

to destabilize neighborhoods and local economies and helped to revitalize and strengthen neighborhoods.

Named as a tribute to the late Pennsylvania Gov. Robert P. Casey, this award is intended to acknowledge the efforts of individuals who have faithfully invested their time and talents to the betterment of the quality of life in northeastern Pennsylvania and, equally as importantly, to allow others to learn from their service.

Ms. Bovard is a special friend to northeastern Pennsylvania. As executive director of the Scranton Area Foundation, she has provided dynamic leadership to an organization that has served this community as a catalyst for change and as a vital convener of diverse groups passionate about community action.

Throughout her career, she has overseen direct and measurable improvements to our region's health, education, arts, environment, human services and civic affairs.

Although she consistently and humbly credits the foundation for its remarkable success, it is widely known that it is her own kindness, intelligence, compassion and love for this community that have been the key ingredients to its amazing impact on our region.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Jeanne Bovard on this auspicious occasion. Her example and commitment is an inspiration to all whose lives she has touched.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RON MASON

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the accomplishments of Ron Mason as he retires after 29 years as a leader at Michigan State University. I want to thank Ron on behalf of those individuals who have benefited from his time, contributions, and dedication to world-class academics and athletics.

Ron Mason's Michigan State career began with the 1979–80 season when he became head coach of the Spartan hockey team. He became a seven-time CCHA Coach of the Year and led the Spartans to seven regular-season league championships and 10 playoff crowns. In 2001, the conference honored Mason by renaming the CCHA playoff trophy—The Mason Cup—in recognition of his contributions to college hockey and the formation of the league as well as his success behind the bench.

Considered one of the "Founding Fathers" of the CCHA, Ron joined Bowling Green's Jack Vivian and St. Louis University's Bill Selman in establishing a "coaches' league" in 1971. Among his many accomplishments included an NCAA Championship at Michigan State in 1986. His dedication to upholding the values of sportsmanship and integrity at Michigan State University, and his continued work on behalf of the university and its community, is a testament to his strength of character.

On March 18, 1994, a win over Bowling Green established him as the winningest college hockey coach in history. In 2001–02, Ron's final campaign as the Spartan coach, he recorded his unprecedented 900th win as a college hockey coach with a victory over

Ferris State (Oct. 20, 2001). In 2002, Ron was introduced as the 16th athletic director in Michigan State history. During his five-year tenure, State athletic squads have captured 11 conference championships (regular season and postseason combined) and one national championship. In addition, MSU has been represented at the NCAA Championships 72 times, including Final Four/Frozen Four appearances by men's basketball (2005), women's basketball (2005), field hockey (2002 and 2004) and ice hockey (2007).

Ron is also active in a number of local organizations and charities. He recently completed a 4-year term on the Sparrow Hospital Foundation Board and has set up the Ron Mason Fund for Kids that supports the Pediatric Rehabilitation Department, which has raised nearly \$675,000 since 1998. He also served as the honorary chairperson for the Children's Miracle Network, which has raised \$19 million over the last 19 years, and has worked with the Coaches For Kids campaign, which has raised \$5.3 million in the last 7 years for a pediatrics emergency room at Sparrow Hospital. In addition, he served on the committee for the broomball game for the Legal Eagles, which benefited the Boys and Girls Club of Lansing, and spent several years on the Lansing Safety Council. Ron currently is a board member for the Lansing Chamber of Commerce.

For all his career accomplishments, Ron has been inducted into the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame (1994), Lake Superior Sports Hall of Fame (1996) and St. Lawrence Sports Hall of Fame (1999). In addition, the American Hockey Coaches Association honored him with the John Machines Award for his outstanding contributions to hockey in the spring of 2003, and he received the Hobey Baker Memorial Award Foundation's 2004 "Legend of Hockey" award in April 2004.

Therefore Madam Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join me in honoring Ron Mason's exceptional service to students, athletes, and Michigan State University. May he know that his nation is greatly appreciative of his dedication, and wishes him the best in all his future endeavors.

MASTER SERGEANT BRIAN
CREMEANS HONORED WITH
ARMY SOLDIER'S MEDAL

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, It was my distinct privilege this morning to participate in ceremonies here at the Capitol to honor Army MSG Sergeant Brian L. Cremeans with the Soldier's Medal for heroism.

During a 2003 tour of duty in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, Master Sergeant Cremeans, an explosive ordnance disposal technician, was conducting a controlled demolition of 4,000 pounds of high explosives that were captured from the Taliban when he alertly realized that a fire ignited in the demolition pit. Given the amount of explosives, he realized that there was no time to evacuate the area. Master Sergeant Cremeans, without forethought for his own safety, jumped into the demolition pit and

quickly began covering the fire with dirt, extinguishing it before the entire cache of weapons exploded. He then located the fire's propellant, scooped it into a canister and continued to fight more small flash fires until they were all extinguished. His actions saved the lives of 15 Afghans and 4 American soldiers who would have been killed had he not taken those extraordinary actions.

Madam Speaker, Master Sergeant Cremeans's heroic actions were brought to my attention by my constituent Army MAJ Zachary Norsworthy of St. Petersburg, Florida, who was with the unit at the time of this incident. Having personally witnessed Master Sergeant Cremeans' quick thinking and actions, Major Norsworthy nominated him for the Soldier's Award, one of the Army's highest noncombat honors for valor. Unfortunately, the award package was lost by the Army and when time had passed with no action, Major Norsworthy resubmitted the application but was told that the two-year period for submitting an award nomination had passed and it was too late to resubmit. Major Norsworthy promptly contacted me and I contacted the Secretary of the Army who reviewed the case and quickly saw that Master Sergeant Cremeans was deserving of this honor and ordered the awarding of the medal.

This morning in my office, SMA Kenneth Preston officiated as we presented Master Sergeant Cremeans with this long-overdue recognition. Following my remarks, I will submit for the benefit of my colleagues the Army citation and Major Norsworthy's narrative outlining the brave actions of Master Sergeant Cremeans.

Madam Speaker, Master Sergeant Cremeans represents the best our Nation has to offer. He volunteered to serve our Nation in uniform and to protect our freedom and liberty. He is now retired after 22 years of service to the United States and to the Army. Please join me in saying thank you to him for his actions and his lifetime of service.

CITATION

To all who shall see these presents, greeting: this is to certify that the President of the United States of America, authorized by act of Congress, July 2, 1926, has awarded the Soldier's Medal to (Then) Sergeant First Class Brian L. Cremeans, United States Army, for heroism on 6 May 2003 in Meynemah, Afghanistan. Given under my hand in the City of Washington on this 30th day of October 2007.

REUBEN D. JONES,
the Adjutant General.
PETE GEREN,
Secretary of the Army.

The President of the United States of America, authorized by an Act of Congress, July 2, 1926, has awarded the Soldier's Medal to Sergeant First Class Brian L. Cremeans, United States Army, for heroism: not involving actual conflict with an armed enemy on 6 May 2003, in Meynemah, Afghanistan. As enemy munitions were being placed in a demolition pit, Sergeant Cremeans saw a glimpse of smoke billow from the pit. The demolition pit was covered with approximately four inches of explosive propellant (white phosphorous) at the base that, if ignited, would detonate the 4000 pounds of high explosives rigged for demolition. Without hesitation, he immediately leapt onto the side of the twenty-foot deep pit, which caused dirt to smother the flame that had begun to build. Sergeant Cremeans' actions

provided him enough time to gain control of the flame and further extinguish it. His attention to detail and situational awareness enabled him to recognize the difference between dust and smoke as the pit was being loaded with mortar and tank rounds. Sergeant Cremeans' quick reaction prevented the propellant from igniting, which would have caused the munitions to prematurely detonate, thereby saving the lives of the fifteen Afghan Nationals and four U.S. servicemen. Master Sergeant Cremeans' courage and concern for his fellow Soldiers and Afghan Nationals were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.

NARRATIVE

On May 6, 2003, Sergeant First Class Brian L. Cremeans was serving as the Senior Explosive Ordnance and Demolition (EOD) Technician to destroy the largest cache ever discovered in Afghanistan. The cache amounted to over 350,000 pounds worth of High Explosives. Over 4000 pounds worth of High Explosives was loaded into one of two demolition pits by fifteen Afghans with the close supervision of a fellow EOD technician. At this point, the floor of the pit was covered ankle deep with propellant from previous demolition shots. SFC Cremeans, 1LT Patton and 1LT Norsworthy were standing on top of the pit as the Afghans and one of the EOD technicians were loading the final mortar rounds into the pit. As he was watching the pit, a billow of smoke appeared at the bottom of the 20 foot deep pit. SFC Cremeans yelled, "Fire" and before 1LT Patton could yell burning, SFC Cremeans had dove into the pit yelling fire. As he was sliding down to the bottom of the pit a flame erupted and he slid into it causing his body to push enough dirt into the flame to momentarily smolder it. This act gave him enough time to put more dirt onto the flames and gather up loose propellant surrounding the site of ignition, thus allowing him to gain control of the situation. He immediately gathered up the white phosphorous residue that had been unearthed and the surrounding propellant and scooped them into a canister. He stayed there extinguishing the ambitious little flames until the threat was eliminated. All non essential personnel were loaded on the truck. He then calmly set the ring main and charges on the pit. He then finished by arming the M-60 fuse igniters on the ring main and was the last man to get into the revving truck. In summary, Sergeant First Class Brian L. Cremeans' courageous selfless act and impeccable attention to detail saved the lives of fifteen Afghans and four United States Army servicemen. SFC Cremeans courageous selfless act richly deserves the award of the Soldiers Medal. Through his courageous selfless efforts and impeccable attention to detail, Sergeant First Class Brian L. Cremeans reflected great credit upon himself, the United States Army and the Department of Defense.

GREAT CATS AND RARE CANIDS ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 19, 2008

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1464, the Great Cats and Rare Canids Act of 2007.

As an original cosponsor of this bill and co-chair of the International Conservation Cau-

cus, I would like to thank my fellow Caucus co-chair, Representative UDALL, for his leadership on this issue.

Endangered species such as lions, cheetahs, leopards, jaguars, and Ethiopian Wolves are not just remarkable creatures, but they play an important role in eco-tourism throughout Africa, bringing in much needed revenue to very poor countries.

Unfortunately, many of these endangered animals are losing their race for survival, as habitats become compromised and poachers decimate populations. This bill will be an important tool for reversing these trends.

Importantly, this bill provides assistance for programs to preserve and protect these remarkable animals. Multinational species funds, such as this one, have enjoyed tremendous success and have played a vital role in the protection of wildlife. On average, private donors have matched 3–1 every U.S. government dollar contributed to conservation programs.

In other words, when the United States leads in conservation, others follow. As the mission of the international Conservation Caucus states, the U.S. has the opportunity to advance the protection of the worldwide environment. This bill is true to that mission.

DYSTONIA AWARENESS WEEK

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to Dystonia Awareness Week, designated by the Commonwealth of Kentucky for June 1–7, 2008.

Dystonia is a neurological disorder that creates painful, involuntary muscle spasms throughout the body. The public knows little about this disorder, afflicting as many as 1 million people in North America alone.

The causes of dystonia are still largely unknown within the medical community. The physical manifestations of dystonia can be debilitating and the lack of understanding among the general public often creates isolation and psychological distress to those who suffer from the disorder.

The Dystonia Association of Kentucky, Inc., was formed by patients, families, and friends to help one another and to seek a cure for their condition. Widespread public support for their efforts is essential.

I urge my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in supporting the goals of Dystonia Awareness Week and urge all Americans to gain a deeper understanding of this disorder and those who are afflicted by it.

THE PUNGO STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, 25 years ago, in the rural area of Virginia Beach, Virginia, known as Pungo, several locals decided

that the rest of the community should be aware of Pungo's delicious treasure: its strawberries. In 1983, locals began an annual festival, which at the time drew 2,500 people. In the years to follow, the festival's attendance grew to roughly 120,000 people each year. Today, the festival hosts many family-oriented activities, including a carnival, youth art show, and a multi-million dollar military display.

In 1985, it was deemed necessary to establish a festival board in order to accommodate the festival's growth as well as establish themselves as a nonprofit organization. To this end, the festival gives back to the community in the form of scholarships for students and makes contributions to other community-oriented programs.

To this date, the Pungo Strawberry Festival has donated over \$550,000 to the community. I want to take this moment to recognize the people behind this festival, some of whom have been involved since the beginning, and to inform my colleagues that this year the festival will be celebrating its 25th anniversary with, as always, an emphasis on the men and women serving in the military. The theme this year will be "Celebrating 25 years of Freedom, Family, and Fun." I support the community of Pungo in their efforts and look forward to attending the festival this year.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING MARY C. POLILLI FOR BEING TUSCARAWAS COUNTY'S OLDEST VOTER

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Mary C. Polilli is 102 years young; and

Whereas, she continues to make voting a priority; and

Whereas, Mary C. Polilli continues to be a positive influence on the lives of others and contributes to her state and country; and

Whereas, she strives to continue her good works of public service and inspire others to work for the many freedoms guaranteed by our democratic form of government; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with her friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend and thank Mary C. Polilli for her contributions to her community and country.

IN RECOGNITION OF COLONEL ANNE L. DAVIS, USA

HON. ROB BISHOP

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding military commander in the United States Army, Colonel Anne L. Davis.

As outgoing Commander of the Tooele Army Depot, TEAD, Utah, Colonel Davis has demonstrated exceptional meritorious service