

contests. Although still young, Fabini has decided to retire from playing professional football so that he can focus on his family and a promising future. Jason Fabini has four sons: Hunter, Jacob, John Michael, and Jordan and is the son of Tom Fabini and Madeline Lombardo of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

PROCLAMATION ISSUED TO MS.  
MARY ANNE SHARP

**HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I would like to submit this proclamation which I issued to Ms. Mary Anne Sharp.

Whereas, Forty-five years ago a virtuous woman of God accepted her calling to serve as Director of the Decatur Civic Chorus in Decatur, Georgia; and

Whereas, Ms. Mary Anne Sharp began her educational career in Decatur, Georgia, attending Decatur public schools, Oglethorpe University and Emory University; and

Whereas, this phenomenal woman has shared her time and talents with the citizens of DeKalb County, Georgia and the world through directing and producing concerts that continue to touch the lives of many; and

Whereas, Ms. Sharp is a cornerstone in our community that has enhanced the lives of thousands for the betterment of our District and Nation; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Ms. Mary Anne Sharp on her 45th Anniversary as Director of the Decatur Civic Chorus and to congratulate her on this milestone;

Now therefore, I, Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr. do hereby proclaim December 13, 2009 as Ms. Mary Anne Sharp Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 13th day of December, 2009.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ADAM SMITH**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, on Monday, December 14, 2009, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 969 (on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 779, as amended) and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 970 (on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 942, as amended).

MS. MARIAN WILSON-SYLVESTRE

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary accomplishments of Ms. Marian Wilson-Sylvestre, who has dutifully served the American Red

Cross, Bay Area Chapter and touched the lives of those in need for nearly 30 years. Her work has affected countless people beset by fires, floods and other disasters, and has ensured that volunteers and communities throughout the 9th Congressional District are ready and resilient in the face of adversity.

Ms. Wilson-Sylvestre has been involved in community-building, volunteerism, education and healing for the length of her career. After attending Columbia University in New York City, Ms. Wilson-Sylvestre received a Master of Social Work at New York's Adelphi University.

Her career in alleviating affliction and pain for others began at the Payne Whitney Psychiatric Clinic at New York Hospital, where she observed and aided patients as a Psychiatric Assistant. Next, her skills in social work and teaching brought her to the Cardinal McCloskey Home and School for Children where she worked with foster children.

In 1978, after arriving in the Bay Area, Ms. Wilson-Sylvestre served Bayview Hunter's Point Mental Health Clinic as a child and family therapist, and also began teaching at San Francisco Community College. Her career with the Bay Area Chapter of the American Red Cross began when she became Director of Project New Pride in 1980. For the next 29 years, she worked her way up through the ranks of the American Red Cross, both fulfilling and exceeding her duties as Case Work Supervisor, Regional Manager, County Executive, and, for the last 14 years, Senior Executive Officer.

Marian has truly utilized leadership, skill, dedication and a penchant for compassion in her life's work, and I am certain she will continue to do so in her future endeavors. As member of many quality organizations, including the National Association of Social Workers, Rotary Club of Oakland, the California Personnel and Guidance Association, the East Bay Women's Political Action Committee, and the boards of City of Oakland Emergency Management, Travelers Aid Society and Allen Temple Baptist Church Health Ministry, Ms. Wilson-Sylvestre has served the community in innumerable ways.

Her work has been celebrated throughout the 9th Congressional District, and beyond, including an award from the National Institute of Mental Health, the Tiffany Award for Management Excellence, a 2002 Congressional Recognition Award, the 1990 National HIV/AIDS Cultural Diversity Award, being named the 2002 Honoree for Black Women Organized for Political Action, and the Oakland Unified School District's recurring honor of Principal for a Day.

On behalf of California's 9th Congressional District, I salute you, Marian Wilson-Sylvestre, for a successful career of service and your unwavering commitment to others. I extend my heartfelt congratulations on your retirement, and I wish you the very best.

HONORING THE CONNECTICUT  
COUNCIL OF SMALL TOWNS

**HON. JOE COURTNEY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Connecticut Council of

Small Towns (COST) for celebrating its 35th anniversary. Several Connecticut town leaders founded COST in 1975 to provide a strong voice for the state's smaller municipalities in both our State's and the Nation's capital.

COST is a grassroots advocacy organization comprised of nearly 120 member municipalities. The organization offers valuable information and training resources to help municipal leaders meet the challenges they face as chief executives of Connecticut's smaller non-metro and suburban areas. It is the only organization dedicated solely to the interests of Connecticut's small suburban and rural municipalities.

Through meetings, conferences, and events, COST brings together the leaders of small towns with legislators to foster discussion about issues that are most important to Connecticut's small communities. The organization provides information to towns regarding public policy and pending legislation, and how they will affect small towns and their citizens.

COST members benefit from connecting with other municipal leaders across the State, sharing ideas, and discussing the similar challenges that they face. Participating municipalities save money by working collectively to advocate for State and Federal aid to towns in Connecticut.

I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in honoring the Connecticut Council of Small Towns in celebrating its anniversary. Many of COST's member towns reside within my district in eastern Connecticut and highly regard the organization for providing a voice for them in all levels of government. We thank COST for its service and look forward to working with the organization in the future to help Connecticut's communities succeed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately last night and earlier today I was unable to cast my votes on H. Res. 779, H. Res. 942, H. Res. 894, H.R. 1517, and H.R. 3978 and wish the record to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Last night, I met with constituents of mine in a town hall forum at the Prairie Winds Retirement Center in Urbana, Illinois and I was unable to arrive in Washington, DC to cast my votes.

Had I been present on rollcall No. 969 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res. 779, Recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Runaway Prevention Month, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present on rollcall No. 970 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res. 942, Commending the Real Salt Lake soccer club for winning the 2009 Major League Soccer Cup, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present on rollcall No. 971 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res. 894, Honoring the 50th anniversary of the recording of the album "Kind of Blue" and reaffirming jazz as a national treasure, I would have voted "aye." One of my constituents, Lamont Parsons of Urbana, Illinois, is a regionally famous jazz guitarist who has inspired in

me and many of my constituents a lifelong appreciation for jazz and its influences and it truly is a national treasure.

Had I been present on rollcall No. 972 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1517, To allow certain U.S. Customs and Border Protection employees who serve under an overseas limited appointment for at least 2 years, and whose service is rated fully successful or higher throughout that time, to be converted to a permanent appointment in the competitive service, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present on rollcall No. 973 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3978, First Responders Anti-Terrorism, Training Resources Act, I would have voted "aye."

GALLAGHER-HANSEN VFW POST'S  
90TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the Gallagher-Hansen Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 295, Department of Minnesota, on the occasion of the Post's 90th Anniversary. Since its original charter in 1919, the Gallagher-Hansen VFW Post has been dedicated to serving veterans and the entire community of South Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Founded as the Patrick Gallagher Post in honor of a local World War I veteran, the post was renamed to honor Lt. Harry C. Hansen, a post member, who lost his life during the Battle of Okinawa in World War II.

All veterans have served and sacrificed on behalf of our great Nation, but many veterans continue their noble service after their tours of duty have been completed. The members of the Gallagher-Hansen VFW Post are among these selfless servants.

Throughout its proud history, the Gallagher-Hansen Post and Auxiliary have earned distinction as exceptional Veterans Service Organizations. Beyond its strong support for veterans, the post is also a community cornerstone. From providing donations to the Dakota County Veterans Emergency Assistance Fund and the South St. Paul Police K-9 unit, to sponsoring an annual Children's Safety Camp and funding a new scoreboard at Wakota Arena, Gallagher-Hansen provides steadfast support to residents in the area.

Gallagher-Hansen's reputation for outstanding public service extends deep into its ranks. Post 295 has been the home VFW post to many state and national leaders, including former Minnesota Governors Karl Rolvaag, Harold Stassen and Orville Freeman. Other members include: past National Ladies VFW Auxiliary President Lola Reid, whose late husband Dr. James Reid served as past Surgeon General of the VFW; past National VFW Chaplain Father Harold E. Whittel; Robert Hansen, past Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and the brother of Lt. Harry C. Hansen; and the late U.S. Navy Admiral John S. McCain, father of U.S. Senator John McCain of Arizona.

Madam Speaker, please join me in rising to honor the 90th Anniversary of the Gallagher-Hansen VFW Post No. 295, and the veterans

who have given so much in support of their fellow veterans, families and our community.

RECOGNIZING THE HEROIC GENEROSITY OF CLARA WARD OF ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA

**HON. KATHLEEN A. DAHLKEMPER**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary woman in Erie, Pennsylvania, who has dedicated her life to helping the children of her community. Clara Ward, the founder of the Youth Development and Family Center in Erie, was the star of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," this week, where her indomitable spirit and dedication to the well-being of children in need was rewarded with an amazing renovation to her more than eighty year old home.

Clara Ward, with her son Bennie and daughter Cynthia, has continually put aside her own needs to take care of the children in her community. Too often, the children in Clara's neighborhood lack the care and resources they need to succeed, to be healthy and safe. These children rely on the generosity of their "Aunt Clara" to have a safe haven after school, where they can play off the streets and out of harm's way.

Many of the children who come to the Youth Development and Family Center would go to bed hungry without the generosity of Clara, Bennie and Cynthia, who feed and welcome children into their home almost every day. Not only does Clara provide a safe space, but she offers these children clothes, blankets and toys that they might not otherwise have. This time every year, Clara gives toys to 300 children for the holidays.

Clara's boundless generosity is all the more remarkable given her own condition. Clara suffers from myasthenia gravis, a degenerative muscular disease that requires her to use a wheelchair. In her old home, Clara's mobility was severely limited and she struggled to move through rooms and hallways that had no space for her wheelchair. Now, thanks to the renovation, Clara can move with ease through a home designed with her needs in mind.

Clara Ward's selflessness has inspired the entire community of Erie. It was her good work that motivated local builder John Maleno and his family to nominate Clara for "Extreme Makeover," which drew 3,000 volunteers and donations from 200 companies. Clara's story has inspired our city and helped us show the world that Erie, Pennsylvania, is a place where neighbors look out for each other and the spirit of generosity runs deep.

Madam Speaker, it is my proud duty to enter the name of Clara Ward in the record of the United States House of Representatives as a hero of Erie, Pennsylvania.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT IN SUDAN

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 15, 2009*

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker earlier today a news conference was held with Congressmen

DONALD PAYNE, CHRIS SMITH and myself along with representatives from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), to draw attention to the desperate situation in Sudan. We heard compelling firsthand accounts of what transpired in Khartoum last week. Arrests, detention, tear gas and beatings of peaceful Sudanese protestors including several high-ranking Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) officials. These protestors had gathered in the streets to press Sudan's President Bashir and his National Congress Party (NCP) to demand passage of important laws by the National Assembly.

Khartoum's actions are inexcusable, but why should we be surprised, given the head of state is an accused war criminal. We also know from widely reported information that the National Congress Party (NCP) is obstructing the establishment of conditions for free and fair elections. The world also still awaits reform of the national security law.

Against this backdrop of violence and intimidation by Khartoum, the NCP and the SPLM entered into intense negotiations over the weekend. While reports indicate that a tentative compromise has been reached, the outcome is still far from assured. And if the coming weeks don't yield the necessary results, the long-suffering people of Sudan will watch any real prospect of lasting peace and justice slip away. Will the U.S. stand by and allow this to happen?

For years the U.S. has been a leader on the world stage in advocating for the marginalized people of Sudan. This is an issue, unlike many in Washington, which has enjoyed broad, bipartisan support. In January 2005, after two and half years of negotiations, the North and the South signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) bringing about an end to the 21-year-old civil war during which nearly two million people died, most of whom were civilians. I was at the signing of the CPA in Kenya along with Congressman PAYNE. Hopes were high for a new Sudan.

Sadly those hopes are quickly dimming as President Bashir becomes further entrenched and principled U.S. leadership on Sudan wanes. On the eve of the five-year anniversary of the signing, the CPA hangs in the balance as does Sudan's future.

President Obama's special envoy to Sudan, General Scott Gration, was appointed in March of this year. Many in Congress, myself included, had pressed for a special envoy in the hope of elevating the issue of Sudan particularly at this critical juncture in the implementation of the CPA and with genocide in Darfur still ongoing.

While there have been times in the months following that I have been concerned by the direction that this administration appeared to be taking in Sudan, I refrained from any public criticism, not wanting to do anything that could jeopardize peace or progress on these critical issues. But I can be silent no longer.

The time has come for Secretary Clinton and President Obama to personally and actively engage on Sudan.

During the campaign, then candidate Obama said, "Washington must respond to the ongoing genocide and the ongoing failure to implement the CPA with consistency and strong consequences." He went on to say, "The Bush administration should be holding Sudan accountable for failing to implement significant aspects of the 2005 Comprehensive