

a seizure. Despite dozens of drug trials, special diets, and experimental therapies, Lauren suffered as many as 25 seizures a day. In between them, she would cry, "Mommy, make it stop!"

While some of Lauren's cognitive skills were nearly on target, she lagged in abstract thinking and interpersonal skills. Her childhood was nearly friendless. The drugs Lauren took made her by turns hyperactive, listless, irritable, dazed, even physically aggressive. "We hardly knew who she was," Susan says. When she acted out in public, the family felt the judgment of onlookers. "Sometimes," Susan says, "I wished I could put a sign on her back that said: 'Epilepsy. Heavily Medicated'"

At 17, Lauren underwent what her mother describes as "a horrific surgical procedure." Holes were drilled in her skull, electrodes implanted, and seizures provoked in an attempt to isolate their location in the brain. It was a failure. "We brought home a 17-year-old girl who had been shaved and scalped, drilled, put on steroids, and given two black eyes," Susan says quietly. "We put her through hell without result. I wept for 24 hours."

The failure of surgery proved another turning point for Susan. "Finally, I thought, 'Well, I can cry forever, or I can try to make a change.'"

Susan began to meet other parents living through similar hells. They agreed that no federal agency or private foundation was acting with the sense of urgency they felt, leaving 3 million American families to suffer in near-silence. In 1998, Susan and a few other mothers founded a nonprofit organization to increase public awareness of the realities of epilepsy and to raise money for research. They named it after the one thing no one offered them: CURE—Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy.

"Epilepsy is not benign and far too often is not treatable," Susan says. "We wanted the public to be aware of the death and destruction. We wanted the brightest minds to engage with the search for a cure."

Then-First Lady Hillary Clinton signed on to help; so did other politicians and celebrities. Later, veterans back from Iraq with seizures caused by traumatic brain injuries demanded answers, too. In its first decade, CURE raised \$9 million, funded about 75 research projects, and inspired a change in the scientific dialogue about epilepsy.

"CURE evolved from a small group of concerned parents into a major force in our research and clinical communities," says Dr. Frances E. Jensen, a professor of neurology at Harvard Medical School. "It becomes more and more evident that it won't be just the doctors, researchers, and scientists pushing the field forward. There's an active role for parents and patients. They tell us when the drugs aren't working."

The future holds promise for unlocking the mysteries of what some experts now call Epilepsy Spectrum Disorder. "Basic neuroscience, electrophysiological studies, gene studies, and new brain-imaging technologies are generating a huge body of knowledge," Dr. Jensen says.

Lauren Axelrod, now 27, is cute and petite, with short black hair and her mother's pale eyes. She speaks slowly, with evident impairment but a strong Chicago accent. "Things would be better for me if I wouldn't have seizures," she says. "They make me have problems with reading and math. They make me hard with everything."

By 2000, the savagery and relentlessness of Lauren's seizures seemed unstoppable. "I thought we were about to lose her," Susan says. "Her doctor said, 'I don't know what else we can do.'" Then, through CURE, Susan learned of a new anti-convulsant drug

called Keppra and obtained a sample. "The first day we started her on the medication," Susan says, "her seizures subsided. It's been almost nine years, and she hasn't had a seizure since. It won't work for everyone, but it has been a magic bullet for Lauren. She is blooming."

Susan and David see their daughter regaining some lost ground: social intuition, emotional responses, humor. "It's like little areas of her brain are waking up," Susan says. "She never has a harsh word for anyone, though she did think the Presidential campaign went on a little too long. The Thanksgiving before last, she asked David, 'When is this running-for-President thing going to be finished?'"

CURE is run by parents. Susan has worked for more than a decade without pay, pushing back at the monster robbing Lauren of a normal life. "Nothing can match the anguish of the mom of a chronically ill child," David says, "but Susan turned that anguish into action. She's devoted her life to saving other kids and families from the pain Lauren and our family have known. What she's done is amazing."

"Complete seizure freedom without side effects is what we want," Susan says. "It's too late for us, so we've committed ourselves to the hope that we can protect future generations from having their lives defined and devastated by this disorder."

#### TRIBUTE TO DR. MONA BETHEL JACKSON

#### HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Dr. Mona Bethel Jackson on the occasion of her retirement from the Miami-Dade County Public School System (MDCPS) with nearly 39 years of service and dedication.

Dr. Jackson, a native Miamian, was born to Charles Edward Bethel and Olga Goodman Bethel Williams. After graduating from George Washington Carver High School, she furthered her education at Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University. She then obtained her master's degree in guidance and counseling from Florida Atlantic University and her doctorate in educational administration and supervision from Florida International University. She also attended Principal Institutes at Fordham University and Harvard University, and was the first African-American woman to serve as president of the Florida Counseling Association.

She began her professional career as a science teacher at Charles R. Drew Junior High School. She served as principal of Richmond Heights Middle School for the past 11 years and is currently serving as mentor principal at Miami Edison Senior High School. Moreover, she is also the first African-American to serve as principal of Redland Middle School. She previously served as lead principal of Miami Southridge Senior High School feeder pattern. In 1999, Richmond Heights Middle School was named a semifinalist for the National Alliance of Black School Educators Award. The school earned a grade of B in 2006 and A in 2008 on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). It is quite clear that Dr. Jackson has been successful at meeting the challenge of educating the needs of her community's young people.

Additionally, Dr. Jackson complimented her educational achievements with her involvement in various organizations such as Delta Sigma Theta Sorority's National, Collegiate and Alumnae Chapters; Jack and Jill of America, Incorporated; Haitian Refugee Center Board of Directors; Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Incorporated, Dade County Chapter; National Council of Jewish Women's Teen Violence Intervention Program Board and life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; National Council of Negro Women; and Red Hat Society. In her spare time, she enjoys reading and organizing activities.

This public servant is married to Herman Jackson, and has two children, Keane Sean (Kelsey) and Herman, II (Cassie), and five grandchildren. She has been a diligent and dedicated member at Christ Episcopal Church where she currently serves as a teller and president of the Episcopal Church Women.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to have the privilege of honoring Dr. Jackson, a valued educator of the Miami-Dade County community and beyond. She can look back on a proud career of service and distinction in education and community leadership. Now, in retirement, she embarks upon new challenges in life and I am certain her legacy of greatness will only grow and develop as she enters this new phase of life. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Dr. Mona Bethel Jackson every happiness and many years of continued success.

#### TRIBUTE TO RETIRING MISSOURI ADJUTANT GENERAL KING SIDWELL

#### HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, let me take this moment to recognize the career of Missouri Adjutant General King E. Sidwell. General Sidwell retired in late February after serving four years as Adjutant General of the Missouri National Guard.

General Sidwell was born in Sikeston, Missouri, on July 13, 1950. He resides with his wife Cindy Sidwell in Sikeston. They have two sons, William Mitchell Sidwell II and Trent Easterby Sidwell.

In 1972, General Sidwell earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology. In 1975, he received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia and, in 2000, he received a Military and Strategic Studies degree from the United States Army War College.

General Sidwell has served in the military since 1972. He was commissioned as an officer in 1974 through the State Officer Candidate School at the Missouri Military Academy. Prior to his serving as Adjutant General, Sidwell served in many assignments of increasing responsibility, culminating with his command of the Engineer Brigade, 35th Infantry Division. Upon completion of this command, he assumed the position of Assistant Corps Engineer, 35th Engineer Brigade until being transferred to the Retired Reserve. It was from the Retired Reserve that Sidwell was appointed to the position of Adjutant General.

Under General Sidwell's leadership as Adjutant General, the Missouri National Guard developed the concept of and deployed an Agribusiness Development Team to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. This important agricultural redevelopment plan, which builds upon the knowledge and expertise of Missourians familiar with agriculture, is now being replicated by other states. The Missouri National Guard also equipped and deployed the first Maneuver Enhancement Brigade structure to command Multi-national Task Force East Kosovo.

General Sidwell has received numerous military awards. He has also been recognized as the Mid-Missouri Communicator of the Year by the Public Relations Society of America and as an outstanding leader by the Jefferson Barracks. The General is also affiliated with the National Guard Association, the American Bar Association, the Defense Research Institute, and the Sikeston Area United Way Board of Directors.

As General Sidwell retires from his current post, I trust that the Members of the House will join me in thanking him for his exceptional commitment to the Missouri National Guard and the safety and security of America.

#### HONORING MARK LUTTRELL

#### HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 5, 2009*

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Shelby County, Tennessee's Sheriff Mark Luttrell for being named the 2009 Sheriff of the Year presented by the National Sheriffs' Association.

First elected in 2002, Mark Luttrell has served Shelby County residents with strong leadership by placing the public's confidence back in the county's jail operations. Sheriff Luttrell has secured accreditation for both men's and women's jails, the medical unit, and the law enforcement division as well as many countless other achievements for which he is being recognized.

Luttrell continues to be an integral member in local and state efforts to fight street crime, including the successful Operation Safe Community. Sheriff Luttrell also serves on the Memphis/Shelby Crime Commission and Memphis Second Chance, an organization which aids first time offenders to transition back into society.

Sheriff Luttrell has set a high example of service, leadership, caring, and civic participation that all would do well to follow. Madam Speaker, I congratulate Sheriff Mark Luttrell on this well-deserved award, and ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating his accomplishments. We congratulate Sheriff Luttrell and his family on this wonderful occasion.

TRIBUTE ON THE 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DANVILLE, ILLINOIS

#### HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 5, 2009*

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 180th anniversary of the First Presbyterian Church of Danville, Illinois.

Built on land so graciously dedicated by Reverend Enoch Kingsbury, the First Presbyterian Church was founded on March 7, 1829 by eight charter members. The Church provided the first school and library of Danville.

From its humble beginnings in the 1830s, the church took a stand against slavery. Confirming their stance on slavery, the church would be honored with a visit from Abraham Lincoln, where he worshiped when his duties as attorney brought him to Danville.

The First Presbyterian Church continues to have a positive impact on the community by establishing and supporting several programs including Aunt Martha's Youth service, a free clinic, Faith in action, a program for adults 60 years of age and older, and Big Brothers Big Sisters, a mentoring service for youth. The church is a strong supporter of the arts through the use of the Aeolian-Skinner Pipe organ and the use of their facilities for musical performances.

I hope all of you will join me in recognizing The First Presbyterian Church in its faithful mission to be servants of Christ, both in their church and their community.

#### TRIBUTE TO RIVERSIDE FIRE CHIEF TEDD LAYCOCK

#### HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 5, 2009*

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Riverside, California are exceptional. Riverside has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Tedd Laycock is one of these individuals. On March 7, 2009, a dinner in honor of Chief Laycock will be held to celebrate his retirement from the City of Riverside Fire Department.

A lifelong resident of Riverside, Chief Laycock graduated from Ramona High School. After receiving his Associate of Science Degree in fire technology from Riverside City College, he went on to graduate from the University of Redlands with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

In 1973, Chief Laycock began his career with the City of Riverside Fire Department as a firefighter. He was subsequently promoted to Engineer in 1980; to Captain in 1984; to Battalion Chief in 2002; and to Fire Chief on April 8, 2005. Chief Laycock's natural leadership ability has contributed to his excellence as a

Fire Chief and established him as a pillar in the community. Chief Laycock retires after forty-six years of service to spend time with his grandchildren, two daughters, three sons, and his wife of ten years Cindy.

As a member of the Riverside community, Chief Laycock not only lived and worked there, but served those in his neighborhood. Chief Laycock has been a member of many local organizations such as the Uptown Kiwanis, the Latino Network and the Greater Riverside Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Twice, in 1994 and 1996, Chief Laycock was awarded the honor of the Exchange Club's Firefighter of the Year Award.

Chief Laycock's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Riverside, California. I am proud to call Tedd a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him as he retires.

#### TRIBUTE TO ELIJAH "PAT" LARKINS

#### HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 5, 2009*

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the late Elijah "Pat" Larkins, a dedicated public servant, tireless community activist and the city of Pompano Beach, Florida's first African-American mayor, who recently succumbed to a 16-month struggle with brain cancer.

Born a farmer's son in Pompano on April 29, 1942, Mr. Larkins, the eldest of nine siblings, graduated from what is now Blanche Ely High School. While a student at Ely High School, he led a boycott of classes when a Senior Day gathering of the county's three black high schools was cancelled. Following his attendance at Tennessee State University, Mr. Larkins was named a Ford Foundation fellow, which allowed him to attend the 1970 National Housing Institute.

In 1972, Mr. Larkins became a federally certified housing-development specialist who created the Broward County Minority Builders Coalition. The Coalition's mission is to ensure black-owned companies participated in South Florida's construction boom, an economic expansion that defined the area for years to come. In addition to his involvement with the Broward County Minority Builders Coalition, Mr. Larkins was a director of his own not-for-profit company, Malar Construction Co. in Fort Lauderdale.

While serving as a City Commissioner for 19 years and Mayor of Pompano Beach for seven terms, Mr. Larkin helped diversify the fire department and police while also advocating on behalf of Pompano Beach's predominantly black northwest quadrant. Mr. Larkin was also instrumental in changing Hammondville Road to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. One of his proudest achievements was getting the E. Pat Larkins Community Center, a center that provides the setting for meetings, banquets and other social events, up and running.

As a parishioner at Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church for over 30 years, "His greatness was measured by his servitude," the