

Year. He joins many deserving honorees across the state and will certainly be a serious contender. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Tyler Martinez, today, and I have no doubt this young man will continue to be a leader in his community.

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, Happy St. Patrick's Day! Originally a religious holiday, today St. Patrick's Day is largely an international celebration of Irish culture. I urge my colleagues and fellow Americans to embrace this day. Today, one in four Americans traces at least part of their ancestry to Ireland. Irish-Americans have provided the backbone of our workforce, enlivened our art and culture, defended our country, and served in this Congress and as President of the United States. Great Irish-Americans such as Eugene O'Neill and F. Scott Fitzgerald transformed American literature, innovators like Henry Ford helped revolutionize American transportation, and who can forget Presidents like Andrew Jackson, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan, each Irish-American alike. Irish-Americans continue to contribute to our nation as they ably serve in their communities in numerous capacities. It is for all of these reasons that I support the designation of March as Irish-American Heritage Month and encourage Americans to celebrate Irish-American heritage. I'm proud to stand today with my colleagues, those lucky enough to be Irish-American, as well as those who aren't, and honor this group that has been so important to our nation on this St. Patrick's Day.

INTRODUCING THE THRIFT SAVINGS FUND IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Thrift Savings Fund Improvement Act. This legislation expands the investment options available to congressional and other federal employees by creating a precious metals investment fund in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Adding a precious metals fund to the TSP will enhance the plan's ability to offer congressional employees a wide range of investment options that can provide financial security even during difficult economic conditions.

The Thrift Savings Plan is one of the most important benefits offered to Congressional employees. A strong TSP can obviously play a key role in attracting and retaining talented individuals to serve in the legislative branch. Adding a precious metals option will strengthen the TSP. In the last year, the price of gold rose by over 23 percent and silver by over 94 percent, while the Dow Jones and S&P 500 each only rose by around 8.5 percent.

Recent gains aside, precious metals have a number of features that make them a sound

part of a prudent investment strategy. In particular, inflation does not erode the value of precious metals is not eroded over time. Thus, precious metals can serve as a valuable "inflation hedge." Precious metals also maintain, or even increase, their value during times of stock market instability, such as what the country is currently experiencing. Thus, investments in precious metals can help ensure that an investment portfolio maintains its value during times of economic instability.

Federal employees could greatly benefit from the protection against inflation and economic downturns provided by prudent investments in precious metals. I therefore once again urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Thrift Savings Fund Improvement Act.

HONORING SERGEANT
KRISTOPHER JAMES GOULD

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of Sergeant Kristopher James Gould of Frankenlust Township in Michigan. Kristopher paid the ultimate price in service to his country on February 27, 2011 in Afghanistan.

Sergeant Gould joined the Michigan Army National Guard in 2003. He served in Iraq from 2005 to 2006. He joined the US Army in 2007 and was serving his second tour of duty in Afghanistan when his unit was struck by an improvised explosive device. Kristopher was assigned to the B Company, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Knox, Kentucky. He was a 2004 graduate of Valley Lutheran High School and his funeral was held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church on Saturday, March 12th.

James and Ann Gould, Kristopher's parents, would like to thank the Casualty Assistance Officer, Sergeant Angelina Saldana, of the Michigan Army National Guard for her assistance during this time. She escorted them to Dover Air Force Base, and coordinated the military honors with the church. Mr. and Mrs. Gould were touched by her compassion and her support of the family during this time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to stand with me in a moment of silence and remember the life of Kristopher James Gould and the service he rendered to our country. His sacrifice for the United States of America cannot be measured, and we owe him our thanks and gratitude. Please join me in offering prayers and condolences to his parents, sister and family for their loss.

STEPHEN F. MESTAS TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chief Warrant Officer Stephen F. Mestas of Pueblo, Colorado. Officer Mestas is a helicopter combat pilot who just finished his second tour of duty in Afghanistan, and his fifth tour overall. His return is a reminder of

the sacrifice our soldiers and their families make to ensure our freedoms.

Officer Mestas and his unit, Alpha Troop 2-17 Cavalry, were recently deployed into some of the most dangerous territory in the world. They put their lives in danger every day so that we may live safely and freely in America. The fact that officer Mestas has been deployed five times in that pursuit is both humbling and inspiring. We are truly indebted to these brave men.

I also feel profound respect for the wives, children, parents and siblings of our American soldiers. They are put through incredible difficulties and we owe them the same gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Stephen Mestas, today. He and his family keep this country strong, along with all of the other men and women we charge with protecting the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OUR DAILY BREAD

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Our Daily Bread, and to congratulate them on their 26 years of service in the Northern Virginia community.

Our Daily Bread is a volunteer-based organization dedicated to providing critical services to families and individuals suffering from financial hardship. Through robust community support from local faith-based groups, community organizations, local businesses, schools and universities, Our Daily Bread has grown to provide food, financial literacy education and assistance, school supplies, and holiday cheer to thousands of people in our area.

Our Daily Bread's mission is to identify and address the unmet fundamental needs of Fairfax area residents, and to empower the community to help our neighbors maintain self-sufficiency. This mission of sustainability and self-sufficiency evolved from humble beginnings. Our Daily Bread was founded in 1984 as a temporary homeless shelter that rotated among several area churches. When Fairfax County opened a county-run shelter in the Reston area, Our Daily Bread refocused its energies on feeding the homeless and opened a soup kitchen to serve those most in need. Recognizing the difficulties faced by those patrons unable to benefit from this service, Our Daily Bread again reinvented itself first by delivering sandwiches made by volunteers and later to delivering supplemental groceries directly to homeless families who were living in motels along Route 50 in Fairfax.

Our Daily Bread has a history of being dynamic in the face of changing demographics. Beginning in the 1990's and largely fueled by the high cost of rental housing, a new urgent need emerged. Families who were not homeless, families in which one or both parents were often juggling multiple jobs, were finding themselves unable to meet their basic needs and were just one crisis away from homelessness. Our Daily Bread rose to meet this challenge and began a program offering emergency financial assistance in the form of a modest one time grant of up to \$350.00. More recently, Our Daily Bread expanded their services to provide financial mentoring, a back to

school program and holiday meals and gifts. It is a testament to talent and commitment of the volunteers, staff, and supporters who make Our Daily Bread's what it is today; an organization with the foresight and readiness to take on new problems, while continuing to deliver on core initiatives.

Today, Our Daily Bread provides critical services to the elderly, the working poor, the disabled and the homeless in the Fairfax area. In 2010, Our Daily Bread provided food assistance to 425 families, an 18% increase from the previous year. In addition, 333 families benefited from financial assistance and over 385 families took part in financial literacy training and mentoring, a 73% increase over last year. 4,584 families were served by the holiday program, and 337 children received supplies for school. Over half of those assisted by our Daily Bread's program were children.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in paying tribute to Our Daily Bread for their commitment to the community. I would also to express my sincere gratitude to the volunteers and staff who contribute their time and energy and also to the Fairfax area business community for the support they provide to this worthwhile cause.

A TRIBUTE TO MAUREEN WALSH,
29TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR—2011

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the accomplishments made by our nation's most distinguished women during the month of March.

Today I pay tribute to Maureen Walsh of Glendale. Along with a successful career in marketing and press relations, from which she is now retired, Maureen has always found time in her life to volunteer. A native New Yorker, when she moved to Glendale in 1988, she became active on the Women's Committee of the Glendale Symphony Orchestra, where she worked on a program that brought music to students in Glendale schools.

For the last several years, Maureen has been enthusiastically involved with the Cabrini Literary Guild in Glendale. The Cabrini Literary Guild is a philanthropic organization organized in 1943, whose mission is to raise funds to support various charities in the Glendale area, such as Loaves & Fishes, YWCA of Glendale, literacy programs, as well as to promote a Writing Award Program with the high schools in the Catholic Diocese of Los Angeles. A member since 1994 and a board member since 1995, Maureen has held the offices of Membership Chair, Writing Awards Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and President. Currently she is First Vice President in charge of programs at the association's monthly meetings and is a participant in the Guild's annual fundraisers.

Maureen joined Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center's Guild in 1999 and went on their board shortly afterward. The Guild's mission is to financially support the Medical Center with its fundraising by making annual pledges—profits from the Gift Gallery and the Guild's annual benefits help make it possible

for the Guild to provide these monetary pledges. Maureen has served as First Vice President and Press Chairman of the Guild, and has acted as Chair or Co-Chair of the annual fundraising events, and is currently involved in the operations of the Gift Gallery.

One of Ms. Walsh's most rewarding activities at the Medical Center is her participation in the Pets with Purpose program. She accompanies her poodle/bichon mix dog, Beau, a participant for nearly five years, as he "makes his rounds" visiting patients in the medical center two Saturdays a month. Maureen is delighted to have the opportunity to help impact the patients' lives and to see the happiness that Beau's visits bring.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Maureen Walsh, for her service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO NATHANIEL
PETERSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a South Carolinian who works every day to make his community a better place for all its residents. Nathaniel Peterson is a well-respected community leader in the Myrtle Beach area and is especially effective as Worshipful Master of Silver Star Lodge No. 333. I believe Mr. Peterson is deserving of our appreciation.

Nathaniel Peterson was born and raised in New York City. He studied at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He worked for nearly a decade with New York City Human Resources Administration/EVR as a Fraud Investigator before relocating to North Myrtle Beach. He currently serves as a financial counselor at Grand Strand Regional Medical Center/Hospital Corporation of America, a position that reflects his dedication to helping others.

When he came to North Myrtle Beach in 2003, Mr. Peterson saw opportunities to be of benefit to the community. He immediately joined Silver Star Lodge No. 333, and within four years was elected Worshipful Master. During his three and half years as the Lodge's leader, Mr. Peterson has organized various events which provide assistance, as well as, recognize individual achievements within the community.

His giving spirit has prompted Mr. Peterson to sponsor a holiday toy drive and initiate outreach programs for families in need. He continues to sponsor the Lodge's annual food drive. He is also responsible for developing the "The 100 Men in Black Unity Service." This program honors men of all creeds regardless of lodge affiliation.

Mr. Peterson believes in giving back to his community, and looks for opportunities to honor others who are doing good works. He has recognized clergy, senior citizens, widows/widowers, teachers, and government officials within the community for their commendable services.

He is also passionate about providing opportunities to young people. In addition to recognizing students for their outstanding aca-

demical achievement, Mr. Peterson began an annual scholarship program in 2009. Each year, the scholarship program assists a graduating high school student achieve his or her dream of going to college.

Wherever there is a need in the community, Mr. Peterson helps to find a way to address it. He recently encouraged members of his Masonic lodge to join him in restoring the home of an elderly woman and her disabled son in the Popular community. He is also a sponsor of the March of Dimes and the Paul Chester Children's Hope Foundation.

Besides his tremendous work with the Silver Star Lodge No. 333, Mr. Peterson is also affiliated with the Holy Royal Arch Masons (Harry T. Ross Chapter No. 54); John O' Floyd Consistory No. 189; A.E.A.O.N.M.S. Shriner Kaaba No. 89; Member of the Order of the Eastern Star Moonlight Chapter No. 168; Knights of Pythagoras Youth Organization JT. Chestnut Council No. 46; and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (Conway/Myrtle Beach Alumni)

Mr. Peterson and his wife, Erica, are the proud parents of five beautiful children, which include two sets of twins; Brittany and Briana, 21, Brandon, 16, and Jared and Jordan, 12.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and our colleagues to join me in applauding the community service of Nathaniel Peterson. To all who know him, Mr. Peterson is an encouraging, inspiring, and persistent individual who works tirelessly to improve the quality of life for others. His leadership is a guiding light in the Myrtle Beach community.

JAMES VASQUEZ AND CHRIS
WEAVER TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize James Vasquez and Chris Weaver for their accomplishments at Pueblo Community College. Both were awarded Rising Star Awards, which are given to students demonstrating leadership and academic excellence.

Mr. Vasquez is president of the Pueblo Community College associated student government, and participates in a number of other extracurricular activities. Most notably, he led the school's Thanksgiving food drive, which helped 206 students in need. During that semester he also maintained a 3.2 GPA as a single parent.

Mr. Weaver also held an exemplary GPA and served as vice-president of the associated student government, under Mr. Vasquez. He also represents the school government at the State Student Advisory Council and was named the board's legislative liaison to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize James Vasquez and Chris Weaver for their accomplishments in higher education. There is no doubt they will continue to be leaders in their communities.