

Carmel mountain forests, forcing the evacuation of over 17,000 residents. One of the worst forest fires in Israel's history, this inferno claimed as many as 40 lives.

The fire damaged about 5 million trees and 12,000 acres. In a country where only 7 percent of the land is forested, the loss of precious woodland was felt as a national loss. In total, the fire caused about \$74 million in damages, including 250 homes.

In response to this tragedy, the United States and the international community stepped in to help Israel battle the flames. The U.S. answered Israel's request for assistance by providing much needed supplies, technical expertise, and equipment.

I applaud the individuals, businesses and philanthropic organizations across the United States and throughout the international community who have responded to the devastation in Israel with an outpouring of generosity and support.

With help from the United States and our friends worldwide, Israel will overcome this challenge. We pledge our continued support as Israel works to restore damaged communities, replenish wildlife, and plant new forests.

IN HONOR OF PRESIDENT
BRONISLAW KOMOROWSKI'S
VISIT TO CLEVELAND, OHIO

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the visit of Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski to Cleveland, Ohio. Since his recent election following the tragic death of former President Lech Kaczynski, President Komorowski has already become a powerful voice for peacemaking, reform, and cooperation in the world theatre.

In just a few short months, President Komorowski has taken steps to facilitate integration of Poland into the European Union, has proposed a plan for eliminating government corruption, and has met with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to rebuild the political and economic relationship between the two countries. He has also continued former President Kaczynski's tradition of celebrating Hanukkah with Warsaw's Jewish community.

I am honored by the President's visit, and I know that my constituents deeply appreciate his efforts. Cleveland is home to a thriving Polish community, which has held together in the face of adversity and today enriches our culture with festivals, films, concerts, and exhibitions. His visit to our city acknowledges this community's success and marks yet another laudable effort toward strengthening international relationships and spreading good will.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor of President Bronislaw and Cleveland's Polonia. May this visit enhance the ties between Poland and the United States, and bring Cleveland's Polish community the recognition it deserves.

HONORING MARTIN LUTHER KING,
JR. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN
COLLEGE PARK, GEORGIA

HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, distinguished colleagues, I rise today to extend my heartiest congratulations to Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School in College Park in the 13th district of Georgia. This exceptional school has been granted a 2010 National Title I Distinguished School Award by the State of Georgia. I am proud to represent the hard-working students, dedicated teachers and strong administrators that made this achievement possible.

Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School was founded in 2003 to provide quality instruction and challenging learning experiences for students. Among its core beliefs are a commitment to put children first and an understanding that children must accept responsibility for their learning in order to improve their future. The teaching curriculum is centered on its children; the teachers meticulously track student progress and collaborate to structure each student's lesson.

As we consider the challenges that our education system faces, we should consider Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary an example of excellent student achievement. In addition to providing a welcoming environment for students and ensuring school safety, students are exposed to immersive, technology-rich lessons that will prepare them for the future. Detailed reports indicate not only the students that need individualized attention, but also the students who are excelling. Perhaps the best practices from this school, including the attention to detail and dedication to learning, can be used to aid students around the country to exceed expectations.

Madam Speaker, I would like to personally congratulate the principal of this great institution, Dr. Machele Matthews, who has led her school to new heights and helped her students to dream their own futures. Please join me in honoring the venerable Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School on their achievement.

TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN
ATTERHOLT ON THE OCCASION
OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend and community advocate. After 16 years of faithful service, Kathleen Atterholt of my staff in Anderson, Indiana, will be retiring from public service at the end of 2010.

Kathleen was born to James and Margaret Steele on September 23, 1935, in Anderson, Indiana. She went on to graduate from Anderson High School in 1953, and she later earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Purdue University and a Bachelor of Science degree from Viterbo College. While at Purdue, Kathleen was also an active member of Alpha Chi Omega Sorority.

Given her family's history of public service, it is no surprise that Kathleen has also dedicated her life to helping those in her community. Her late father, James Steele, served on the Anderson Board of Public Safety and the Board of Public Works. Her brother, Jim Steele, served as Controller for the City of Anderson and later for the City of Indianapolis. Lastly, her son, Jim Atterholt, served two terms in the Indiana General Assembly and is currently the chairman of the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission.

After staying home to raise her two sons, Kathleen began her career in public service working as a Constituent Services Representative for Congressman David McIntosh in 1994. During those years, she also worked occasionally for the Madison County, Indiana Election Board. When I took office in 2001, Kathleen stayed on with my staff and continued to lend her expertise to the constituents in my district. For more than a decade, she has helped people navigate their way through the Federal Government and receive assistance from Federal agencies. Her kindness and compassion have undoubtedly helped to renew the people's trust in their government.

Over the years her particular areas of expertise have been advocating on behalf of constituents with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service, United States Embassies and Consulates, the United States Passport Agency, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Kathleen has said that some of her fondest memories have been when parents have brought their internationally adopted children by the office simply to thank Kathleen for her advocacy on their behalf. She has also been able to meet married couples, friends, and relatives whom she helped obtain proper immigration documentation in order to be reunited with their loved ones. Her kind heart has made Kathleen an invaluable liaison to my constituency, and she has shown an ability to relate to others with the compassion and empathy required of public service.

I offer my deepest gratitude to Kathleen for her years of tireless devotion and service not only as a member of my staff, but as a servant leader to constituents in my district. She has embodied the commandment found in the Good Book to "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." Though she will be sorely missed by myself, my family, and the rest of my staff, I wish Kathleen blessings and joy in the years ahead as she begins her retirement.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN ARTUR
DAVIS FOR HIS SERVICE TO
WEST ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor and recognize the exemplary service of my colleague, and friend, Congressman ARTUR DAVIS, who has represented Alabama's Seventh Congressional District since 2002.

A native of Montgomery, Congressman DAVIS graduated with honors from both Harvard University and Harvard Law School and

has equally distinguished himself in public service.

As a law student, he worked for the Southern Poverty Law Center and the late U.S. Senator Howell Heflin. After law school, ARTUR DAVIS compiled a near 100 percent trial conviction record as a federal prosecutor in the Middle District of Alabama. From 1998 to 2002, he worked as a litigator in private practice.

Congressman DAVIS was first elected to Congress in 2002 and has served four terms representing his west Alabama district which encompasses twelve counties, spanning from Birmingham and Tuscaloosa to the Black Belt.

Congressman DAVIS and I both represent portions of Clarke County and it has been my personal pleasure to work with him and his staff during his 8 years in the House. We were both elected in the same class of 2002 and have labored together to help expand economic opportunity for southwest Alabama. I am particularly grateful for his support of efforts to enhance the Port of Mobile and the Alabama State Docks as well as his valuable assistance in ongoing major economic development projects for our region.

ARTUR made his mark in Washington as an effective legislator who has won national attention for his leadership on a range of issues. He serves as a member of the prestigious Ways and Means Committee, which oversees economic policy. Congressman DAVIS is only the tenth Alabamian in 190 years to serve on this committee, which is the only congressional committee actually described in the Constitution.

He was the chief advocate for legislation to save the HOPE VI program for revitalizing public housing communities. He has also been a strong voice for creative ideas that would expand health care and improve educational performance benefitting rural and urban areas alike.

ARTUR has garnered a variety of honors during his tenure on Capitol Hill, including being selected by *Esquire Magazine* as one of the 10 best Congressmen in America.

As they prepare to leave Congress, I extend my best wishes to ARTUR and his lovely wife, Tara, and thank them both for their honorable service and leadership for the people of Alabama.

HONORING DEAN HIRSCH

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, today I would like to honor Dean Hirsch for his distinguished career in serving others around the world. Dean recently retired as the long-time president of World Vision International, capping a 34-year career at the humanitarian organization.

World Vision International is a relief organization that serves tens of millions of people in need, in nearly 100 countries around the globe. World Vision is helping to improve the lives of the world's most impoverished people, with a special focus on children. Under Dean Hirsch's leadership, World Vision has worked to alleviate the suffering of those facing both the long-term challenges of endemic poverty,

famine and disease, as well as acute crises, such as the 2004 tsunami.

Throughout his tenure as President, Dean was instrumental in fostering greater cooperation between World Vision and other leading relief and humanitarian organizations, in order to better serve those in need. I had the opportunity to spend time with Dean at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where he offered an important voice on addressing the root challenges of poverty. Dean often said that his mission at World Vision was to "help create a world in which no child suffers or dies for lack of food, clean water, shelter or protection from exploitation or war."

I congratulate Dean on a very distinguished career, thank him for his great humanitarian work, and wish him and his wife Wendy all the best as they begin this new phase of their life together.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, on December 8, 2010, I was unavoidably detained and was unable to record my vote for rollcall No. 624. Had I been present I would have voted: Rollcall No. 624: "yes"—To extend the Child Safety Pilot Program.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND WESLEY A. JAMES

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life and memory of a remarkable civic leader who was recently called from us. The Rev. Wesley A. James never held an elected political office, yet his influence over his beloved Mobile, Alabama surpassed many who have.

A native of Mobile and a 1970 graduate of Central High School, Rev. James continued on to the University of South Alabama where he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice Administration. In 1979 he graduated from Virginia Union University School of Theology where he received a Master of Divinity Degree. He was also active on campus as president of the student body, director of resident life, and an instructor of freshman orientation.

In 1981 he graduated number one in his class from Southwest Police Academy located at Faulkner State Community College in Bay Minette, Alabama. From 1990 to 1995, he was a fellow at Boston University School of Public Health. And, in 1997 he earned a Doctor of Ministry Degree, with emphasis on community development from Virginia Union University School of Theology.

Rev. James took the helm of Franklin Street Missionary Baptist Church in Mobile in 1988, leading the church's ministry until his untimely passing last month. While his role as pastor and spiritual guide for his flock was central to his life's calling, Rev. James took an equally

active role in his community where he served on a wide variety of boards and coalitions.

He was both past chairman and member of the board of the Mobile Water & Sewer Service. He served on the MWSS for twenty years, overseeing a seventy million dollar budget. He also served three years on The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Board.

Leaning on his law enforcement and pastoral backgrounds, Rev. James was both an active member of the National Board of Directors of the Community Coalition For A Drug Free America and a founding member of the Coalition for A Drug Free Mobile County.

He was also moderator of the Mobile Baptist Sunlight Association where he oversaw programs for 87 Baptist churches in Mobile and Washington Counties.

Rev. James was noted for his unbending devotion to local schools and his ability to reach across the community to bring together different views for the common good.

His love of Mobile and its patchwork of communities no doubt inspired his dedication to serve the people on so many different levels.

Madam Speaker, we all mourn the loss of Rev. James and on behalf of the people of South Alabama, I wish to extend my condolences to his wonderful wife, Gwendolyn, their children, Sophia, Wesley, Abron, and their extended personal and church family for their loss. You are all in our thoughts and prayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 622 and 625, I was absent from the House. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

TRIBUTE TO ISADORE BANKS

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I am here today to pay tribute to Isadore Banks, a proud World War I veteran, important leader in the community, and someone I am proud to say made east Arkansas his home. In June of 1954, Isadore became the victim of a heinous racially charged murder for which his attackers were never found. I ask all my fellow colleagues to stand with me today to honor the memory of this great man and also to condemn such senseless acts of violence in the history of this Nation.

Although born in Georgia, after serving in World War I, Isadore Banks would come to call Crittenden County, Arkansas, home. As a place where racial tensions ran high at the time, Isadore made a name for himself as one of the most successful farmers in the area.

Isadore was acutely aware of troubles faced by the black community. He used his business savvy to help create a cotton gin business that helped to support other black farmers, and would often buy school supplies for black schools around town that were in need. He is