

California, and after retiring from the Air Force, he became President of Air North in Vermont, and then president of Dolphin Airways in Tampa, Florida. Dick was an avid entrepreneur and started several additional businesses in Florida including a gift shop, a sheet metal business, and an interior landscaping company.

Our hearts are with Dick's wife, Dawn, and his children and grandchildren in this time of sorrow. I hope my colleagues will join me honoring this remarkable man who was a lifelong patriot dedicated to his country and his family. His humility, kindness, and compassion continue to inspire those who knew him and he will be greatly missed in our community.

IN SUPPORT OF U.S. SOUTHERN
COMMAND'S EFFORTS IN EL
SALVADOR

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the humanitarian assistance efforts of the U.S. Southern Command, whose headquarters is in south Florida.

Last week, El Salvador was hit with torrential rain storms, causing massive flooding and mudslides that devastated parts of that country.

Nearly 200 people were killed. Many thousands more were left stranded and in immediate need of assistance.

The very next day—the same day our Nation paused to celebrate Veterans Day—U.S. troops deployed nearby in Honduras boarded helicopters bound for the affected areas. These troops spent their Veterans' Day partnering with their counterparts in El Salvador, supporting them in saving lives and fulfilling a mission of cooperation that continues to serve our Nation well.

In just four days our troops distributed more than 217,000-pounds of aid to villages completely isolated due to damaged roads and bridges. They brought food, water, milk, clothing and other emergency necessities.

I understand that these airlifts were the only source of lifesaving supplies for the stranded village.

So, Madam Speaker, I rise to offer my thoughts and prayers to the people of El Salvador, and to also express my appreciation and admiration for the members of U.S. Southern Command.

HONORING JUDGE SOLOMON
CASSEB, JR.

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. GONZALEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak of sad tidings. The south Texas legal community lost a great leader and a great friend on October 16, 2009, when Judge Solomon Casseb, Jr. passed away at the age of 94.

A native San Antonian, Judge Casseb graduated from Central Catholic High School and St. Mary's University before earning his law degree at the University of Texas Law School in 1938. After several years in private practice, he enlisted as a private in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II, and was honorably discharged as a Major by the time he returned from overseas. He then practiced law until his appointment and two subsequent elections to serve as a Judge of the 57th District Court in Bexar County. He presided over many important cases during his career, though none may be more famous than 1984's Texaco case, which resulted in what was the largest award of damages in history.

During his time on the bench, Judge Casseb was repeatedly honored by his colleagues in the legal community time and again as an outstanding jurist, and the endowed Judge Solomon Casseb Jr. Research Professorship in Law at the University of Texas Law School stands as a tribute to the esteem in which he was held.

Before and after he obtained senior status in 1985, Judge Casseb worked to improve the lives of the people of South Texas outside of his official duties as well. He was a co-trustee of the Lamar Bruni Vergara Trust and was a bold and diligent advocate for the poorest citizens of his community.

Solomon Casseb Jr. was a great judge, a great friend, and a great man. His family, friends, and all those who had the privilege to know him will miss him deeply.

THIS THANKSGIVING IN HONOR OF
ALL THE ARMED FORCES AND
THEIR FAMILIES

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I submit a heartfelt poem penned by Capitol Guide Albert Caswell, entitled "This Thanksgiving" in honor of all the members of the Armed Forces and their families who are separated by war and death this Thanksgiving. Our thoughts go out to all of them this Thanksgiving. Bless them all.

This is a special Thanksgiving as we recognize the success of Cold War veterans from Korea to Vietnam and across the world who achieved victory on the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall inspired by Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, and Pope John Paul II working with Lech Walesa of Poland and Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia.

The spirit of Ronald Reagan is kept alive by Young America's Foundation preservation of the Reagan Ranch, Rancho del Cielo (Ranch of the Sky) in California.

THIS THANKSGIVING

This
Thanksgiving . . .
Be thankful, when you're at home . . .
With your family all at peace, remember all
of those so all alone . . .
Who on battlefields can not be home . . .
Families at dinner tables with tears
in eyes . . .
And all of those who upon battlefields of
honor died . . .

The ones who so live without the ones, they
so can not live without . . . who now so
cry . . .

And all of those children, whose daddies and
mommies, can't wipe those tears from
their eyes . . .

And not watch their children grow and smell
that pumpkin pie . . .

The ones who but gave, That Last Full Measure!

One's Life, The Greatest of All Treasures
. . .

The ones without arms and legs . . .

As their fine eyes they gave . . .

Showing us all, of what a hero is made!

So Few, but for so many . . .

Have carried that load . . .

Have bore all of the heartache so . . .

And when you watch that touchdown
run . . .

While, holding your loved ones . . . having
all that fun . . .

But, let your thoughts to them so run . . .

The ones who died, for what is true . . .

And all of those out on the front, the face of
death must so view . . .

And the loved ones at home, each day who
wait by the door . . . the phone . . .

Bow down now upon your knees . . .

And ask our Lord God, so please . . . to bless
all of these . . . The Families . . .

Who with such heartache, and will never see
another day of peace . . .

And as you say grace . . .

Say a prayer for all of those Heroes of such
splendid grace . . .

Who did not so hesitate . . .

And all of those families, whose loved ones
for them now so wait . . .

Who sit, with one less spot at the Thanks-
giving table set . . .

Be ever thankful, for what they gave . . . and
have to yet . . .

On this day of days . . .

Give Thanks, Be Thankful for all of those
who gave!

This Thanksgiving . . .

PRAISING NEBRASKA'S HONOR
FLIGHTS

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, a week ago, our Nation celebrated Veterans Day. I rise today to honor a couple who have done a great service for Nebraska's Veterans.

Bill and Evonne Williams have organized seven Heartland Honor Flights which made it possible for 1,454 World War II veterans to come to Washington D.C. in 2008 and 2009 to receive the recognition they deserve.

Veterans participating were able to visit the World War II memorial, as well as other points of interest here in the Nation's capital.

I know their visit to Washington was a trip of a lifetime for each and every one of them, and I know I speak for all of us when I thank them for their service to our country. Bill and Evonne also deserve our thanks for making these moments possible. Without their dedication and commitment, we would not have been able to honor these men and women who have helped make our Nation great.

HONORING THE 102ND INFANTRY
AND THE 250TH ENGINEER COM-
PANY OF THE CONNECTICUT
ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the deployment of 102nd Infantry Battalion and the 250th Engineer Company. On November 15, 2009, Connecticut sent off 700 soldiers from the two Connecticut National Guard units to be deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

The logistical and tactical work that the Connecticut soldiers will do in Iraq and Afghanistan is critical to the Nation's success in the two conflicts. The 102nd Infantry will deploy to Afghanistan to partner with the Afghan security forces to assist, train and mentor the Afghan Army, Police, and Border Police forces in order to strengthen, stabilize and legitimize the Government of Afghanistan. The 250th Engineer Company will work in Iraq to provide bridging support for theater mobility, and to ensure rapid emplacement of bridging assets in the event that routes in their area of operations become impassable.

The Connecticut National Guard currently has nearly 500 Soldiers and Airmen mobilized and deployed to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan in support of counterterrorism missions. This is the largest single deployment of Connecticut Army National Guardsmen since the Korean War and will bring our total number of deployed Soldiers and Airmen to 1,200.

The 250th Engineer Company, commanded by Captain Charles Taylor of Hamden is based in my district out of New London. The unit's motto is "No Bridge too Far," which refers to its primary mission of supporting our combat forces by literally building bridges over otherwise inaccessible terrain and rivers. In Iraq, the 250th will be a part of the drawdown of our forces and equipment there—a massive, historic undertaking in the history of our military.

This will be no easy feat—about 3.1 million pieces of equipment of all sorts, over 100,000 vehicles, military and civilian, 24,000 short tons of ammunition, over 120,000 containers of supplies, and around 120,000 U.S. military personnel that have to be moved out of Iraq, mostly through Kuwait.

This past weekend, I had the honor of joining many of my colleagues in the Connecticut Congressional Delegation, state officials and Adjutant General Thaddeus Martin in a moving and well attended "send off" ceremony for the 102nd and 250th. The ceremony, of course, was one of mixed emotions. On the one hand, these men and women represent the best of what our State and Nation has to offer. They have trained and worked to be the very best at what they do—and we are so proud of them. However, on the other hand, Connecticut is sending its own to do a hard and dangerous job.

The eyes of Connecticut and the families of these soldiers are on them, eagerly awaiting their safe return. But soon, the eyes of the world will be on them. And all of us in Connecticut will be so proud to watch the work that they do. Their missions in Iraq and Af-

ghanistan are critical to America's mission to secure and keep the peace in the world's most troubled regions, and all of us from Connecticut are proud to say these dedicated men and women are our fellow citizens."

I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in honoring these men and women who defend our Nation every day. We thank them for their service and look forward to welcoming them home again after a successful deployment.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES EDWARD
MCNEIL

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, the City of Mobile recently lost a dear friend with the passing of Charles Edward McNeil, and I rise today to pay tribute to his memory. Mr. McNeil was a remarkable businessman, active citizen and committed U.S. Army Air Force pilot. He will be remembered by all as a man devoted to his family, his faith, and his country.

A graduate of Marion Military Institute, Mr. McNeil later attended the University of Alabama before volunteering for the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II. A decorated pilot, he was captured behind enemy lines after being shot down by the Germans and remained in captivity until the end of the war.

Coming home with two bronze stars, the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster and two Purple Hearts, Mr. McNeil began a life of entrepreneurship that was as impressive as his dedication to his country.

His resume included a career with Protective Life Insurance Company, co-founder and director of Commercial Guaranty Bank, board member of SouthTrust Bank, and founding co-partner in the McNeil, Jackson and Ahrens Financial group. He also held membership in the Million Dollar Roundtable since 1946. But that was just the beginning.

Mr. McNeil also found the time to serve his community as president of the Mobile County School Board for no less than 17 years and he maintained active membership in many philanthropic, civic clubs and service agency boards.

An avid sportsman and outdoorsman, Mr. McNeil exemplified the indomitable spirit of our Gulf Coast community. His love of life and tireless devotion to uplifting the lives of so many around him will be missed.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a dedicated and generous community leader and a dear friend. Our condolences go out to his wife, Evelyn Adelia Bell; his children, Millie McNeil, Marilyn Peyronni, Charles McNeil and John McNeil; and his seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Mobile—and indeed our entire state—lost a true leader and our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

RECOGNIZING IDA FIORELLA FOR
HER UPCOMING BIRTHDAY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Ida Fiorella, a longtime Buffalo resident who will be celebrating her 95th birthday this December 26th.

Ida was born in Buffalo's West Side on December 26th, 1914. The daughter of Italian immigrants Joseph Pizzuto and Maria Cordaro Pizzuto, Ida attended Buffalo's public schools and went on to work in her family-owned grocery store at the intersection of Prospect and Virginia located in Buffalo, New York.

Ida's brother Russell Pizzuto, now deceased, served honorably and was wounded in World War II; he was the father of six children.

Ida and her family were parishioners at St. Anthony's Church where she married her husband, Vincent (Jimmy) Fiorella on November 11th, 1940. Together Ida and Jim raised their three children, Russell, Bonnie, and Joseph, on Buffalo's West Side. Their marriage spanned 50 years until Jim passed away on March 19th, 1991.

When her children were grown, Ida went on to a successful career in retail sales. She spent a number of years at Hengerer's downtown, then at the Sample Shop on Hertel Avenue, and finally at Joseph's on Delaware Avenue, all located in Buffalo.

Ida is a wonderful homemaker, avid Italian cook, and premier pie maker. One of her proudest accomplishments was encouraging all of her children to go on to receive a college education.

Ida loves meeting and entertaining people and is very independent. Even to this day she does all of her own cooking, baking, and only stopped driving after her car was no longer road worthy. Ida still attends church and is a very devoted Catholic.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Ms. Ida Fiorella as she approaches the celebration of her 95th birthday. I congratulate Ida for her many contributions to her family, friends, and community and wish her many more years of happiness.

HONORING THE 100TH
ANNIVERSARY OF DRAUGAS

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Draugas newspaper on its 100th year of daily publication.

Draugas was founded in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in 1909 as a Lithuanian language Roman Catholic paper and moved to Chicago in 1916. The location changed a few times in its early years, but Draugas has been located at 4545 W. 63rd St. in Chicago since 1957. Many Lithuanian-Americans live on the Southwest Side of Chicago and in the surrounding suburbs I represent, and they greatly appreciate the reporting and cultural commentary that Draugas provides.