

to restoring full diplomatic relations between these neighboring states.

Madam Speaker, I also want to congratulate Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for her leadership in helping to move the process forward. In this connection, I would like to submit an October 14, 2009 Washington Post editorial entitled, "Opening a Border." The article does an excellent job of detailing the deft diplomatic work of Secretary Clinton to assist Turkey and Armenia in taking this historic step.

As the article states, the rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia is critical to the United States since it promotes stability in the Caucasus region and could provide new avenues for gas and oil export to the West.

In closing, I commend Secretary Clinton and her colleagues at the State Department and offer my full support for their valiant efforts. The protocols have been sent to the parliaments of the respective countries. I hope they will be ratified quickly and open the door to a new era of diplomacy and friendship.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 14, 2009]

OPENING A BORDER

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton executed some deft diplomacy last weekend as the leaders of Turkey and Armenia signed a potentially historic deal to establish normal diplomatic relations and reopen their borders. We say "potentially" because there are some big obstacles to implementing the accord, which we'll come back to. But Ms. Clinton helped to ensure that the signing ceremony in Zurich went forward after four hours of last-minute mediation. Not for the first time in her short tenure, she proved capable of overcoming an impasse and teasing out of a favorable outcome of the United States.

The rapprochement between these two nations matters to the United States for a number of reasons. It could help stabilize the volatile Caucasus region, open the way for new corridors for the export of gas and oil to the West, ease Russian's political domination of Armenia and remove a major irritant from U.S. relations with Turkey. The Obama administration worked diligently to promote the accord: Ms. Clinton made 29 phone calls to the leaders of the two nations. President Obama played a part by sidestepping a campaign promise to formally recognize the mass killing of Armenians by Turks during World War I as "genocide."

The genocide issue—and the refusal of some in the American Armenian community to compromise on it—still threaten to undo the deal. The opening of the border, closed since 1993, would be a huge benefit to impoverished and landlocked Armenia. But there is resistance to a provision of the accords that would set up a joint commission to study the study of the massacres. Opponents say this could give Turkey, which denies that a genocide took place, a means to filibuster the issue—and to stop the annual attempt by some in the U.S. Congress to pass a resolution declaring that genocide occurred. In fact, the issue is one best left to the two countries; that several U.S. Armenian groups have endorsed the accord is a victory for common sense.

A more formidable obstacle to the deal may be Armenian's unresolved dispute with another neighbor, Azerbaijan, over the ethnically Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is occupied by Armenian along with neighboring Azeri territory. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan took the courageous step of declining to make the settlement of this "frozen conflict" a precondition to his accord with Armenia—thereby inviting the wrath of Azer-

baijan, which is an ally and energy supplier to Turkey. But Mr. Erdogan has said—most recently last Sunday—that his government will not go forward with the deal unless Armenia executes at last a partial withdrawal from Azerbaijan. That would be a tough step for Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan and require considerable international support: more delicate work for Ms. Clinton.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ROBERT BROWN

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring the memory of Robert Brown, the first African American mayor of Orange, New Jersey, which is in my congressional district.

Mr. Brown is remembered by family, friends, and colleagues as a big thinker, a role model and an excellent presenter. He was born in 1947 in Wetumpka, Alabama, but was raised in Albany, New York, where he was described as a stellar student and athlete. He earned a football scholarship to Central Connecticut State College. After college he moved to East Orange and received a law degree in 1973 from Rutgers University in Newark.

Mr. Brown moved to Washington, D.C., where he worked as counsel on the Judiciary Committee for the House of Representatives during the Watergate hearings. He moved back to East Orange in 1976, and served as a municipal prosecutor and as the Essex County public defender before opening a private practice. He was widely recognized for his outstanding oration ability, his skill as a lawyer, and his strong commitment to community service.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his son, Remington, and brother, Raymond.

As friends and family gather to remember Robert Brown, we are reminded of the tremendous difference that one person can make in the lives of others. I know my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives join me in honoring the memory of Mr. Brown and in paying tribute to this outstanding person who meant so much to all who knew him and to the entire city of Orange.

HONORING EBRAHIM ASHABI

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Detective Ebrahim Ashabi, an 11-year veteran of the Long Beach, California, Police Department. I applaud his contributions to our community and wish him much future success.

Detective Ashabi's unique background has provided him with the tools to excel in his chosen profession. Born in Iran as a Shiite Muslim, Detective Ashabi lived through the Iranian Islamic Revolution of the late 1970s as well as the Iran-Iraq war. In 1982, Detective Ashabi fled from Iran into the Kurdish area of North-

ern Iraq and then into Turkey. After a few months in Europe, he emigrated to the United States, where he lived in New York and Washington, DC.

In 1990, Detective Ashabi moved to the Los Angeles area and in 1997 joined the Long Beach Police Department. Detective Ashabi now serves in the Long Beach Police Department's Office of Counter Terrorism, protecting the citizens of Long Beach and the United States from domestic and foreign homeland security threats. He is responsible for analyzing, collecting, and investigating criminal intelligence as it relates to terrorism, organized crime, and extremist activities. Detective Ashabi shared his expertise earlier this year at a first response training conference and exposition for law enforcement, military, security, corrections, and federal agencies. He presented as a keynote speaker and presented "A Brief History of Radical Islam," to his colleagues. Detective Ashabi also provides invaluable assistance in investigations with other local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, including the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force.

For the past five years, Detective Ashabi has trained law enforcement officers and his expertise is a tremendous asset to our community. Detective Ashabi holds a bachelor's degree in Public Administration from the University of La Verne and is currently working on his master's degree at California State University, Long Beach.

In closing, Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring the achievements of Detective Ebrahim Ashabi and wishing him continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARY SHIRAH UPON HER RETIREMENT

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Mary Shirah, a Northwest Florida community leader who is retiring after fifteen years of public service as the Director of the Pregnancy Resource Center in Milton, Florida. Mary spent her career serving others, and I am proud to honor her dedication and service.

Born in 1927, Mary Shirah was a Navy wife. She married her husband, Henry, in 1946, and was married for 62 years until her husband passed away last year. Her family eventually settled in the Pensacola, Florida area, and found a home in the Pea Ridge community. In 1968, Mary went to work for Tupperware where a co-worker suggested that she volunteer at the Alpha Center in Pensacola, a resource center for pregnant women.

After working with the Alpha Center and encouraging her Women's Ministry Group at her church to participate, Mary decided to investigate the need for a similar center in Santa Rosa County. She went on to join the committee to find a director for the center and after much searching, the committee chose Mary to serve as the Executive Director. The Pregnancy Resource Center of Milton opened on March 20, 1995. Until her retirement, Mary has served as the center's sole executive director. Under her leadership, the PRC serves an average of 300 families each year.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am honored to recognize Mary Shirah for her service to Northwest Florida. Mary has worked tirelessly on behalf of the women of Santa Rosa County for the last 15 years. My wife Vicki and I wish all the best for her and her family, including sons Henry, Richard, and John, and her six grandchildren, as they embark on this next journey in their lives.

IN MEMORY OF MR. MICHAEL J.
BONASERA

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I inform the House of the death of Mr. Michael J. Bonasera of Warren, Ohio.

Michael J. Bonasera Sr. was born April 13, 1915 in Buffington, Pa., the son of Pasquale and Ninfa Danca Bonasera.

Michael was a 1934 graduate of Hickory High School and came to Warren in 1942 from Sharon, Pa., where he had lived since 1920.

He was a veteran of WWII, having served in the Army Transportation Corps., and attaining the rank of Sergeant. His military service included tours of duty in England and the Philippines.

Michael retired in 1980 from American Welding, where he was a machine operator for 32 years. He was an award-winning machinist, and was one of the first machinists to machine parts for jet and rocket engines. He was a great teacher and was able to pass on his vast knowledge to future generations of machinists.

He was a member of St. Mary's Church, and enjoyed traveling, golf, tending to his garden, and music, and had taught accordion lessons for 45 years. Most of all, he enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife of 67 years, Lena R. Maggiano Bonasera, whom he married Oct. 10, 1942; a daughter, Janet M. (Charles) Richards of Warren; two sons, Michael J. (Susan) Bonasera Jr. of Seattle and Atty. Thomas J. (Julie) Bonasera of Columbus; 14 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and a son-in-law, Dan Matthews of Coos Bay, Ore.

He was preceded in death by a daughter, Mary Lee Matthews; a brother, Charles Bonasera; and his sisters, Constance LaMagro, Grace Ciolfi, Sunda Sebastian, Josephine Roman, Rose Russo and Mary Welch.

Calling hours were yesterday from 4 to 7 p.m. and this morning from 9 to 9:30 a.m. at the Peter Rossi & Son Memorial Chapel.

Burial will be at All Souls Cemetery.

The family requests that memorial contributions be made to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, 26210 Emery Road, Suite 307, Cleveland, OH 44128.

EFFINGHAM ST. ANTHONY STATE
GOLF CHAMPIONS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of a talented group of student-athletes from Effingham, Illinois.

The Effingham St. Anthony boys golf team took state championship honors this month at the Illinois High School Association's finals at Prairie Vista Golf Course in Bloomington. The squad entered the final day tied with a competitive Mt. Carmel team, but St. Anthony's jumped out to an early lead in the final round and held on to clinch the title.

I want to congratulate Coach Phil Zaccari for his work with the team. But most of all, I want to congratulate the 2009 state champion boys golf squad from Effingham St. Anthony: Michael McHugh, Michael Koester, Derek Rohlfing, Kit Koerner, Lewis Martin and James Jansen. They have represented themselves, their school and their community in an exemplary fashion and I want to join with all the members of this House in wishing them continued success in their athletic and academic endeavors.

CONGREGATION BEIT KODESH

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. McCOTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Congregation Beit Kodesh, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

In 1958, a small number of intuitive individuals started hosting Shabbat services at the Clarenceville Central Elementary School. This same year, over 200 people attended High Holiday services at the Botsford Inn in Farmington. The following year, the Livonia Jewish Congregation was formally organized. Over the next few years, the Congregation met at several different locations until negotiation with the Jewish Welfare Foundation allowed them to move into the May and Samuel Cohn Building.

Importantly, the Congregation has been served by three Rabbis over the years: Rabbi Nathaniel Steinberg (one year), Rabbi Martin Gordon (twenty-two years) and Rabbi Craig Allen (seven years). When no Rabbi is available, the lay people of the congregation carry out services. Currently, Rabbi Jason Miller, the associate director of the University of Michigan Hillel Foundation in Ann Arbor, is the Rabbinic Advisor.

In 1990, the congregation officially changed its name to Congregation Beit Kodesh in order to recognize members who live throughout the Tri-County area. Two years ago, they combined efforts with Bet Chaverim and began to hold Sunday School classes and activities together at Congregation Beit Kodesh. Notably, students play an important role in these congregations. For example, students attend regular Bar and Bat Mitzvah classes and volunteer at Yad Ezra. In addition, they contribute actively in the community by participating in

the Matzos Factory at the Junior Community College, the annual Penny Harvest, and assisting the elderly with various projects. Finally, the synagogue also has an active Sisterhood, which sends relief packages to our soldiers and seeks to advance tolerance in the community.

In addition to being the only conservative synagogue in Western Wayne County, this distinguished congregation was the first in Metropolitan Detroit to elect a woman as president. While receiving very little financial assistance or recognition from the Jewish community, they remain very active and play an important role in the community.

Madam Speaker, for fifty years, Congregation Beit Kodesh has stood as a tribute to the strong efforts of Metropolitan Detroit's Jewish community. As their members commemorate this tremendous milestone, they embody a legacy of distinction and determination. While observing their Jewish customs, this small but significant family synagogue will continue to contribute to the community. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in commemorating Congregation Beit Kodesh and recognizing their contributions to our community and country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was unavoidably absent Friday morning, October 23, on very urgent business. Had I been present for the eleven votes which occurred Friday, I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 3619, rollcall vote No. 812; and I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 3619, rollcall vote No. 813.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DON
WEEKS

HON. PAUL TONKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, residents of New York's Capital Region have been blessed to wake up each morning to the voice of long-time radio host Don Weeks. Since 1980, Don has hosted the WGY morning radio show, entertaining listeners with a mix of comedy and insightful interviews, all delivered with a friendly, neighborly charm.

Throughout the years Don has always put the community first, lending his talent to local fund drives and other special events, from restocking food pantries to emceeding the annual Red Cross Hometown Heroes Awards breakfast. He has been honored with several New York State Broadcaster of the Year awards, and a Marconi Award from the National Association of Broadcasters.

We'd like to congratulate Don on the recent announcement that he will be inducted into the New York State Broadcasting Hall of Fame. It is a fitting honor for a lifelong Capital Region resident who has dedicated his life to informing and entertaining others, and making our community a better place in which to live.