

Thankfully, Harris County Texas District Judge, Marc Carter, an Army veteran himself noticed that many of the defendants coming through the Harris County courts were veterans who had recently come home from fighting overseas. Judge Carter is judge of the 228th Criminal District Court of Texas. He replaced me after I served as judge in that court for 22 years.

Judge Carter and other members of the Harris County community recognized this problem in 2009 and took the initiative to create the first veteran's court in the state of Texas. The Harris County Veteran's Court Program specifically works with first time misdemeanors and felonies. If veterans choose to go through the program instead of going to prison, it requires two years of probation and treatment.

The reason why the Veteran's Court Program is so successful is because it addresses the root of the problem, which is PTSD and drug abuse. Many of these veterans are still mentally overseeing fighting for ours and their lives and these programs give them the help they need to readjust back into society. Since 2008 veteran's treatment courts have been created in 27 States.

These men have been to the darkest places on earth to protect the American people and although there is a lot we owe our veterans, most importantly, we owe them a second chance.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COMMANDER TOM G. WEILER

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize those men and women who have served this great Nation with honor, men such as Lieutenant Commander Tom G. Weiler, United States Navy.

For the past year, Lieutenant Commander Weiler, a proud submariner and graduate of the University of Notre Dame, served on my staff as a Congressional Defense Fellow. During his assignment, he served as a senior member of my staff responsible for defense, veterans, foreign affairs and intelligence matters. Lieutenant Commander Weiler executed his work as a liaison to the constituents of the First District and the numerous defense installations in the First District with distinction. Furthermore, he provided exceptional support to me as my staff liaison to the House Armed Services Committee in my role as a Subcommittee Chairman and as the Co-Chair of the Congressional Shipbuilding Caucus.

Lieutenant Commander Weiler directly contributed to my goal of providing excellent constituent service to the people of the First District. He was responsible for bringing numerous constituent inquiries to a successful conclusion and he was able to leverage his personal and operational experience to respond to the most challenging inquiries.

In addition to his efforts on behalf of the First District, Lieutenant Commander Weiler took on projects with regional, state and national implications, demonstrating his ability to view a challenge from many angles and de-

velop innovative solutions often requiring collaboration across many levels of government.

Lieutenant Commander Weiler's work ethic, duty to mission, and commitment to servant leadership is without equal. I believe that his personal drive to achieve excellence in his work has and will set a very high standard for his peers.

I would also like to thank Lieutenant Commander Weiler for the service and sacrifice he has made, and continues to make, for our Nation and our great Navy. His keen sense of honor, impeccable integrity, boundless work ethic, and loyal devotion to duty earned him the respect and admiration of my staff and the First District of Virginia. After spending eight of the last eleven years stationed in Hawaii, which included multiple patrols in the Western Pacific and a 12-month deployment to Germany, Lieutenant Commander Weiler is headed to the England as the only U.S. Navy submarine officer to participate in the Royal Navy Submarine Command Course in Portsmouth, England in 2013. Following this distinguished opportunity to train with the British Royal Navy, Lieutenant Commander Weiler will embark on his journey to become an Executive Officer of a United States Navy submarine and attend the Submarine Command Course. After this intense course of instruction Lieutenant Commander Weiler will return to sea and to leading Sailors as he goes back into harm's way to execute his trade as submariner in the "silent service" of this great Nation. I have no doubt that Lieutenant Commander Weiler will continue to serve the United States Navy honorably and with distinction.

I wish him the best of luck as he continues his Naval career. It was an honor and a pleasure having him serve on my staff. We all can sleep soundly at night knowing that men and women like Lieutenant Commander Tom Weiler are members of our all-volunteer force and they stand ready to defend our country and take the fight to our enemies; far away from their families and the comforts of the United States of America.

Lieutenant Commander Weiler, thank you. Best of luck to you and God bless you, your family, and all the Sailors you are charged with leading. Fair winds and following seas . . . and GO IRISH!

TRIBUTE TO TERESA VANZANT

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Teresa Vanzant, in honor of her retirement after dedicating 31 years of public service to Kentucky's Rockcastle County Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

Teresa's passion and commitment to public service was inspired by her father and my dear friend, the late Denver Miller, who also served as Circuit Court Clerk in Rockcastle County for three terms. Denver instilled in his family, the value of being an engaged citizen and giving back to the community. Denver's service as Clerk and Administrative Assistant to the Administrative Office of the Court also influenced his son, James Miller who serves as Rockcastle County's Jailer. The tireless dedication of this entire family will be a legacy long admired in our region.

Teresa Vanzant is also a role model for women in public service in our rural communities. In addition to her role as Circuit Court Clerk, she has volunteered for the Kentucky Women's Missionary Union, the Mt. Vernon Elementary Family Resource Center Council, President of Kiwanis Rockcastle, the Education Chair of Kentucky's Circuit Court Clerk's Association, Secretary of the Trust for Life, and a board member of the anti-drug Rockcastle County UNITE Coalition. Teresa works diligently, to not only serve her county, but to be a voice for opportunity and vision for generations to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a leader and dear friend of southern and eastern Kentucky, Teresa Vanzant, on her retirement. My wife, Cynthia and I wish Teresa and her family all the best in the years to come.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$16,359,758,742,907.76. We've added \$5,132,881,693,994.68 to our debt in nearly 4 years. This is a \$5 trillion in debt our Nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

TRIBUTE TO ADOLFO JESUS VALADEZ

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 80th birthday of Adolfo Jesus Valadez.

Adolfo Jesus Valadez, the son of Mexican immigrants who came to the United States fleeing the Mexican Revolution, was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas. Adolfo attended local public elementary schools and in 1949, graduated from Central Catholic High School. He enrolled in the University of Texas at Austin to study business administration and pharmacy studies. However, his studies were interrupted when he was called to serve his country as part of the post WWII occupation forces. Adolfo served as an Army Corp medic in Germany, where he provided health care services to American troops and learned to speak German fluently.

When Adolfo returned to the U.S., he completed his studies at the University of Texas at Austin and received a Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy, one of the few Mexican-Americans at that time to receive an undergraduate degree. Adolfo moved back to San Antonio and worked as a registered pharmacist serving the city's poor in various settings, including the Stella Mares Clinic on the west side of the city. Eventually, he opened his own small

business—Lydia's Prescription Pharmacy—an independent pharmacy on San Antonio's south side. Adolfo provided high quality pharmacy services to the area residents while also mentoring many Mexican-American youth to pursue higher education in the health professions.

For over 30 years, Lydia's Pharmacy served the residents of the south side of San Antonio until Adolfo's retirement. During those years, Adolfo together with his wife Lydia, raised their family and served their community. In 1986, the family suffered the tragic loss of the youngest child, Rebecca Christina, "Becky". Despite this incredible loss, Adolfo and his family, with the love and support of family and friends, worked through their grief and continued to thrive. Adolfo and Lydia will celebrate their 49th wedding anniversary on January 26, 2013 and their remaining four children have led successful careers in law, health care, and public health. In addition to running a business and raising a family, Adolfo earned a second degree in business administration; found time to serve as a board member of the St. Peter's/St. Joseph's Children's Home; became a member of the Our Lady of Grace Knights of Columbus; and traveled with friends and family within the U.S., Europe, and Mexico. He is a longtime Spurs fan and enjoyed their first of four championships like most San Antonians did, by riding through downtown in an impromptu celebration! He is also a devoted grandfather to his seven grandchildren.

Again, please join me in recognizing a true community leader in San Antonio on his 80th birthday, Adolfo Jesus Valadez.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLYMAN ANTHONY J. PORTANTINO

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Anthony Portantino for his six years of service in the California State Assembly. A graduate of Albright College in Reading, Pennsylvania, Assemblyman Portantino started out with a successful career in the entertainment industry. He produced and co-wrote a multitude of film and TV productions, including independent historical films highlighting racial issues in American history.

Mr. Portantino was then elected to the La Cañada Flintridge City Council in 1999 with over 70 percent of the vote. As a member of the City Council/School District Joint Use Committee, he played a pivotal role in procuring funding and services for local public schools. Mr. Portantino continued to serve as a member of the Council for nearly eight years and served two terms as its Mayor in 2001 and in 2005. He resigned in 2006 upon his election to the California State Assembly.

During his years in the California legislature, Assemblyman Portantino served the 44th District with great distinction, championing tougher regulations on firearms and successfully passing 38 bills into law.

He presided as Chair of the Assembly's Committee on Higher Education and was a member of the Transportation, Government Organization and Public Safety Standing Committees. He also served as a member of the

Assembly Select Committees on the Preservation of California's Entertainment Industry, Foster Care, and Community Colleges. Assemblyman Portantino has been recognized by his community for his extraordinary efforts on behalf of the Gold Line and for his exemplary service as a state legislator.

As a strong advocate for transparency and accountability in state finances, and a champion of health care issues, Assemblyman Portantino will be missed in the Assembly and by his constituents, but I know he will continue to represent the needs of his community in any endeavor he chooses to pursue hereafter. I join my colleagues in thanking him for his service and wish the Assemblyman, his wife Ellen, and their children Sofia and Isabella, the best in this new chapter of their lives.

REMEMBERING JOE McNULTY

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to remember a former member of my staff who lost his battle with cancer two weeks ago today.

Joe McNulty was my deputy press secretary and director of online communications. He worked for me from the summer of 2009 until this July, when he left to go to law school at the University of South Carolina. Joe was an important member of my staff and will be missed dearly.

Joe was an amazing individual and certainly left his mark on this world, as evidenced by the number of people who attended his memorial service at Immanuel Bible Church in Springfield, Virginia on December 10. Aside from family, friends and co-workers, classmates from high school and college were in attendance as were friends and neighbors of his parents, Paul and Brenda, and three sisters, Katy, Anni and Corrie.

People came from as far away as Spain for the service. There were friends from the church he attended and members of his college club soccer team. His principal from Robinson high school came, as did the school's choral director. The current U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia was at the service (Joe's father was the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia from 2001–2006) as were several other assistant U.S. attorneys from the office and a number of U.S. Marshals.

Joe's passing also made Politico's Playbook, something everyone on Capitol Hill reads every day and Joe devoured every morning.

The service for Joe was deeply moving. The pastor of his church in Fairfax spoke at the service, as did the pastor of the church he started attending in South Carolina, where he was attending law school. Both talked about Joe's strong faith in the Lord.

Joe's best friend, Steve Brewer, talked about how they met as freshmen in high school and said Joe was the best friend anyone could ask for. He told a story about how on a recent birthday the Washington area was paralyzed by a massive snowstorm, yet Joe managed to dig out his car and drive across town so his best friend wouldn't be alone on

his birthday. That spoke volumes of Joe's loyalty and the value he placed on friendship.

Joe's older sister, Katy, spoke on behalf of the "McNulty Women." She reminisced about how she and "Joey" would play for hours on end as toddlers and that Joe was always a good sport about playing the things that his older sister always wanted. She also talked about how "Joey" cared about his sisters and always looked out for them.

His father, whom I have known since his days when he served on the House Judiciary Committee, described how Joe always put others first, even in his darkest hours. He emphasized how much Joe would want to thank everyone for all they have done for him through the years and for coming to his memorial service. He told a story about how as Joe was once being wheeled into an operating room he asked the nurses to stop so he could thank them and the doctors for all they were doing for him. One of the nurses said no one had ever done that before. That was Joe. Always putting others first.

Paul also stressed Joe's unwavering in his courage, especially as he received one piece of bad news after another yet always helped his family and friends get through all it. Paul said Joe referred to his courageous reaction to news about spreading cancer as "a leadership moment."

His family has carried on Joe's spirit, sending out this message a few days after the service: "On behalf of all the McNulty's, I [his mother, Brenda] just wanted to say THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH for all of your selflessness over the weekend as you prepared, and on Monday for Joe's service. It was above and beyond anything we could ever hope for or imagine and we are so very grateful. . . . Every word spoken and every song sung ministered to us and to everyone there. So many people have been telling us that they appreciated the scriptures, were moved by the whole tone of the service, and gained a new appreciation for Joe and all he was about. We truly appreciate all you did to participate in the service and wish we could give you all a huge collective hug but mere words will have to do."

I was honored to speak at Joe's service on December 10. Below are my remarks:

I am speaking today on behalf of my entire staff, who worked with Joe and loved Joe. We extend our condolences to Brenda and Paul and the rest of Joe's family.

Joe started in the Wolf office as an intern but left as a vital part of our staff. He always wanted to be a prosecutor like his father. That drove him.

I know my staff would have liked him to have abandoned those plans for our own selfish reasons because of the talents he brought to the office. He always pushed us to find new and more creative ways to reach constituents. He was a trend setter on Capitol Hill for communicating online. Other offices would regularly reach out to him asking for advice. He also was active in the Republican Communications Association, serving as its treasurer and reinvigorating the organization with great speakers and social events.

Joe brought an incredible work ethic to the office. No job was too menial; no task insurmountable. He also had an unbelievable reservoir of energy. There were nights that he would play sports until the wee hours of the morning but be at his desk first thing in the morning ready to conquer the world.

He never really stopped working. My staff got an e-mail from him just the other day making sure we had seen an article on an