

HONORING CONRAD BECKER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Conrad Becker of Platte City, Missouri. Conrad 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 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Conrad has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Conrad 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 Conrad Becker for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING RETIRING ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE JOEL GIAMBRA

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the public career and personal sacrifices of Joel A. Giambra, who, on December 31, 2007, concluded more than two decades of continuous elective public service with the end of his second and final term as Erie County Executive.

Joel faced challenges throughout his career, and most particularly throughout his two terms as County Executive. Hit with a cancer diagnosis before taking the oath of office as County Executive, Joel faced that challenge and many, many more with a sense of commitment and—most especially—aplomb that inspired many to heed his advice to quit smoking.

Joel and I had the pleasure—and I do mean that it was a pleasure—to serve together as members of the Buffalo Common Council. My time serving alongside Joel was brief, but we were part of a new majority caucus on the council that was thoughtful, deliberative and served as an important check and balance on the office of the Mayor.

Following Joel's service on the Common Council, he distinguished himself as Buffalo City Comptroller, administering a large department of city government charged with important day to day functions in city life.

Joel's election as County Executive in 1999 was challenging at its start and was controversial almost throughout. Joel fought the fights he believed were worth fighting and never ducked a challenge. Joel rightly brought to the forefront the issues of overlapping governmental services and the need for county and local governments in Western New York to develop new strategies to collaborate and save taxpayer dollars. While Joel's efforts certainly could not be termed a complete success, he is widely and appropriately credited for bringing these issues to the forefront, and his ef-

forts have paved the way for succeeding elected officials to find new and innovative ways to collaborate and consolidate services in the future.

As I indicated, Joel's eight years as County Executive had its share of ups and downs, but while some questioned the policies Joel implemented, no one could question his commitment to the community that he lives in and loves so much. From meetings in Albany to Washington, DC and to points abroad, during his years as County Executive, Buffalo and Western New York had no more dedicated ambassador than Joel Giambra.

Joel is now entering a new chapter of his professional life and we wish him good luck and Godspeed in his future endeavors, and Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to recognize Joel's public career.

TRIBUTE TO HARDIN COUNTY, TEXAS, AND ITS RESIDENTS ON THEIR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Hardin County, Texas, and its residents on their 150th anniversary.

Sixty-eight miles northeast of Houston and 54 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, Hardin County's 897 square miles are covered by pine and hardwood forests. This puts Hardin County in the middle of the beautiful Big Thicket of southeast Texas and the larger east Texas Timberlands region. Natural resources are still a main driver of the local economy and timber, oil, gas, sand, gravel, and salt domes are found within the county.

In 1836 the area was split between the jurisdictions of Liberty and Jefferson counties. Following the region's population growth, in 1858 the legislature established a new county. The new county was named in honor of the Hardin family from nearby Liberty County; the county seat was also to be designated as Hardin. When the Sabine and East Texas Railroad bypassed Hardin in favor of the newly established railroad town, Kountze was made the new county seat.

Long ago, American Indians in the region began to visit what they called Medicine Lake, seeking the healing powers of the mud and mineral water in what we today call Sour Lake. Oil was discovered in 1901 around Sour Lake and quickly became the lifeblood of the area, production later reached 7 million barrels a day. This same discovery allowed for the creation of the Texas Company, better known as Texaco. Today, Hardin County has grown to over 50,000 residents.

Immigrants from Ireland, Germany, France, and other countries were drawn to Hardin County for its oil, timber, livestock and agricultural products. This rich diversity contributed to economic growth and the rich culture Hardin County still enjoys today.

Today, Hardin County is one of the fastest growing areas of southeast Texas—there is a bright future of growth and prosperity. Families are choosing to live in Hardin County because of its outstanding schools and traditional

sense of community. Hardin County is the type of place where neighbors check in on each other and catch up at high school football games. Local leaders through out the county have worked hard to maintain Hardin County's quality of life. These men and women are following in the footsteps of early settlers and the county's founders to make Hardin County a better place for hardworking men and women who call it home.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to represent this community in the U.S. House of Representatives and I urge you to join me in congratulating Hardin County on its sesquicentennial birthday.

HONORING QUINTIN PHILLIP O'DELL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Quintin Phillip O'Dell of Platte City, Missouri. Quintin 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 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Quintin has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Quintin 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 Quintin Phillip O'Dell for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING RETIRING TOWN OF SARDINIA COUNCILWOMAN CARLA FULLER

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments and public service career of Carla Fuller, councilwoman from the Town of Sardinia, upon her retirement from active public service as a member of the Town Board.

Sardinia is among the smallest towns in my congressional district and sometimes, Madam Speaker, that makes for the most difficult service in public office. Because everyone in a small town seems to know everyone else, the decisions made in government often have a oversized impact upon the very people that you represent. It is that very challenge that makes the service of people like Carla Fuller all the more substantial.

Carla served as a diligent, thoughtful and respectful representative of the people during her years on the town board. While she will retire from active service on the town board at the end of this year, I have little doubt that Carla will remain dedicated to Sardinia and to its residents for many years to come.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have had this opportunity to honor Carla's service to the Town of Sardinia and am certain that you join me and the rest of our colleagues in wishing Carla and her entire family the best of luck and Godspeed in all of their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO MS. SONJA DRAN
EMBRY

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, let me take this time to recognize the outstanding federal civilian service of Ms. Sonja Dran Embry on the occasion of her retirement. Ms. Embry has worked for the federal civil service at the Navy Personnel Command for the past 36 years.

A native of Caneyville, Kentucky, Ms. Embry is a 1970 graduate of the Kentucky Business College in Lexington, Kentucky. On January 4th 1971, she began her civil service career working at the Bureau of Naval Personnel where she held administrative support positions in the Recall and Release Branch, Civilian Personnel Branch/Administrative and Management Division, and the Congressional/Disposal Sections. As the Vietnam Conflict was winding down, Ms. Embry was again assigned to the Recall and Release Branch where she worked until September 1979.

Ms. Embry was selected to serve as the Human Resources Assistant in the Submarine and Nuclear Power Officer Assignments Branch in September 1979. In August 1998, she assisted in the move and reorganization of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, DC into the Navy Personnel Command in Millington, TN. She has been the cornerstone of this office providing continuity and service to the military members of the U.S. Navy's Submarine Service. Her tireless and caring performance of duty has touched and had a pronounced effect on the lives and careers of over 18,000 submarine officers.

Please join me and our colleagues in thanking Ms. Embry for her tireless contributions to a grateful Nation and in wishing her the best in her future.

HONORING ZACHARY BOYD HEISER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zachary Boyd Heiser of Platte City, Missouri. Zachary 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 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zachary has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Zachary 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 Zachary Boyd Heiser for

his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING RETIRING NYS SUPREME COURT JUSTICE JEROME GORSKI

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to honor a respected jurist, a dedicated public servant and a trusted friend of this community upon the occasion of his retirement from the New York State Appellate Court Division. Madam Speaker, I want to call to the House's attention the outstanding record of public service of Justice Jerome C. Gorski.

Judge Gorski received his law degree from Georgetown University in 1962 and was admitted to practice later that year. He initially practiced in Buffalo, concentrating on negligence, products liability litigation, and labor relations related work. From 1973 until 1980, he served as law clerk to Judge James L. Kane, first in County Court and later in Supreme Court. In the past, Justice Gorski served a clerkship under renowned U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica.

Initially elected to the Supreme Court in the late 1980s, Judge Gorski's judicial career culminated in his appointment to serve on the Supreme Court's Appellate Division for the Fourth Department in 2001. Judge Gorski received the Outstanding Jurist Award from the Erie County Bar Association in 1998, and the 2000 Award of Merit.

Judge Gorski is a part of a revered family in Western New York. Judge Gorski's father, the late Chester Gorski, and his brother Dennis, each had outstanding careers in public service, and each were, in the past, candidates for the congressional seat that I am fortunate to occupy today. Imbued within the Gorski family is an innate commitment to the community that is Buffalo and Western New York, and all of our residents are better for the tremendous commitment to public service demonstrated by the Gorski family.

Madam Speaker, in recognition of and in gratitude for his service, leadership and patriotism, I ask that this honorable body join me in honoring Justice Jerome Gorski upon the occasion of his retirement, and wish he and his family the very best of health and happiness in the months and years ahead.

A FAREWELL TO HOUSE GENERAL COUNSEL GERALDINE GENNET

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to say a few words on the recent retirement of Geraldine Gennet, the outgoing General Counsel of the House of Representatives.

Because of the sensitive areas that it works on, the Office of the General Counsel is not well known to many people outside of Con-

gress. Nevertheless, the office provides invaluable legal advice and representation to Members, committees, employees, and officers of Congress, regardless of their political party or affiliation. Geraldine joined the Office of the General Counsel in 1995, and became General Counsel in 1997. Prior to her service in the House of Representatives, she worked as a sole practitioner in the District of Columbia, and then served as General Counsel for the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department and as Litigation Counsel for the Office of Thrift Supervision.

During her time at the helm of the Office of the General Counsel, Congress was involved in a host of public and private battles and constitutional issues with wide-ranging implications, and through each one, Geraldine provided tremendous leadership to Congress and its Members. Indeed, even as Congress became a more partisan place over the last decade, Geraldine was ceaselessly nonpartisan in her work. During my time on the House Ethics and Judiciary Committees, I was fortunate to work with her on several occasions, and I was always impressed with Geraldine's strong focus on ensuring that congressional prerogatives and Congress as an institution were tenaciously protected from political considerations and other negative influences.

It is an honor to commend Geraldine for her leadership and hard work, and to wish her the very best in all of her future endeavors.

HONORING DAVID KYLE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize David Kyle of Liberty, Missouri. David 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 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

David has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years David 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 David Kyle 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 NICOLE SCHWARTZ

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I am honored to rise here today to recognize the efforts of Ms. Nicole Schwartz to promote a "Bill of Rights for Diabetics."

Ms. Schwartz is an exemplary young woman whose passion to fight diabetes is leaving an indelible mark in our community. By