

for a political party to come into existence, the party must have an initial conference of 1,000 persons representing two-thirds of the regions of Kazakhstan and a membership of 50,000. The OSCE, the same organization that Kazakhstan will head in the near future, denounced the restrictiveness of this law and predicted that it would have "a chilling effect on the development of political pluralism in Kazakhstan."

The media, a tool of the utmost importance in any democracy, has been dominated in Kazakhstan by government loyalists, while independent journalists are threatened and harassed for criticizing the president for government policies and practices. This, no doubt, has enhanced Nazarbayev's hold on power.

As for corruption, Kazakhstan regularly ranks close to the bottom internationally. In 2007, Kazakhstan was ranked 150 out of 179 countries by "Transparency International" league table. As a United Nations report on Kazakhstan's corruption so eloquently put it: "Corruption undermines the democratic development, performance of State institutions, and efficient use of resources. Eventually, it undermines development of society, especially of its most vulnerable groups."

So why should we care? Is it because Kazakhstan is an oil-rich country? Is it because of its proximity to Russia? Perhaps. We often seem to care more about the fate of any oil-rich country, or any country that delivers oil than countries in a similar plight that do not have oil. But we should also care because we claim to be a country that promotes democracy and human rights, a country that values the individual freedoms of humans, no matter where they live, no matter what natural resources they possess, and no matter what relations they have with the US. How can we lecture the world about abiding to human rights laws, anti-corruption laws, and judicial reform, when we cannot look straight at our friend's face and say: "For the sake of your own people, for the sake of your region, you need to do better." And now, more than ever, before it takes the Chairmanship position of the OSCE, it must reform.

#### HONORING CAMERON CROOKS

#### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Cameron Crooks of Kansas City, Missouri. Cameron is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1374, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Cameron has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Cameron has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Cameron Crooks for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

#### TRIBUTE TO CRAIG RHODES

#### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the retirement of Craig Rhodes, park officer and maintenance supervisor for the Marshall County Conservation Board, and to express my appreciation for his 37 years of public service to his community.

Craig began as a seasonal employee in the summers of 1969 and 1970 with the Marshall County Conservation Board. In 1971, he applied for a maintenance position that opened up and was offered the position. Craig kept the area parks, wildlife areas, prairies, river access sites and trails maintained for the public use. During his years at the Conservation Board, Craig's hard work has earned him respect and appreciation from citizens and visitors around the region.

I commend Craig Rhodes for his many years of loyalty and service to his fellow Iowans. It is an honor to represent Craig in the United States Congress, and I know my colleagues join me in wishing him a happy and healthy retirement.

#### HONORING TIM MOREHOUSE

#### HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, Tim Morehouse combines the discipline of an Olympic medalist with the generosity of spirit that makes him a teacher in one of our poorer neighborhoods.

As a member of the United States sabre team, Tim won a Silver Medal at the Beijing Olympics.

He began fencing in seventh grade at Riverdale Country Day School, and switched to the sabre from the foil in the eighth grade. His skill got him recruited by Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. There he became one of the top college fencers in the country, qualifying for the NCAA championships three times.

At Brandeis, Tim was a history major and served as a resident adviser for 2 years. After graduating, he became a part of Teach for America, an education consortium that aims to bridge the achievement gap between different socio-economic groups. Morehouse went to Intermediate School 90 in Washington Heights as a 7th-grade English and social studies teacher.

As a former teacher I am proud of Tim Morehouse for his abilities as an Olympian, but even more so for his dedication to helping others. He is an example of the scholar-athlete who, having achieved his goals, then helps others to achieve theirs.

We are proud of Tim Morehouse. To be an Olympian takes dedication and training, and a lot of both. It takes a different kind of dedication to devote your life to helping others. I congratulate Tim for being superb on both counts.

#### CONGRATULATING HURST MAIN POST OFFICE AS A VOLUNTARY PROTECTION PROGRAM STAR SITE

#### HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Hurst Main Post Office for being certified as a Star site in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, OSHA, Voluntary Protection Program, VPP. The Hurst Main Post Office is one of three postal VPP sites in the Fort Worth area.

The Voluntary Protection Program promotes success through effective worksite safety and health. Approval into the Voluntary Protection Program is the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's way of officially recognizing the outstanding efforts of employers and employees who uphold exemplary occupational safety practices.

The distinction as a "Star" site displays Hurst Main Post Office's sustained excellence in all areas of safety and health management systems. This excellence stems from strong leadership, participation, and commitment to quality.

I commend the Hurst Main Post Office upon their receipt of this distinction for their commitment to exercising safe and healthful working conditions. Their efforts serve as an example to all, and I am proud to be their representative in the 26th District of Texas.

#### HONORING MAXWELL BOWERS

#### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Maxwell Bowers of Kearney, Missouri. Maxwell is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Maxwell has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Maxwell has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Maxwell Bowers for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

#### TRIBUTE TO NAVY COMMANDER DAVID ASJES

#### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Navy Commander David Asjes of Ames, Iowa as a recipient of a Bronze Star

Medal for his heroic achievements during combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Bronze Star, the Department of Defense's fourth highest award given, is awarded to individuals for bravery, heroism, and meritorious service.

Commander Asjes earned the Bronze Star as a military personnel assigned individually for his expertise in coordinating air combat operations, organizing ground units and executing tactical air operations. Commander Asjes served in Iraq from October 13, 2007 to April 2, 2008. He has honorably served in the U.S. Navy for 23 years.

Commander Asjes' sacrifices, heroism and hard work illustrate the compassion and professionalism of America's troops. I commend Navy Commander David Asjes' courageousness and service to our great nation and consider it an honor to represent Commander Asjes and his family in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues join me in wishing him the best in his future service to our country.

A TRIBUTE TO PROTECTION &  
ADVOCACY INC.

**HON. DORIS O. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Protection & Advocacy Inc. for their 30 years of advocacy in California on behalf of the disabled. Following the 1975 reports of abuse and neglect at a State institute called Willowbrook, Congress mandated and began to fund Protection and Advocacy systems across the Nation. In 1978, Protection & Advocacy Inc. was created as a nonprofit to advance human and legal rights of those with disabilities. The spirit and dedication of Protection & Advocacy Inc. still lives in their daily work. I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring some of California's finest citizens.

For the past 30 years, Protection & Advocacy Inc. has advocated for Californians with disabilities that had been traditionally underserved. Since their first office opened in 1978 in my hometown of Sacramento, Protection & Advocacy Inc. has grown into 26 satellite offices throughout California. With more than 200 staff members, Protection & Advocacy Inc. provides services and information at community events, trainings and conferences. In order to properly represent the diverse community they serve, the staff members speak 15 different languages and more than half of their staff lives with disabilities themselves. Today, Protection & Advocacy Inc. is the largest disability advocacy agency in the Nation. It will soon be renamed Disability Rights California in order to more accurately reflect their mission.

As a response to congressional findings of abuse and neglect of individuals in residential care facilities, the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act was enacted in 1986. This allowed Protection & Advocacy Inc. the opportunity to provide legal representation to persons with psychiatric disabilities and conduct investigations of abuse and neglect.

Protection & Advocacy Inc. strives to create an inclusive society. In 1993 they became a

cross disability advocacy agency when Congress extended their role to protect and advocate for those who were not eligible for services under other programs. Their work now also focuses on improving daily life for people living with disabilities. This includes strengthening access to justice, correcting wrongs, enforcing rights, training individuals on self-advocacy and legal protections, public education, and building collaboration across advocacy groups.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the Protection & Advocacy Inc.'s distinguished commitment to the well-being of the disabled community. Over the last 30 years, they have expanded their mission with the changing times and have been true champions of those living with disabilities. As the Protection & Advocacy Inc.'s staff, supporters, and constituents gather together to celebrate the organization's 30th anniversary, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring their outstanding work on behalf of Californians with disabilities.

HONORING BLANCA ALVARADO

**HON. ZOE LOFGREN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, today I rise with Congressman MIKE HONDA to honor Santa Clara County Supervisor Blanca Alvarado on her 28 years of elected service and wish her the best upon her retirement.

Supervisor Alvarado was elected to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in March 1996 to complete my unexpired term upon my election to Congress. My colleague, MIKE HONDA had the pleasure of serving with Supervisor Alvarado during his term in office.

As the County Supervisor for the Second District, Blanca represented over 350,000 residents living in San Jose. Her district has one of the Nation's highest concentrations of racial diversity and poverty where the lack of opportunity is prevalent for many individuals and families.

During her time in office, Ms. Alvarado served on several committees as an engaged member of the board. As chair of the Children and Families' Committee, her efforts led to programs that focused on the comprehensive care of children and their families and reduced teen pregnancy. As chair of the Public Safety and Justice Committee, Supervisor Alvarado tackled issues of youth incarceration and provided productive alternatives to troubled youth other than incarceration. Her work established neighborhood programs to support anti-gang initiatives and she tirelessly pursued reforms that emphasized prevention and hope for the young residents of San Jose's poorest neighborhoods.

Additionally, Blanca served as an advocate for programs for incarcerated women and gave crucial support for programs and services for female inmates in county jail. Her work was so significant that the County Domestic Violence Council Conference presented her with its 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Always mindful of her cultural roots and the importance of ethnicity and race in America, Alvarado was the principal visionary behind the Mexican Heritage Plaza.

Blanca Alvarado has appointed more Latinas to commissions and committees than anyone else throughout her 28 years of service. This year, Ms. Alvarado launched the Latina Leadership Project in an effort to ensure that Latina leaders continue to have opportunities in Santa Clara County to serve their communities and inspire each other in their dreams of civic service.

It has been an honor for us to know Blanca Alvarado and on behalf of the many residents of the county of Santa Clara who have benefited from her leadership; we thank her and wish her the best upon her well-deserved retirement.

HONORING ROBERT AMSDEN

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Robert Amsden of Liberty, Missouri. Robert is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Robert has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Robert has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Robert Amsden for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING THE ORFORDVILLE  
JOURNAL AND FOOTVILLE NEWS

**HON. TAMMY BALDWIN**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 22, 2008*

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to the Orfordville Journal and Footville News, which ceased publication on August 15, 2008, after nearly a century of chronicling the lives of families in the Orfordville area of Rock County, Wisconsin. Its dedicated owners and publishers, the Stewart family, kept the small weekly newspaper alive for 92 years. Upon its closing, the Journal-News was the second oldest business in Orfordville.

The first issue of the Orfordville Journal debuted on December 17, 1908, but it was not until 1916 that the Stewart family became its owners, when Ward A. Stewart purchased the struggling newspaper at age 22. Later that year, a young woman named Rose came to work for the Journal. Rose and Ward soon married on a Wednesday night in Orfordville, but only after the printing of that week's paper was complete.

This and countless other Stewart family anecdotes illustrate a behind-the-scenes picture of the Journal-News as a quintessential family business rooted in the community that