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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STAFFORD CONNECTICUT FIRE DEPARTMENT NO. 1

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 75th Anniversary of the Stafford, Connecticut Fire Department No. 1. For 75 years the men and women of this department have dedicated themselves to protecting the people and the community in which they serve.

While the department was not formally incorporated until November 11, 1936, it began its work in Stafford on May 10, 1934 in the B. Schwanda and Sons button factory. The eight founding members later began meeting in an unused garage and dance hall that later became incorporated into station 145. While membership grew over the next ten years, a shortage of able bodied men during World War II forced the department to allow members of the Junior Fire Department over the age of 14 to join the full department.

In June 1949, a committee was formed to begin work on plans for a new firehouse located on Colburn Road. Just a few years later, this new department was built to house the members, vehicles and equipment. That structure is still used to this day as the home base for the ET-145, ET-245, Rescue 145, Forestry 145, Service 145 and Marine 145. In 1953, the department won first prize in a statewide contest conducted by the Hartford County Mutual Fire Insurance Company as the volunteer department with the most improved facility with the best fire prevention program available.

In March of 1956, under the leadership of then chief Benjamin Muzio, the Auxiliary of the Stafford Fire Department No. 1 was organized to assist the department with fundraising efforts to acquire necessary equipment and supplies. Through the years, the Auxiliary has raised funds through a variety of events including the annual chicken BBQ that draws people from communities far and wide every year.

The men and women of this department have put their lives on the line for the past 75 years and they deserve our thanks and praise. On behalf of the people of Connecticut's Second Congressional district, I want to thank you for your service.

ACKNOWLEDGING AND COMMENDING NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, from April 12–18, 2009, our nation celebrated National Library Week and the vital role that these insti-

tutions and their dedicated staff play in supporting our communities. On April 22, 2009, the House of Representatives passed H. Res. 336, supporting the goals and ideals of National Library Week and encouraging Americans to take full advantage of these wonderful public resources.

In Oregon, we pride ourselves on our strong community and a commitment to quality of life and education. Public libraries are a vital piece of this fabric and, in fact, Oregon has the second highest circulation of public library materials in the nation and the only 5-star library in the Northwest. As the economic downturn has pushed family budgets to the brink, these resources are more important than ever. In addition to public reading and visual materials, libraries offer Internet and computer access for all, free of charge. Many also serve as community spaces for gatherings and events.

Another library that deserves recognition is our very own Library of Congress. In 2008, to highlight the world-class work of this institution I formed the Library of Congress Caucus, now nearly 50 Members strong. I have the distinct honor of co-chairing this bipartisan organization with my friend Congressman ZACH WAMP. Our goal is to draw further attention to the nation's library, its collections and curators, and to encourage further use by Members of Congress and the public alike.

The Library of Congress not only houses the much-appreciated Congressional Research Service, it also offers 1.6 million visitors access to 15 million primary-source documents and operates the Veteran's History Project and the Surplus Books Program. One of my favorite programs, the Surplus Books Program is an innovative book donation program, through which Members may send library materials to the schools and libraries in their home district. At a time when funding for libraries is scarce, this is a simple way to reduce book waste and distribute excess resources to our communities and schools where they are needed most.

I strongly encourage members to take advantage of these extraordinary programs and resources, and congratulate all our nation's libraries, librarians, and library-enthusiasts.

CHRISTOPHER ALLEN CARPENTER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher Carpenter of Kansas City, Missouri. Christopher is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 260, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Christopher has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities and 29 merit badges. Over the many years Christopher has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned titles such as Den Chief and Patrol Guide, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher Carpenter for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CELEBRATING THE CORNBREAD FESTIVAL OF SOUTH PITTSBURG, TENNESSEE

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the people of South Pittsburg, Tennessee on their 13th annual National Cornbread Festival. In 1996, a group of residents in this small city of 3,500 decided to take action to promote economic activity, which had waned as surrounding areas developed and a newly constructed highway directed traffic away from South Pittsburg's local businesses.

The goals of the Cornbread Festival were to promote the unique sights, sounds, tastes, and history of South Pittsburg and, Madam Speaker, they have done a fine job. Each year, during the last weekend in April, people have traveled from across the country and around the world to take part in the vibrant heritage of southeast Tennessee. This festival, which has been featured several times in national publications and on the Food Network, celebrates the southern delicacy of cornbread and the culture that surrounds it. Local artists and musicians keep the region's great traditions alive. Visitors can also see the great history of the local cast-iron industry around which South Pittsburg grew, and which still produces the skillets used to make the world's best cornbread.

Most importantly, Madam Speaker, this festival has made a great contribution to the community that created it and continues to run it. Proceeds from the National Cornbread Festival have been used to landscape streets, help build athletic fields, and support Boy Scouts, schools, daycares, and libraries. It serves as an economic driver which has helped to revitalize downtown South Pittsburg and its local businesses. It is a true testament to the power of community involvement and self-determination.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate South Pittsburg on a thirteenth year of what I hope will be a longstanding tradition. I encourage my colleagues and the American people to take note of the National Cornbread Festival and to consider a trip to see what's cooking in South Pittsburg, Tennessee.

HONORING THE 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SAIGON

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to recognize a day of great historical significance to my constituents and this nation.

On April 30, 1975, the city of Saigon fell to communism. This day was a somber day marked by hardship and loss of life for both Vietnamese and Americans. Thousands of people fled Vietnam by boat from the late 1970s to the mid-1980s. One half of those who fled by boat did not survive the journey.

Indeed, many Vietnamese-Americans come from a line of brave folks who left an oppressive regime to search for freedom. Citizens of

Vietnamese descent form a key, politically active group of Americans. They truly know the meaning of the term "American," and they value freedom, democracy, and liberty.

My constituents, as part of the Vietnamese Community in Virginia, Washington DC, and Maryland, will commemorate the 34th Anniversary of the Fall of Saigon on Saturday. And so, Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I submit into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a statement of recognition of this historic day.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the significance of this day.

HONORING BRIGADIER GENERAL
GILL P. BECK

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. COBLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Brigadier General (BG) Gill P. Beck, who has been selected by Appalachian State University's (ASU) Alumni Association to be the sole recipient of its 2009 Distinguished Alumnus Award in a ceremony to be held this Saturday, April 25, 2009, at the Broyhill Inn in Boone, North Carolina.

General Beck was selected for this honor due to his remarkable record of leadership and service to the public in both his professional and military careers, and for his many contributions to civic and charitable causes in his community.

A third-generation Mountaineer and third-generation North Carolina attorney, Gill Beck attended Appalachian State from 1974 to 1978 on a football and academic scholarship. Describing himself as "the slowest quarterback in the state" in high school, he showed his "coachability" by switching positions and playing center in college. Three years later, he was named team captain and distinguished himself as the team's best blocker. A three time All-Southern Conference first-team selection, he was selected as ASU's athlete of the year during his senior year.

While at ASU, he distinguished himself academically as well, making the Chancellor's List all eight semesters, twice being named an Academic All-American, graduating second in his class with a 3.98 grade-point average and earning an Army ROTC scholarship to study law at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. After graduating with High Honors from law school, he entered the Army JAG Corps, where he spent the next six years on active duty and represented the Army in a wide variety of litigation matters.

A resident of Greensboro, Beck has served as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Middle District of North Carolina since 1992. He currently serves as the Chief of the Civil Division, United States Attorney's Office, where he is responsible for directing all civil litigation against or for the United States within the United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina, as well as prosecuting criminal forfeitures that involve drug or money laundering offenses. As a federal prosecutor, he has spearheaded a number of high-profile civil actions, including several that involve the fight against fraud and whose resolution protected the rights and interests of taxpayers. In 1997, the U.S. Department of Jus-

tice presented Gill Beck with its highest award, the Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award, for his initiative and success in one such action that recovered more than \$180 million for taxpayers.

Since completing his initial active duty tour in the Army, Gill Beck has continued his military service as an Officer and Judge Advocate in the U.S. Army Reserve. In a promotion ceremony at Fort Myer, Virginia, in December 2008 that was presided over by the Judge Advocate General of the Army, Lieutenant General Scott C. Black, Beck "pinned on" the rank of Brigadier General after being nominated by President Bush and being confirmed by the United States Senate. In an investiture ceremony that day, BG Beck was also installed as the Chief Judge, U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals (IMA), U.S. Army Legal Services Agency (USALSA).

BG Beck's previous military assignments include Commander, 12th Legal Support Organization, Staff Judge Advocate Task Force 134 (Operation Iraqi Freedom), Staff Judge Advocate, Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, and Brigade Judge Advocate, 108th Division (Institutional Training), and a total of thirteen years on active duty with tours in the 1st Infantry Division, 3d Armored Division, 82nd Airborne Division, and Litigation Division (USALSA).

Madam Speaker, during his 2005 tour of duty in Iraq, then-Colonel Beck and his family provided an illustration of just how important the initiative and contributions of individual members of our armed forces and their military spouses "back home" are to the success of our military operations and humanitarian endeavors abroad. What began as a simple personal request to his wife, Mary Jo, to send toys, trinkets and candy to present to the Iraqi children turned quickly into a community-wide effort. "Operation Toy Drive," which was co-ordinated by Mary Jo and her friend, Hillary Bouknight, resulted in the collection of tens of thousands of items that were transported by a U.S. based charity, Operation Give, and shipped by FedEx (without charge I might add) to the U.S. military for distribution by our U.S. service men and women to the children of Iraq. Indeed, not only did Mary Jo orchestrate the effort but the entire Beck family, including his sons, Gill Jr. and Jon, got into the act. In addition to collecting toys from others, Jon even donated a bear he had received for his birthday.

Before concluding my remarks, I'd also like to make mention of BG Beck's outstanding commitment to his profession and voluntary service with the N.C. Bar Association (NCBA). He has served as a member of the Board of Governors of the NCBA, past Chair of the NCBA's Government and Public Sector Section, and while deployed to Iraq in 2005, was selected to receive the association's Government and Public Sector's Distinguished Attorney Award as North Carolina's top government and public sector attorney. In describing why he was chosen for the award, Linda Miles, the city attorney of Greensboro stated, "Gill Beck embodies all of the virtues of a public servant. He is a person of integrity, honesty and loyalty in his service to his country in every way."

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would just note that BG Beck and his family are among those who represent the best of America. His dedication to duty, reputation for integrity, and commitment to improving the well-being of

others, whether in his hometown and state or more than half a world removed, are exemplary. I am happy to convey my personal best wishes to General Beck and his family and ask that you and our colleagues in the House join me in recognizing BG Beck not only on the occasion of his fitting selection as Appalachian State University's Distinguished Alumnus of the Year for 2009, but also for his lifetime of service and commitment to others.

COMMENDING PAUL MCGILL OF
HUNTERDON COUNTY

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Paul McGill of Hunterdon County for his outstanding efforts on behalf of the Shannon Daley Memorial Fund. The Shannon Daley Memorial Fund was established by approximately 70 Hunterdon County members of the Readington Men's Basketball League who came together to raise money and support for families of children suffering with catastrophic illnesses.

On Friday, April 24, 2009, Paul McGill will be recognized by the United Way of Hunterdon County as their Community Volunteer of the Year. The evening will celebrate Paul's volunteerism and recognize his achievements as the officer and chief operating officer for the Shannon Daley Memorial Fund.

Paul has devoted significant portions of his personal time to insure the continued success of the charity—which includes a significant amount of time devoted to fundraising. In addition to fundraising, Paul provides extensive leadership for the Shannon Daley Fund and has developed close personal relationships with Hunterdon County residents and businesses to support the cause. He has done and continues to do an outstanding job to help families in need.

For those who know Paul, he is a true inspiration, an exemplary volunteer and an outstanding community leader. Paul McGill has truly made a difference in the lives of so many families in Hunterdon County and I am proud of his efforts.

I am pleased to share the good deeds of Paul McGill with my colleagues in the United States Congress and with the American people.

IN RECOGNITION OF BARONESS
CAROLINE COX OF QUEENSBURY

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize The Honorable Baroness Caroline Cox of Queensbury on the occasion of her visit to Michigan during the week of April 24, the day set to commemorate the 1915 commencement of the genocide of the Armenian peoples. During her visit, Baroness Cox continues her tireless mission to educate and promote awareness of the present-day status of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh and oppressed peoples around the world.