

Since the 1830s, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating these superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve? In 1843, when West Point was the sole academy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. This was not an act of an imperial Congress bent on controlling every aspect of Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, a further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to unfettered nepotism and handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the academy nomination process—the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

The Academy Review Board is composed of six local citizens (several of whom are distinguished veterans) who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer groups, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Being on the Board requires hard work and an objective mind. Members have the responsibility of interviewing upwards of 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. High school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy once they become interested in attending. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other activities. At this time, they also inform my office of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return the files to my office with their notations. In late November, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of two days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

This year the board interviewed 38 applicants. Nominations included 10 to the Naval Academy, 8 to the Military Academy, 5 to the Merchant Marine Academy, and 5 to the Air Force Academy—the Coast Guard Academy does not use the congressional nomination process. The recommendations are then forwarded to the academies by January 31, where admissions staff reviewed files and notified applicants and my office of their final decision on admittance.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the acad-

emy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make: to defend our country and protect our citizens. This holds especially true at a time when our Nation is fighting the war against terrorism. Whether it is in Afghanistan, the Iraq, or other hot spots around the world, no doubt we are constantly reminded that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and sometimes dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2008, 11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT NEW JERSEY

AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Chelsea A. Bailey, Chatham, Academy of Arts Science & Engineering.

Phillip XG Choy, Basking Ridge, Ridge H.S.

Kenneth A. Natelli, Andover, Lenape Valley H.S.

Ethan J. Proll, West Caldwell, Trinity Christian School.

William D. Thimmel, Pompton Plains, Don Bosco.

MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Michael C. Jones, Basking Ridge, Ridge H.S.

Leslie M. Martin, Parsippany, DePaul H.S.
Jack A. Morado, West Caldwell, St. Benedict's Prep.

Evan Prill, Boonton, Boonton H.S.

Matthew J. White, Bloomingdale, Butler H.S.

MILITARY ACADEMY

Brian P. Greely, Lake Hopatcong, Pope John XXIII.

Travis Hughes, Randolph, Randolph H.S.

Vincent J. Lally, Sparta, Sparta H.S.

James J. Mariani, Fairfield, West Essex H.S.

Mark E. McConnell, Lake Hopatcong, Jefferson H.S.

Alexander G. Pagoulatos, Basking Ridge, Ridge H.S.

Jason S. Rothamel, Basking Ridge, Ridge H.S.

Brendan J. Ward, Chatham, Chatham H.S.

NAVAL ACADEMY

William B. Brundage, New Vernon, The Pingry School.

Aaron Z. Dewitt, Mendham, W. Morris Mendham H.S.

Katherine S. Drainsfield, Bridgewater, Bridgewater-Raritan H.S.

Zachery R. Hoyt, Morristown, Delbarton School.

Anthony J. Kline, Boonton, Seton Hall Prep.

Kenneth L. Miltenberger, Mendham, Mendham H.S.

Kevin A. Petty, Succasunna, Roxbury H.S.

Colin R. Price, North Caldwell, Home School.

Nicholas G. Tepfenhart, Long Valley, West Morris Central.

David C. Wenger, Montville, Montville H.S.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLARENCE CENTER VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

HON. THOMAS M. REYNOLDS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2008

Mr. REYNOLDS. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Clarence Center Volunteer Fire Company of Clarence, New

York. For a century the members of the Clarence Hose Company have been volunteering to protect their neighbors.

The Clarence Center Volunteer Fire Company became the first fire company in the Town of Clarence in 1908. The company began as a stock company and was able to purchase a hand drawn hose cart and chemical fire extinguishers. Land for a fire hall was donated to the Fire Company by a local businessman, and fundraising for the construction began in July 1908 with the First Firemen's picnic in Clarence. With the help of a local farmer, Wesley Williams, the Company raised enough money to construct Williams Hall.

The year 1922 marked a milestone for the Clarence Center Volunteer Fire Company. In February of this year the Company was able to purchase its first fire truck. The acquisition of this truck was important to the protection that the fire company offered the people in Clarence. Additionally, the first annual Labor Day Picnic was held in 1922. This is a time-honored event in the town of Clarence; not only is it a way for the fire company to raise funds for improvements to the equipment used to serve the people of Clarence, but it is an event that families throughout the town look forward to every year.

Since its beginnings the Clarence Volunteer Fire Company has become an indispensable part of the town. The Company remains committed to providing fire, rescue, and EMS services to the citizens that reside within the district boundaries. They've continued to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population of Clarence Center. As we reach the 100th anniversary of this fire company the volunteers continue to dedicate themselves to serve and assist the members of their community.

Thus Madam Speaker, in recognition of its 100th Anniversary of tremendous service in the Town of Clarence, I ask this honorable body join me in honoring the Clarence Center Volunteer Fire Company.

HONORING HRANT DINK

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2008

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Hrant Dink. He was a Turkish-Armenian journalist and a defender of the freedom of the press. His belief in this freedom never wavered despite his prosecution and conviction under Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, which makes it a crime to discuss the Armenian Genocide. Sadly, Mr. Dink's life was taken one year ago on January 19, 2007.

I am proud to cosponsor H. Res. 102, which condemns the assassination of Hrant Dink. This bill urges the Turkish government to continue to investigate and prosecute those responsible for Mr. Dink's murder and to protect the freedom of speech in Turkey by repealing Article 301. The repeal of this Article will ensure that Hrant Dink's legacy will live on and that his death will not have been in vain.

HONORING MARY LOUISE
PLUNKETT

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2008

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute and say thanks to Mary Louise Plunkett one of the most influential people in my life for more than 25 years, and one of the most valued members of the Queens community for more than 50.

I was blessed to meet Mary Lu in my early twenties, when I stopped into the Queens Democratic County Headquarters while running errands for my Uncle Walter. That day was the start of one of the important friendships in my personal and political life.

But, long before Mary Lu became a valued part of my life, she was already a valued and well-established force in Queens County.

Brooklyn-born Mary Lu moved to Jackson Heights in 1949 with her husband, Jack. Mary Lu was quick to engage in her community and church, and we were just as quick to forgive Mary Lu for her Brooklyn past.

Mary Lu's foray into politics started when she joined the Amerind Democratic Club. She went on to volunteer at Queens County Democratic Headquarters, where she became a full time member of the staff in 1956. While working at County headquarters, Mary Lu served some of Queens finest leaders, including Moses Weinstein, Jim Roe and Tom Manton. And, her influence on them and our community was felt by all.

No political event or dinner was held without Mary Lu and her charm. She helped to welcome such dignitaries as Jack Kennedy, TED KENNEDY, Jimmy Carter, Hugh Carey, Ed Koch, Mario Cuomo, and Bill and HILLARY CLINTON in to our Queens family.

Her intelligence, warmth and kindness made all people feel welcome and comfortable.

However, Mary Lu's reach went far beyond local politics. When she was not at County headquarters, she was working to create a better Queens. For example, she hosted an annual fundraiser to help the children of St. Gertrude's Parish in Far Rockaway.

On top of all she does for others, most important to her is her role as mother and grandmother. There is nothing Mary Lu won't or hasn't done for her two children—Steven and Jamie and her three grandchildren—Matthew, Christopher and Caroline.

I have tremendous respect for Mary Lu and all she has accomplished, but as her friend I am most proud of how she has led her family.

In the coming weeks, my fellow friends and colleagues in Queens will gather to honor Mary Lu for her lifetime of service to Queens, New York.

We will applaud her for her charity, wit and political skill. And, I will thank her for being a mentor and friend.

Mary Lu, congratulations on a lifetime of achievements.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

HON. TRENT FRANKS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2008

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, because the end of the hour grows close, I would now come before this body with a sunset memorial. We intend to repeat this from time to time to chronicle the loss of life by abortion on demand in this country.

Madam Speaker, it is January 23, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun sets today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand just today.

Exactly 35 years today, the tragic judicial fiat called *Roe v. Wade* was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million children. Madam Speaker, that is more than 16,000 times the number of innocent lives lost on September 11.

Each of the 4,000 children that we lost today had at least four things in common. They were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. And each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each of their mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Madam Speaker, those noble heroes lying in frozen silence out in Arlington National Cemetery did not die so America could shred her own Constitution, as well as her own children, by the millions. It seems that we are never quite so eloquent as when we decry the genocidal crimes of past generations, those who allowed their courts to strip the black man and the Jew of their constitutional personhood, and then proceeded to murderously desecrate millions of these, God's own children.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to blindness and invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government."

Madam Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here. It is our sworn oath. The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says: "No state shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law."

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the Declaration, not the casual notion, but the Declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. It is who we are.

And yet today, Madam Speaker, in this body we fail to honor that commitment. We fail our

sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 innocent American babies who died without the protection we should have been given them.

Madam Speaker, I believe that this discussion presents this Congress and the American people with two destiny questions.

The first that all of us must ask ourselves is very simple: Does abortion really kill a baby? If the answer to that question is "yes," there is a second destiny question that inevitably follows. And it is this, Madam Speaker: Will we allow ourselves to be dragged by those who have lost their way into a darkness where the light of human compassion has gone out and the predatory survival of the fittest prevails over humanity? Or will America embrace her destiny to lead the world to cherish and honor the God-given miracle of each human life?

Madam Speaker, it has been said that every baby comes with a message, that God has not yet despaired of mankind. And I mourn that those 4,000 messages sent to us today will never be heard. Madam Speaker, I also have not yet despaired. Because tonight maybe someone new, maybe even someone in this Congress, who heard this sunset memorial will finally realize that abortion really does kill a baby, that it hurts mothers more than anyone else, and that nearly 50 million dead children in America is enough. And that America is great enough to find a better way than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Madam Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are numbered and that all too soon each of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on another day yet to come, may that be the day that we hear the cries of the unborn at last. May that be the day we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect the least of these, our tiny American brothers and sisters, from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

This is a sunset memorial, Madam Speaker. It is January 23, 2008, in the land of free and the home of the brave.

NEW TREATMENT FOR HIV/AIDS

HON. MARY BONO MACK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2008

Mrs. BONO MACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the approval of a new treatment that will provide renewed health and hope for people living with HIV/AIDS. On Friday, January 18, 2008, the Food and Drug Administration approved INTELENCE™, for the treatment of HIV infection. Tibotec Therapeutics innovative efforts in developing new, effective treatments for people living with HIV/AIDS should be commended.

We are all aware of the success HIV therapies have had on prolonging and enhancing the quality of life for those infected with HIV/AIDS. As the infected population lives longer and becomes increasingly resistant to current treatment regimens, there is a growing need to focus on access to newer therapies for treatment experienced. HIV drug manufacturers are being challenged to meet the treatment needs of this changing population.