

supporting the growth of each species in the grove. Trees and plants in Armstrong Woods, such as Douglas Fir, Big Leaf Maple, Redwood Trillium, Sword Fern, and the most renowned, the imperial coast Redwood, contribute to the forest's diverse ecosystem.

Nurtured by abundant winter rain, moderate year-round temperatures and partial shade, coast Redwoods can grow up to 2–3 feet per year. At more than 310-feet tall, Parson Jones is the Reserve's tallest tree. The cloak of fog that protects the Redwoods from summer's harsh drought conditions allows these supreme trees to flourish along the coast from southern Oregon to central California.

Despite logging and raging fires, these mighty trees continue to provide their striking beauty, ecological significance and are witnesses to hundreds of years of history. The Reserve's oldest tree, Colonel Armstrong, is estimated to be more than 1,400 years old.

Part of the Redwood's resiliency is attributed to its natural resistance to insects, fungi, and fire. Some trees bare scars of the fire that roared in 1926, which is a testament to the strength of the thick, reddish bark.

The history of Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve extends back to 1850, when the area was established as a lumber camp on the north bank of the Russian River called Stumptown, known today as Guerneville.

In 1874, Colonel James Boydston Armstrong, a journalist, surveyor and colonel with the Union Army, relocated from Ohio to Sonoma County where he logged and operated a sawmill site. Armstrong acquired 440 acres of land three miles north of Guerneville, and deeded the land to his daughter, Kate Armstrong, with the intention of preserving the land until its opening as an arboretum.

Because of Armstrong's financial distress and his daughter's ailing health, the parcel was eventually purchased by a family friend, Harrison M. LeBaron. Armstrong's vigilant efforts to preserve the land prevailed under the direction of his daughter Lizzie and the LeBaron family. They launched a well-supported campaign to protect the once mighty forest.

In 1917, the County of Sonoma purchased the property for \$80,000 and operated the grove until the State of California assumed ownership in 1934. The Reserve's trails and amphitheatre were created by the Civil Conservation Corps during the Great Depression.

Thanks in large part to Colonel Armstrong's preservation efforts, today the beauty, history and serenity of Armstrong Woods is enjoyed by students, campers, hikers and visitors from around the globe.

Armstrong Woods State Natural Reserve offers visitors an abundance of hiking trail choices, ranging from brief one-mile walks, to an intense 9-mile loop that ascends from 120 feet to 1,250 feet at the summit by Bullfrog Pond. Adventure seekers can enjoy back country campsites, equestrians can trot along trails and families can meander into the park to enjoy lunch flanked by awe-inspiring, 300-foot trees.

Through Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, the Reserve's cooperating volunteer association, students learn about the forest's flora and fauna and can participate in an Environmental Living Program where they discover and explore the area.

Madam Speaker, my hope is that through continued preservation efforts and work on be-

half of park staff and volunteers, Armstrong Woods State Natural Reserve will continue to serve as a tranquil reprieve, an ecological treasure, and a recreational destination for years to come.

HONORING RUSSELL DUNHAM,
WORLD WAR II MEDAL OF
HONOR WINNER

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Russell Dunham, Medal of Honor Winner, who passed away at the age of 89 on April 6, 2009.

Russell Dunham was born in 1920, in East Carondelet, Illinois and grew up on a farm in Fosterburg, Illinois. With his brother, Ralph, Russell traveled to Peoria, Illinois in August, 1940 to find work. Instead of finding a job, both of them enlisted in the Army and would serve together throughout the war.

Russell saw action in North Africa, Sicily, and Anzio as part of the 3rd Infantry Division. On January 8, 1945, TSgt. Russell Dunham and his platoon were stationed on a snowy hillside near Kaisersberg, in the Alsace region of France, near the German border. German machine gun nests were covering the Americans from positions at the top of the hill and American artillery units were about to begin shelling the location where Dunham and his men were situated. This prompted Dunham to take the courageous action that would earn him the Medal of Honor.

With a mattress cover over his uniform to help blend into the white surroundings and carrying 12 carbine magazines and a dozen grenades, Dunham made his way up the hill toward the enemy position. When he was within 10 yards of the enemy machine guns, Dunham stood up to attack and was struck in the back by enemy fire. Despite his wounds, Dunham got to his feet to resume his attack, kicking away an enemy grenade that had landed at his feet.

Dunham continued his assault, taking out the first machine gun nest, then proceeded another 50 yards where he took out a second machine nest. Finally, he made his way up the hill another 65 yards where he took out the third and final enemy location.

As a direct result of Russell Dunham's single-handed charge, the lives of 150 of his fellow soldiers were saved. For this heroism, Russell Dunham was awarded the Medal of Honor at Zeppelin Stadium in Nuremberg, Germany on April 23, 1945.

After returning home from the war, Russell Dunham accepted a position with the Veterans Administration where he worked for 30 years, explaining benefits to veterans.

As is typical of so many who display rare acts of courage, Russell Dunham would deflect praise and insist that he did not consider himself a hero. He claimed that he was just doing his job. I am sure the 150 soldiers who survived that day because of Dunham's heroics would have a different opinion.

Russell Dunham is survived by a daughter, stepdaughter, stepson, three brothers, three sisters, three grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of honor and appreciation for a true American hero, Russell Dunham.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PASSING
OF SPECIALIST MICHAEL J.
ANAYA, UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of Specialist Michael J. Anaya, United States Army. Specialist Anaya gave his life in defense of our Nation and was killed in action on April 12, 2009 in Baiji, Iraq. Specialist Anaya was serving with the 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

Nick-named the "Anayalator" by his Army buddies, Michael loved the Army and wanted to serve in the Infantry. His military skills were obvious to everyone, as he was awarded the Expert Infantryman's Badge along with other military awards. He loved the military and his country. He also loved his family, friends, and fishing. He was a fine young American—an example of the greatness of our Nation.

Michael was buried with full military honors and will go to his eternal rest as an American hero. We remember this patriot—this fine soldier—and thank him for making the ultimate sacrifice for the United States of America. I am always reminded of the greatness of our country when I meet military families like the Anaya's who supported Michael as he volunteered to defend America.

The people of Crestview, Northwest Florida, and our Nation have many reasons to be proud of Specialist Anaya. Vicki and I will keep Michael's entire family, especially his parents, Carmelo Sr. and Cheryl Anaya of Crestview, his brother Carmelo Jr., and his sister, Trista, in our thoughts and prayers. I hope all the people of Northwest Florida and our nation do the same. May God bless Specialist Michael Anaya and all of those who serve in our armed forces and defend our Nation around the globe.

HONORING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE ST. ANTHONY
CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN SAN ANTONIO,
FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 125th Anniversary of St. Anthony Catholic School in San Antonio, Florida. Founded on April 29, 1884 through the tireless efforts of Father E.J. Dunne, the school grew out of a class of 14 children taught in the home of Mrs. Ceclia E. Morse.

The first school house was a small 12 foot by 24 foot wooden structure. In 1892, the Benedictine Sisters, who remain involved with the school to this day, arrived from Pennsylvania and constructed two large wooden

school buildings. In 1922, Bishop Barry of St. Augustine dedicated a three story, red brick building which opened to 100 students. Today, St. Anthony's campus includes seven buildings and the enrollment has doubled in just the last 10 years.

As the oldest parochial school in Pasco County and in the Diocese of St. Petersburg, St. Anthony's strives to offer students the best educational start possible regardless of religion. In its 125th year, St. Anthony continues to welcome a new generation of young students with the goal of educating the total person: mind, body and spirit.

Madam Speaker, it is truly an honor to have such an exceptional and longstanding school in my district. St. Anthony Catholic School and all who have contributed to its success over the last 125 years should be commended for their commitment to education, child development and service to the community.

COMMEMORATION OF ARMENIAN
GENOCIDE

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. WAXMAN. Madam Speaker, today marks the 94th Anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian genocide. This devastating event is a reminder that we cannot allow for such atrocities to happen again. It is unacceptable to witness thousands of innocent victims suffer and die without taking any action.

Ninety-four years ago, the Ottoman Turks began their attempts to exterminate the Armenian people. From 1915 until 1923, 1.5 million Armenians were tortured and killed. Men were separated from their families and murdered; women and children were forced to march across the Syrian desert without water, food, or possessions; many died of hunger or thirst or were killed when they lagged behind during the forced marches into the desert.

These acts of intolerance cannot be termed anything but genocide. We must honor and recognize those who survived but also remember those who perished. Acknowledging the commemoration of the Armenian genocide, is an important to tribute to the Armenian people, especially the American-Armenian community.

CHICAGOAN RITA SALLIE'S COURT
STATEMENT BEFORE TWO MEN
WERE SENTENCED IN HER
DAUGHTER'S SLAYING

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, it's my sad responsibility to call your attention to the anguish that Ms. Rita Sallie is experiencing. Hers is a pain felt by so many mothers and families across this great nation. Losing a child is a tragedy that no parent should have to endure but, once again, an innocent child whose life was so full of promise abruptly lost her life due to gun violence in my Chicago community.

Rather than add more of my own words, I'm taking this opportunity to enter into the record

the entire statement by Ms. Rita Sallie. Somehow, she found the courage to speak through her pain and wrote a heartfelt statement to the Chicago Sun-Times—a statement aimed, directly, at the convicted murderers of her daughter, 15-year-old Schanna. It is important that history remembers her petition as it sadly resonates for millions of parents throughout the United States.

Here's her statement, in its entirety:

They stole the life of a beautiful, kind, free-spirited girl and made her a statistic. Why? To get revenge for an argument? A fight? The leader should have gotten over it and walked away. But he was mad, you see, so the only reasonable thing for a coward to do was to get an idiot to shoot up a park where children play, only to hurt my child who was feet away.

She was born on Dec. 16, 1993, and was a cute, bald bundle of quiet joy. She grew to be a sincere, respectful, loving, selfless spirit filled with the joy of life. Her smile is infectious and no one can deny her energy and pure heart. She has a confident yet modest bearing and a smile like a balm to the soul. I would not realize until after I saw her smile how much I yearned for it.

The child I anticipated seeing everyday was gunned down in the middle of a park, behind Funston Elementary School, by two nothings. She was supposed to start 8th grade in the fall of 2007, but she never made it. She will never have the chance to show herself to the world. I will never have the chance to watch her make her way.

Schanna has always been so full of life. Her energy and vitality would leave me rolling my eyes in exasperation because sometimes I just wanted her to sit still and take a breath. They took the energy that left me breathless and left her lying, unmoving in the park behind Funston Elementary School where people could see her at her most vulnerable. They denied her the right to live, breathe, laugh, love and dream.

Schanna has such a generous spirit. She thought nothing of sharing her time or her possessions with you. She hated to see others unhappy or angry. There was nothing that she had that she wasn't willing to share. This child would take her birthday money and buy Christmas presents for everyone else. She was supposed to donate her organs so that others could continue living, even though she would not. They denied her that right, as well, because her heart stopped before her organs could be harvested, leaving them unusable and the recipients to wait and maybe even succumb themselves.

I have always been amazed by her. Over the years I would ask myself what did a barely passable person like me do to earn the privilege of having Schanna as my child? Somehow I was blessed to have a little girl with a brilliant mind, a big heart and a generous spirit. Although I struggle with being a better person, I do try to teach my children to know right from wrong, to make principled decisions and to have good moral character. Schanna took what I taught her and magnified it. She not only listened to what I advised, she put it into practice so much that she became the teacher, and I, the student. She is the person that I have struggled all my life to become.

People have always been drawn to her. Even as a toddler, people would stop me on the street to admire her and buy her small gifts, a piece of candy, or lollipop. That never changed. Up until she was taken from me, I would watch her walk to school by herself and before she made it, she would be surrounded by so many friends that I would no longer be able to tell her apart from the sea of blue and white uniforms.

All I have left are memories. The memories of our life before they intruded. The memories that I cannot call up because they are pushed aside for what they did to her on June 25, 2007. I saw my baby lying in the park, eyes open staring, with bits of her favorite fruit scattered around her. I struggle to recall the constant twinkle in her eye, the bright smile and the distinctive cackle of her laugh. I am embarrassed to admit that I try to avoid thinking of her at all because I don't want to recall that day and all the days that came after. I have to put her away, for now. Maybe, in the future, but not now.

She had a life plan at 12 years old and they denied her all of her dreams and aspirations. She'll never experience going to high school, or college, or even the 8th grade. She will never be consumed by her first love and I will never have the chance to help her through her first broken heart. There will be no stories of her travels, the people she would meet and the things she would see and do. She never even got the chance to ride public transportation by herself.

Over the years, people have told me that I was a strong woman. On June 25, 2007, I was exposed as a fraud. I'm not the strong woman I've always considered myself to be. My armor is only as strong as its weakest point. My weakness is my family, my children. They not only put a chink in my armor, but shattered it and left it lying at my feet, leaving me fearful and weak. I have gone from a strong, independent person to someone who would like nothing more than to crawl into a dark hole and lick the wounds that will never heal. My sleep is restless. I am overly emotional and struggle to make the simplest decisions and have felt no true happiness since that time.

Since losing her, I have tried to find some sense of normalcy to my life. But I can't, because I know that I'm supposed to kiss three children before I go to work, not two. I know that I'm supposed to cook for four people, not three. I know I am supposed to hear three voices when I come home from a long day. I know I'm supposed to talk to three children about what is going on in their lives. I know that I'm supposed to hug three children. It's impossible to return to normal when you know these things in your heart and mind and that knowing is not enough. Her absence is the 800 pound gorilla in the room that everyone notices but tries to ignore, hoping that someone else will mention it first. The emptiness is physical and must be kept at bay.

They left me powerless. I would do everything to help my children through crises real and imagined, and they knew it. They took away my power when they hurt my little girl. I had to leave her in the care of the paramedics, police, hospital, morgue and funeral home, only to lay her to rest in a cemetery surrounded by strangers.

She could forgive people for anything. Make her sad or angry and a few minutes later all would be forgiven, whether you apologized or not. Knowing her, she's probably forgiven them. For years I wished I were more like her, but I'm not and despite my best efforts, I never will be. Schanna is a better person that I am in every way. She may have forgiven them, but I hate them. I have a fiery hatred for both of them that I know will one day consume me. The anger eats away at my mind and heart, knowing what they did to her, I seethe at the very thought of them as part of our history, that they are an asterisk on my family tree. We don't want them there, but they are, forever.

When the situation occurred, my imagination made them seem big, menacing, nearly otherworldly. Upon actually seeing them, I realize they are two nothings. One, a pint-sized, arrogant wannabe outsider and the