

to Solzhenitsyn can attest to this truth. Their lives in captivity did not improve because President Reagan quietly urged Gorbachev to set them free, but because he publicly shamed them.

In Egypt opposition leader Ayman Nour, who was himself inspired by President Bush's call for democracy in Egypt, challenged Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in the 2005 elections and was jailed prior to the election. His wife has tirelessly advocated for his release with inconsistent help from the U.S.

Nour's plight is indicative of a confused policy in Egypt and throughout the Middle East which gave occasional lip-service to human rights and freedom and then rarely stood with reformers who dared to answer the call.

In 2002, the administration boldly threatened to withhold additional foreign assistance to Egypt, the second largest recipient of U.S. aid since 1979, largely because of their imprisonment of pro-democracy activist Saad Ibrahim. This was the first time that any administration linked the human rights of a Middle Eastern country to its eligibility to receive foreign assistance. The efficacy of this approach was apparent when Ibrahim was eventually released.

The amount of aid we give Egypt is a powerful means of prompting political reform and protection of vulnerable minorities, like the 9 million Coptic Christians—an ancient community withering under tremendous pressure. But the visionary approach of the early days of the administration quickly faded to business as usual with the U.S. expressing only mild disapproval over Mubarak's February 2006 announcement of the delay of municipal elections and aid continuing unabated.

Vietnam is another example, like China, where trade has trumped human rights for the last 8 years. Just this summer, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung visited the U.S. but the focus of talks with the President was almost solely on economic cooperation with little to no mention of human rights abuses particularly of political dissidents and the Christian minority.

Since 2004 Vietnam had been on the Countries of Particular Concern list annually put out by the State Department which names the worst violators of religious freedom. But in 2006, on the eve of the President's visit to Hanoi, Vietnam was removed despite persistent abuse, harassment and detention for those seeking to practice their faith outside of government approved religious organizations. Shortly after the removal the government launched a crackdown. Sadly we had relinquished a major diplomatic tool for bringing about reform.

If China is any indication of the future, we would be naive to assume that more trade between our two countries will bring about political reform.

The list of missed opportunities goes on and on. The ancient community of Iraqi Christians is on the verge of extinction, Egypt's Bahais continue to be denied basic rights, the people of Tibet are helpless to do anything as their homeland is plundered, a sobering assessment on this International Human Rights Day which marks the 60th anniversary of the U.N. adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

President Reagan once said, "To prisoners of conscience throughout the world, take heart; you have not been forgotten. We, your

brothers and sisters in God, have made your cause our cause, and we vow never to relent until you have regained the freedom that is your birthright as a child of God."

A word to my Republican colleagues as our party seeks to once again find its voice in the aftermath of a difficult election year: we must return to the principles at the heart of the Republican Party—the party of Lincoln and Reagan. We must affirm that we stand for the defenseless, champion liberty, confront injustice. In the words of our own party platform let us not forget that, "the international promotion of human rights reflects our heritage, our values and our national interest."

And to my Democratic colleagues, specifically President-elect Obama, I pray that the words which rang out on the night of his historic victory will in fact be realized during his administration. He rightly spoke directly to those "huddled around radios in the forgotten corners of the globe," and told them that the "true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity and unyielding hope." I would go a step further. America is never more strong, never more fully America, than when we are seeking to secure these ideals the world over: for the Egyptian opposition leader, the Chinese house church pastor, the Vietnamese reporter, the Darfurian refugee.

COMMENDING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE VILLAGE OF MORGANZA

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of the Village of Morganza.

Named after the first American sheriff of Pointe Coupee Parish, Colonel Charles Morgan, the Village of Morganza was incorporated in 1908.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Morgan came to Pointe Coupee Parish in 1830. He was a prominent land-owner in the parish, and served in the Louisiana Legislature and represented the Mississippi River Authority.

During the Civil War, the Village of Morganza was the site of a Union Army encampment. Several battles were fought in this area throughout the war. The largest conflict in Pointe Coupee Parish occurred at nearby Stirling Plantation, on September 29, 1863.

Just before the turn of the Twentieth Century, the Morganza Post Office was organized, and the Town Hall was built in 1968.

St. Ann's Catholic Church was founded in 1916, but was so severely damaged by storms in 1934 and 1935, the structure was later destroyed. The present church building was dedicated in October 1935.

The Village of Morganza is perhaps best known for the Morganza Spillway which helps control flooding on the lower Mississippi River. It is also commonly known for featured scenes in the movie "Easy Rider" in 1968.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Centennial Anniversary of the Village of Morganza. I am proud of the

residents of this historical community for ensuring its charm and spirit is as strong today as it was 100 years prior.

HONORING JIM WITT, CITY MANAGER OF COPPELL

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Jim Witt, who is retiring after fifteen years of service as City Manager of Coppell, Texas. His dedication to the community proves that citizens can truly make a difference in the lives of others, and I am proud to honor such a distinguished leader.

Mr. Witt has played an indispensable role in the development of Coppell during his tenure. In his fifteen years of service, Coppell has increased its size by 19,000 residents, the City staff increased from 178 to 365, and the City budget grew from roughly \$15 million to approximately \$81 million.

Mr. Witt oversaw tremendous economic growth in Coppell. Many of the buildings in Coppell that stand as cornerstones of the community were only possible through the efforts of Mr. Witt. To name just a few of the buildings he has played an instrumental role with: the Justice Center, three Fire Stations, a Fire Administration building, a Service Center, the William T. Cozby Public Library, an Aquatics and Recreation Center, a Municipal Cemetery, Wagon Wheel Park, Andy Brown East and Central, MacArthur Park, over six miles of trails, Town Center Plaza, and the Community/Senior Center.

With Mr. Witt's leadership, he helped create several community-based initiatives such as Farmers Market, community gardens and the half-cent sales tax for schools.

On behalf of the 24th District of Texas, I would like to thank Mr. Witt for his tireless service to Coppell. Mr. Witt's successes have been many, and it is an honor for me to recognize him for his nearly two decades of contributions to the people of Coppell. I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing Jim Witt continued success in his future.

IN HONOR OF DR. CORNELIA N. WINNER

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize Dr. Cornelia N. "Connie" Winner. In December 2008, Dr. Winner will retire after thirty-six years of service to Delaware Technical & Community College.

Dr. Winner's involvement with the college began in 1972, when she took a position at the Wilmington Campus as an instructor in the Secretarial Technology Department. Just eight years later, Dr. Winner became Chairperson of the campus Technology Department. In 1985, she was made Assistant Dean of Instruction of the Stanton/Wilmington Campus. During the remainder of her time at Delaware Tech, Dr.

Winner served as Dean of Instruction, Acting Assistant Campus Director, and now as Acting Vice President of Academic Affairs at the Terry Campus in Dover and Assistant Campus Director at Wilmington/Stanton.

In all of these roles, from faculty member to administrative leader, Dr. Winner has proved an invaluable member of the Delaware Tech family. She played an instrumental role in establishing and promoting that mindset for which Delaware Tech has become known and that has helped the organization thrive into the statewide institution that it is today: "focused on excellence, but never ignoring the individual". Dr. Winner never lost sight of the educators' primary mission to serve and mentor students in order that they may become successful individuals. It is this selfless dedication that has come to define the character of Dr. Connie Winner in the minds of her colleagues and students at Delaware Tech.

Once again, I commend Dr. Connie Winner on nearly four decades of exemplary service to Delaware Technical & Community College. While I am sure that her caring spirit will be missed in the halls of the campuses, I am confident that she will remain an active and influential member of the Delaware community.

A TRIBUTE TO ISRAEL VELÁZQUEZ

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor Mr. Israel Velázquez. Mr. Velázquez is the founder and President of Velázquez Associates, Inc., and its subsidiary Velázquez Accounting Services (D/B/A), a New York-based Accounting and Non Profit Development Consulting firm.

Mr. Velázquez, for the past 30 years, has consistently assembled public and private partnerships on affordable housing and economic development projects in urban cities throughout the United States and in several Caribbean islands. Mr. Velázquez has successfully managed to have a major input in various national, statewide and citywide revitalization programs benefiting various disadvantaged communities. His tireless efforts have borne fruit, as evidenced by new ventures in affordable housing, senior citizen housing complexes, community-owned shopping centers and well-recognized youth programs in these communities.

Mr. Velázquez has held several executive positions as the first Comptroller for organizations such as the West Harlem Community Organization, Inc., the National Black United Fund, and the Black United Fund of New York, Inc.

Currently, Mr. Israel Velázquez serves as Special Project Director for the East New York Development Corporation formulating public and private partnerships in ascertaining corporate giving, public grants, and funding specialized academic and recreation programs/activities for the youth in the East New York community.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Israel Velázquez for his extraordinary accomplishments on behalf of East New York and elsewhere.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Mr. Israel Velázquez.

HONORING THE LEWIS AND CLARK TRAILBLAZERS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding group of women from Lewis and Clark Community College who last week completed an amazing soccer season by winning the National Junior College Athletic Association Division 1 National Championship.

The Lewis and Clark Trailblazers defeated previously unbeaten Darton College by a score of 3-2 on November 3, 2008 to cap off a 27-1 season, thereby setting an NJCAA record for most wins in a single season.

My congratulations go to head coach Tim Rooney, assistant coaches Ryan Hodge and Meghan Rooney, and the members of the 2008 National Champion Trailblazers: Taylor Bivens, Nicole Yaun, Brittany St. John, Liz Pivin, Molly Kellett, Meredith Morkel, Sarah Schultenhenrich, Kim Kahre, Bridget Belli, Kaylee Neutzling, Jennifer Vandever, Mallory Morkel, Kelly Musenfichter, Bianca Busch, Jessica Randazzo, Emily Winschel, Jamie Beuhle, Kristin Pelley, Emily Silorski, and Danielle Lucks.

These women represented themselves, their families and their community in a first-class fashion, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors, both on and off the field.

TRIBUTE TO ARMY CPT ROB YLLESCAS

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor a brave young man who called Nebraska's Third District home, Army CPT Rob Yllescas, who was laid to rest this week after succumbing to injuries received in Afghanistan on October 28. He commanded B-Troop, 6-4 Cavalry of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

Rob has been described as a hero both on and off the battlefield. I was honored to speak with his family a few weeks ago, and I was touched by their hope, resolve, and spirit even as Rob struggled against his injuries. Nebraskans throughout our State are sending our thoughts and prayers to his wife, Dena, and his two daughters, Julia and Eva. I know Rob's strength is with them.

Words cannot express our gratitude for Rob's service to our country, or the loss of such a brave friend and father. We can do no less than live up to his ideals.

A TRIBUTE TO MARSHAN MASON GAINER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor Marshan Mason Gainer. Ms. Gainer began her career as a public high school teacher in Washington, D.C. after receiving her BA degree in English and Secondary Education from the State University of New York at Fredonia and an MA from the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

Ms. Gainer, in her 30-year career, has been responsible for the development and implementation of sales and management training and the design of multi-media and computer-based training programs. She has administered assessment centers and conducted training programs throughout the United States and abroad. Her areas of responsibility also cover all phases of human resource management for staff located worldwide.

Before retiring from her position as Vice President of management services for Save the Children (a relief and development organization operating in 40 countries), Ms. Gainer was responsible for developing and implementing human resource policies and programs for the more than 2,500 staff members in the headquarters, field and overseas offices. A worldwide traveler, Ms. Gainer has visited countries on five continents. Her adventures also included stops in almost every state in America.

Ms. Gainer is an active member of the Prince Hall Order Eastern Star and its affiliate groups. She has held several offices, chaired many committees, and was most recently the Grand Worthy Matron of Eureka Grand Chapter, Prince Hall Order Eastern Star Inc., State of New York.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Marshan Mason Gainer for her extraordinary accomplishments on behalf of children across the world.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Marshan Mason Gainer.

TRIBUTE TO MR. JAMES BABATUNDE ADEGBOYE

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a man who stood in the forefront of helping to propel his countrymen to a sense of moral and ethical courage through the giving and sharing of one's talents for the good of the society in which he lived. On behalf of the people of the great State of Florida, I stand today to recognize the personal and professional accomplishments of a man who loved his country and his family, and gave unselfishly of his time and talents to make a better place for all.

Mr. James Babatunde Adegboye, a great family man and a financial expert passed on November 26, 2008, at the University of Florida & Shands Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida.