

its contributions to the community. The Westchester County Press has published news about politics, religion, and social events in our district.

While the Westchester County Press targeted a broad audience when it was founded in 1928, it eventually focused more exclusively on religious and social news in the African-American community. In 1950, Dr. Alger L. Adams bought the newspaper and transformed it into a publication for black audiences to give voice to their contributions to the fabric of our society. Decades later, the Press is still thriving.

In 1961, Paul Redd was hired as a columnist for the Westchester County Press. In 1986, Mr. Redd purchased the paper, for which he now serves as president and publisher. For 47 years, Redd has written a column, "M. Paul Tells All," which informs his readers about politics and opportunities to get involved in the political process.

As a life-long advocate, Paul Redd's interests have included employment training for the disenfranchised, voter registration, education, and civic participation. Redd served as president and chief operating officer of the Westchester-Putnam Affirmative Action Program, Inc., for over 25 years. The agency's employment and training activities have resulted in over 5,000 job placements for local residents.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to recognize my good friend M. Paul Redd for his unparalleled contributions to the community through the Westchester County Press and other organizations, and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring his tremendous accomplishments on the 80th anniversary of the Westchester County Press.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBBIE FLOYD

#### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 9, 2008*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sadness and great respect that I take this time to remember one of Northwest Indiana's finest citizens, Ms. Robbie Floyd of Gary, Indiana. Ms. Floyd's many contributions to the Northwest Indiana community, as a businesswoman, as a civil servant, and as a leader within her church, are worthy of our deepest admiration. Robbie passed away on Sunday, September 28, 2008, but the impact and influence she has had on her community will surely live on for generations to come.

Robbie Lorraine Floyd was born in Gunnison, Mississippi to Joseph and Julia Floyd. At the age of 8, Robbie relocated to Gary, Indiana. She attended Froebel High School, one of only two schools in the City of Gary with integrated classes, where African-American students could attend with other children and receive the same education. The type of person who always sought to deepen her understanding of different areas, Robbie later enrolled in real estate school and became a licensed realtor.

Known for her focus and determination, Robbie Floyd took on the many challenges life brought her, and in spite of the shortage of advantages for African-Americans, sought to improve the quality of her life and the lives of her other family members. In the 1940s, she

and her father became owner-operators of a grocery store, as well as apartment rental units in Gary.

Ms. Floyd, a true activist in the Northwest Indiana area, also recognized that having a voice at City Hall was essential to social progress. Recognizing the respect Robbie had in her community, and seeing just how dedicated an individual she was, then Mayor Peter Mandich encouraged her to enter politics. Thus she became a Precinct Committee-woman twice, first in District 4 and later in District 3. These positions enabled Robbie to serve her constituents by giving them a voice and allowing them to acquire the services they needed. Later, continuing her service in the public sector, Robbie worked as the Administrative Assistant/Secretary to two city controllers, George Chacharis and my father, John Visclosky, both of whom later became mayors of the City of Gary. It is in the City Controller's office that I first met Ms. Floyd as a child. Robbie kept an eye on me there, and until the day of her passing, to make sure I stayed on the straight and narrow.

A true renaissance woman, Robbie Floyd was also the first African-American woman to serve as a police officer for the Lake County Sheriff. As her peers would recall, in breaking this glass ceiling, she did so with distinction, dignity, honor, and dedication. For her efforts, she was honored with the highest accolade bestowed upon an individual by the governor of the State of Indiana, the Sagamore of the Wabash.

While she was fully committed to the people of Gary and Northwest Indiana, Robbie's commitment to her faith was equally impressive. After confessing Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior with First Baptist Church in Gary, she later became a charter member of Christ Baptist Church. Prior to her passing, Ms. Floyd was a key member of her church. For 16 years, Robbie served as its Financial Secretary. As her congregation would attest, she loved serving others and never failed to aid "the stranger," "the friend," or "the child" in any way that she could. Robbie was known for her ability to help those who needed it most, leading to her participation in various church ministries, including: the Willing Workers, Church School, the Church School Fellowship Committee, for which she served as its chair, Male Chorus Boosters, and the Pearce Prayer and Study Group.

While Robbie Floyd was always active in her community and her church, she cherished her time with her family the most. She leaves to cherish her memory two daughters, Dr. Doris Keys Ward and Debra Floyd; grandnieces, LaTanya Obgiofor, Desnee Flakes, and Donna Floyd; grandnephews, Cordell (Millicent) Olive and Joseph Floyd, and numerous great-grandnieces and nephews. She will also be greatly missed by her many friends, her Pastor, Reverend Dr. Maurice White, Jr., and all of the members of Christ Baptist Church.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Robbie Lorraine Floyd for her outstanding devotion to her community in Northwest Indiana. Her unselfish and lifelong dedication to those in need is worthy of the highest commendation. Robbie's selflessness was an inspiration to us all, and I am proud to have represented her in Congress.

#### TRIBUTE TO PAUL H. SNIDER

#### HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 9, 2008*

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Madam Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to Paul H. Snider. Paul is a loyal American and a fine man.

Paul grew up in Denair, CA and graduated from Turlock High School. After high school he entered the U.S. Maritime Service as a radio operator. Following his Maritime service, he enrolled in Modesto Junior College. While attending Modesto Junior College, Paul and his father started Snider Honey, a business in which they marketed and distributed honey to retailers. One of those retailers was Tom Raley, who at that time had only one store in Placerville, but went on to establish the well-known chain of Raley's grocery stores.

After graduating from Modesto Junior College, Paul joined the National Guard. He was sent to Okinawa for 6 months and was honorably discharged in January 1953. Upon returning to California, Paul began working for his uncle, Stewart Snider, selling Buicks. As was the custom in the early 1950s, Paul went door-to-door after dinner contacting people who had visited the dealership in order to sell them a car.

In 1956, Paul bought his own Chevy dealership in Patterson, CA. In 1966, he bought a Volkswagen dealership in Sacramento. Paul's success continued, and at one time he owned about one dozen dealerships, including Ford, Toyota, Nissan, Volkswagen, Chevy, Pontiac, Isuzu, Hyundai, and Infiniti. Paul has managed to succeed in business without compromising his character; he has remained humble and has cared about his many employees. In fact, Paul hated it when he was forced to fire someone and agonized over the decision each time it needed to be made.

Paul has three children: Shelby, Marcus, and Blake. He is an avid hunter and has been a member of the Safari Club International, Ducks Unlimited, the Lions Club, and the Rotary Club. He has contributed generously and repeatedly to the Red Cross, the Shriners, the River Oak Center for Children Foundation (for children with developmental disabilities), and to Ducks Unlimited and the Safari Club International. Paul is a man who puts his energy behind his beliefs, and he has been a faithful supporter of many conservative causes. I am grateful for his support and friendship and wish him well in the years to come.

#### OSCAR ELIAS BISCET

#### HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 9, 2008*

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, this last December 6 was the 9th anniversary of the imprisonment—the cruel and unjust imprisonment in a cold and damp cell in the most inhuman of conditions—of the great Cuban leader in the fight for democracy and human rights in that imprisoned island, Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet. Dr. Biscet is prohibited even from walking in the prison's yard, and he is incarcerated along with common criminals.

Dr. Biscet was released from prison early in 2003, for a few weeks only, before being re-arrested and subsequently sentenced to 25 years in the Communist gulag due to his peaceful pro-democracy activities.

A few days ago, I was honored to receive a congratulatory letter from Ms. Elsa Morejon, Dr. Biscet's courageous and admirable wife.

Oscar Elias Biscet personifies the opposition to the brutal totalitarian regime of Fidel Castro and his brother, who the dictator has given some additional titles to because of the ailing tyrant's failing health. Dr. Biscet is an admirer of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

A physician by training, he began his opposition to the totalitarian regime by speaking out against the regime's "forced abortion when there is any indication whatsoever that the pregnancy may have an abnormality" policy. Biscet described that policy as inhuman. He was immediately fired from his job at the hospital, prohibited from practicing his profession as a physician, and his wife was also fired from her job as a practicing nurse. Within hours, the couple and their son were summarily evicted from their apartment and their physical possessions thrown into the street.

Fortunately, an elderly patient of Elsa's allowed the family to move into her house. Dr. Biscet continued peacefully denouncing the totalitarian regime's absolute denial of human rights to the Cuban people—and because of that he has been unjustly and cruelly imprisoned for 9 years, and counting.

Hundreds of other brave human rights activists are also suffering in the political prisons of the Cuban totalitarian dictatorship for the "crime" of supporting democracy and liberty and opposing tyranny, including 23 known journalists, thrown into dungeons because of articles they wrote that bothered the dictator. No regime in the world has more journalists in prison, with the possible exception of another totalitarian dictatorship in an obviously much larger nation, communist China.

Just last week the respected international organization, "Reporters Without Borders" gave one of the Cuban journalists in the gulag, Ricardo Gonzalez Alfonso, sentenced by the Cuban tyrant to 20 years in prison in the year 2003 and currently in very poor health, the "Reporters Without Borders" Journalist of the Year Award. "Reporters Without Borders" is to be commended.

Three other Cuban prisoners of conscience, Adolfo Fernandez Sainz, Pedro Arguelles Moran, and Antonio Diaz Sanchez, are known to have begun a hunger strike due to the brutal conditions they are subjected to.

Where is the outrage? Where is the solidarity in the international community?

The reality is that for too many in the world today, Cubans are supposed to be content with their lot, to be quiet, to . . . "move on", in the words of one of our pro-Cuban dictatorship colleagues here in the U.S. Congress. The regime that enslaves a nation and imprisons hundreds of heroes simply for their beliefs deserves unilateral rewards and concessions, many maintain.

But Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, and the many other heroes imprisoned in the Castro brothers' gulag will not be able to be ignored forever. They must be freed. And political parties be legalized, as well as independent press agencies, and labor unions. And free and fair elections must take place in Cuba.

Many of those imprisoned today will be democratically elected leaders tomorrow. That is what is going to occur in Cuba tomorrow. Today, as they suffer the most unjust of cruel imprisonments, we here remember and honor them—and once again demand their immediate release.

#### HONORING JOHN EVANS

#### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 9, 2008*

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Madam Speaker, it is with great respect and sincerity that I take this time to honor one of Northwest Indiana's most accomplished citizens, Mr. John Evans of Miller Beach. On Sunday, November 2, 2008, John was honored by the Indiana Division of the Polish American Congress for his many years of service as a dedicated member of his community, as well as a proud representative of the Polish American heritage in Northwest Indiana. This extraordinary event took place at The Patio restaurant in Merrillville, Indiana.

John Evans, a lifelong resident of Northwest Indiana and the son of Russell Glenn and Eleanor Evans of New Chicago, Indiana, has been recognized by the Polish American Congress, Indiana Division, as the recipient of the 2008 Distinguished Service Award. From his career in the insurance industry to his service with several of Northwest Indiana's churches to his commitment to preserving the Polish heritage, John is truly deserving of this prestigious accolade. Always one to try to improve the lives of his fellow citizens in any way possible, John has spent the last twenty-four years working with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois. After spending many years building relationships between hospitals and providers as a Provider Network Consultant, John moved into a management position in 2000 and was recently promoted to Director of Provider Network Relations. In his current position, John is responsible for overseeing relations with all hospitals, physicians, and ancillary providers for the State of Illinois. As a member of the Blue Cross Blue Shield team, John has been active with the company's Diversity Workforce Committee, serving as Master of Ceremonies for their 2007 Polish Heritage Day.

Mr. Evans, widely known as a truly gifted musician, has been a fixture in the Northwest Indiana for, in all sincerity, most of his life. As a child of only ten years of age, John began formally studying the organ with Mrs. Joanne Sparks of Gary, Indiana. Only a few short years later, John began playing dinner music at Wilson's Restaurant and Lounge in Miller Beach, entertaining diners every Friday and Saturday night. During this time, he also began playing at wedding receptions and other banquets, as well as serving as the organist at Sunday masses at Assumption B.V.M. Church in New Chicago. From there, at a mere fifteen years of age, John took over as the director of the church's choir in 1973. During the twenty-three years he spent at Assumption, John's leadership meant not only an increase in choir membership, but in popularity as well. During this time, the choir was asked to perform at many dances, ordinations, anniversaries, and other special occasions. In fact, they even recorded an album entitled "Christ-

mas in New Chicago" which featured Polish and English Christmas carols.

Fully committed to his faith and his heritage, John also has organized and choreographed dance selections for Polish Women's Alliance Saint Anne's Group 778, directed the choir at events for the Polish Women's Alliance Group 132, and directed the choir for the Polish mass at Saint Stanislaus in Michigan City, Indiana. In 1996, Mr. Evans took over as the organist and choir director for the Saint Cecilia Choir at Saint Stanislaus Parish in East Chicago, Indiana. Since taking over at Saint Stan's, the membership of the choir has nearly doubled, and John has been successful in bringing young people into the choir. Not to be outdone, the choir at Saint Stanislaus has also produced a professional CD of Polish and English hymns and religious selections entitled "Spirit," which has sold over 500 copies, profits from it contributing to various church renovations.

Madam Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in commending Mr. John Evans as he is honored for his lifetime of service and dedication to the Northwest Indiana community. His years of service have touched and improved the lives of all whom he has served. His unselfish and lifelong dedication is worthy of the highest commendation, and I am proud to represent him in Congress.

#### IN HONOR OF COLONEL RAYMOND ANTHONY CELESTE, JR.

#### HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 9, 2008*

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Colonel Raymond Anthony Celeste, Jr., who is retiring from the United States Marine Corps after more than 26 years of faithful service.

Colonel Celeste attended Officers Candidate School in October 1982 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in December 1982. In 1983, he graduated first from The Basic School and later from the Field Artillery Officer Basic School. His first fleet assignment was at Marine Corps Base, 29 Palms, California in January 1984, where he served first with 4th Battalion 11th Marines and then with 5th Battalion 11th Marines as a platoon commander in 8 inch self-propelled Howitzer Batteries. During his time as a platoon commander, he participated in numerous Combined Arms Exercises, learning the great capabilities of the Marine Air Ground Task Force.

In May of 1985, then-First Lieutenant Celeste transferred to Camp Pendleton, California, where he served in the Tactical Exercise Control Group and assisted in organizing field and staff exercises worldwide. In September of 1986, First Lieutenant Celeste reported as the first Operations Officer of the 1st Remotely Piloted Vehicle Company, where he became one of the first members of the newly established unit. In this assignment, he assisted in integrating Unmanned Aerial Vehicles into the Marine Air Ground Task Force and received an award for his meritorious service. Because of his expertise in this area, an article he wrote on the subject was published in the Marine Corps Gazette.