

later moved to St. Helena, California where she worked at the St. Helena Catholic Church, caring for migrant workers. She also began to focus more on her writing and was taught creative writing at Napa Valley College. Mary was a feature writer for the Cleveland Plain Dealer and contributor to Cleveland Magazine, the Napa Valley Register and the St. Helena Star and Appellation Magazine. Mary also wrote a novel, "The Politics of Annie Quinn," chronicling her experience on Cleveland's City Council.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the memory of Mrs. Mary Zunt. Her contributions to the City of Cleveland will be remembered for years to come.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF MRS.  
SARA LOUISE JONES PETTIS

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Mrs. Sara Louise Jones Pettis. Mrs. Pettis was a respected community activist in the Fort Lauderdale area, and her commitment to civic service was admirable. She recently passed away at the age of 90, and I would like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest sympathies to her family and all those who knew her.

Mrs. Pettis was a resident of Fort Lauderdale, Florida for 64 years. She married Mr. Cyrus Pettis in 1941, and the couple lived in Fort Lauderdale since first moving to the area in 1947. They both understood the importance of giving back to the community. Mr. Pettis was a postal worker, and Mrs. Pettis served as a teacher's aide at multiple schools in Broward County.

Mrs. Pettis was known for her desire to improve the community. She was a lifetime member of the Parent Teacher's Association, and she volunteered at local schools, churches, and other charitable organizations. Mrs. Pettis was ultimately credited for expediting the creation of the Dillard High School Gymnasium in 1959. Her dedication to improving the lives of the people of Broward County was truly remarkable.

In 1985, the Pettis family received a very special recognition from then-First Lady Nancy Reagan. The First Lady recognized the Pettis family as a Great American Family. Over 25 members of the Pettis family were in attendance at a special White House ceremony. The award is given to families leading exemplary lives, and giving back to their communities. The Pettis family is one of only nine other families to ever receive this award.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend Mrs. Pettis for her dedication to the people of Fort Lauderdale. I knew Mrs. Pettis personally, and I was saddened to hear of her passing. She had an extraordinary sense of civic duty, and I would like to extend my sympathies to not only her family and friends, but to the entire South Florida community, and all of those whose lives she touched. Mrs. Pettis will be truly missed.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL CLIFFORD GEORGE FORD

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Lieutenant Colonel Clifford George Ford, distinguished veteran of the United States Air Force, loyal friend, and loving father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. Cliff passed away on January 18, 2012 at the age of 81. Through his thoughtful nature, zest for life, and dedication to service, he leaves behind a wonderful legacy.

Cliff was born on April 16, 1930 in Lohrville, Iowa, and grew up on farms in Iowa and Minnesota, alongside his two brothers and two sisters. It is during his childhood that his lifelong love of nature developed. After graduating from Lake City High School at the age of 17, Cliff made the decision to serve our great Nation in the United States military. Cliff's time in the United States Air Force took him all around the world, including: Japan, Germany, England, and Taiwan. While living in Yakota Air Base, Japan, Cliff met the love of his life, Rose. The two married on February 10, 1951.

Cliff spent the majority of his life serving our country in a number of capacities while in the Air Force. Throughout his service, Cliff demonstrated courage, determination, strength, and empathy—he truly illustrated the best of what America has to offer. In 1975, Cliff retired from the United States Air Force and spent the remainder of his life in Atwater, California. Retiring in the heart of California's San Joaquin Valley afforded Cliff the opportunity to purchase an almond orchard and pursue his lifelong passion for agriculture.

Cliff's legacy will live on through his service to our Nation, his work in our Valley, and through his children: Christine, Linda, Michelle, Anita, Chuck, Valerie, Melissa, and Hilary; 14 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Perhaps what was most telling of Cliff's character was the importance he placed on family and kinship. Cliff leaves his family with many warm and cherished memories.

In a note to Cliff, his grandson wrote, "every person is an example of the people they have spent their life with." As we reflect on Cliff's life, let us aspire to lead a life like his—one filled with resolve, self-reliance, and love.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the life of Lieutenant Colonel Clifford George Ford, an honorable and respected man with an unwavering commitment to his loving family and our Nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ANNI-  
VERSARY OF LITHUANIAN INDE-  
PENDENCE DAY

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the anniversary of the restoration of Lithuania's independence, and the re-establishment of their independence as it is com-

memorated by the Cleveland Chapter of the Lithuanian American Community.

On February 16, 1918, the people of Lithuania declared their independence to the world as a distinct country with its own culture and traditions. The state was founded on democratic principles and declared its independence in a peaceful manner. However, Lithuania's freedom was short-lived, as the country and its people were subjected to foreign occupation and conquest by the Nazi Germany regime and the U.S.S.R. during World War II. In 1940, the Soviet Union took control of Lithuania without the people's consent. This unjust control of a free people lasted for 50 years. On March 11, 1990, upon the fall of the Soviet Union, the people of Lithuania re-established their independence, and once again, became a sovereign, free state.

The Lithuanian-American Community's Cleveland Chapter has worked to connect the people of Cleveland of Lithuanian descent and to share their rich and vibrant culture with the community. I offer my best wishes for the upcoming celebration of their heritage and their independence.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in commemorating the independence of Lithuania and, in wishing the country and its people continued freedom and success.

HONORING SUPERINTENDENT  
SANDY THORSTENSON

**HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Sandy Thorstenson for her leadership and dedication as Superintendent to the Whittier Union High School District.

Born and raised in Whittier, CA, Sandy has served as Superintendent of the Whittier Union High School District for 10 years. She is a graduate of Whittier High School and Whittier College with her Master's Degree in Education from California State University, Fullerton. Sandy started her 34-year career in the Whittier Union High School District as a teacher and quickly ascended to Assistant Principal, Principal, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and ultimately Superintendent.

Under her leadership, Sandy has spearheaded Whittier Union's transformation into a high-achieving district with five comprehensive high schools serving 13,400 students from socio-economically diverse backgrounds. Sandy's "whatever it takes" attitude has ensured student achievement for all students, resulting in state and national recognition. Whittier Union High School District has demonstrated remarkable gains in student achievement at every school, becoming one of the top school districts in Los Angeles County.

Sandy is an active advocate for quality and equity in public education at the local, state, and national level as a member of many professional and community organizations. She currently serves on the California State Superintendents' Council, the Pivot Learning Partners Board and is the current President of California City Superintendents Association. She is also a member of the Soroptimist International of Whittier, Whittier College Corporate

Council, and a past member of the Whittier Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Due to these outstanding achievements for the school district and beyond, Sandy has been selected as California's National Superintendent of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators.

Mr. Speaker and distinguished colleagues, please join me in honoring this extraordinary woman whose love and dedication to our students is overwhelmingly obvious. Let us congratulate her on her many accomplishments to the Whittier Union High School District and our community.

24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
NAGORNO-KARABAKH WAR OF  
1988-1994

**HON. BRAD SHERMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the 24th anniversary of a dark chapter in modern history. During the Nagorno-Karabakh War of 1988 to 1994, Armenian civilians were indiscriminately attacked.

On the evening of February 27, 1988, Armenian civilians living in Sumgait, in Soviet Azerbaijan, were violently targeted in a three-day rampage. Armenian civilians were hunted down and brutally assaulted. Some were raped, and some were burned alive at the hands of rioters. Local police reportedly ignored repeated calls for help by Armenian civilians. The official figure from Soviet authorities, who prohibited journalists from entering the area, was just over 30 people dead and over 200 injured. However, it is believed that more—perhaps hundreds—were murdered by roving mobs.

The Sumgait Pogrom was, sadly, only the beginning.

Despite international condemnation of the pogrom in Sumgait, another anti-Armenian pogrom occurred later that year in Kirovabad, Azerbaijan, from November 21st to 27th. Due to the brutality, the Armenians of Kirovabad and the surrounding areas were forced to flee their homes.

Another crime against humanity occurred yet again from January 13th to the 19th, in 1990. Members of the Armenian community of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, were assaulted, tortured and killed again by violent mobs.

I would like to commemorate the Armenian victims of the Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku massacres to honor the memory of the murdered, and to stop future bloodshed. If we hope to stop future massacres, we must acknowledge these horrific events and ensure they do not happen again.

We will not forget the ethnic-cleansing of the Armenians from Azerbaijan.

But we need to do more—we need to demonstrate to Azerbaijan that the United States is committed to peace and to the protection of Artsakh from coercion.

We must urge Azerbaijan to cease all threats and acts of coercion against the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh.

In 1992, Congress prohibited aid to Azerbaijan because of its continuing blockade against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. Un-

fortunately, Congress in 2001 approved a waiver to this provision and administrations have used the waiver since then to provide aid to Baku. Congress should strengthen Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act by removing the President's ability to waive U.S. law prohibiting aid to Azerbaijan because of its continuing blockade against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

I urge the Administration to remove all barriers to broad-based U.S.-Nagorno Karabakh governmental and civil society communication, travel, and cooperation.

We must reaffirm America's commitment to an enduring, peaceful and democratic resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHNNY  
KILBANE

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and memory of Cleveland's Boxing Champion, Johnny Kilbane, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of his attainment of the title of World Featherweight Champion-ship.

Johnny Kilbane was born in Cleveland, Ohio on April 9th, 1889. He began his ascent into the boxing world at age eighteen with his first fight in the featherweight division. Throughout his career, Johnny fought in over 140 fights—resulting in 46 victories, 79 no decisions and only four losses. On February 22, 1912, in a 20 rounder in Vernon, California, Johnny Kilbane won his first world title in a fight against Abe Attell. The fight was for the World Featherweight Championship, a title he would hold from 1912 to 1923. Kilbane is believed to have held that title for the longest uninterrupted reign in boxing history.

A Cleveland local, Kilbane held a number of positions after he retired from the boxing world. During World War II, he worked as a boxing instructor at Camp Gordon in Georgia, Camp Sherman in Ohio, and Camp Custer in Michigan. He was also a boxing referee and instructor at local high schools. He operated a training club in Vermillion.

Johnny transitioned into politics as well, and was elected to the Ohio State Senate in 1941. He also held office as a State Representative, and was elected to the Municipal Court Clerk's Office in 1951, a role which he served until his death in 1957.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the life of Johnny Kilbane and the 100th anniversary of his achievement of the title of World Featherweight Championship.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SOM-  
ERSET COUNTY MILITARY FAM-  
ILY SUPPORT GROUP

**HON. MARK S. CRITZ**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. CRITZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a military support group in my district that provides deployed members of our armed forces

and their families with material support, emotional comfort and spiritual sustenance.

Founded in 2003, the Somerset County Military Family Support Group sends deployed service members monthly packages containing food, health products, books, letters and games. The group also counsels family members of deployed military personnel, takes part in festivals and parades in order to pay homage to the sacrifices of our soldiers, gathers and distributes information about pressing issues facing members of the military and their families and holds annual candlelight vigils to honor all those who have worn our nation's colors in battle.

Because the group is comprised largely of veterans and individuals from military families, its members understand the physical and psychological strain our troops experience each day they are separated from their families, and the emotional turmoil the family members of these service members are forced to endure as a result of knowing that someone they love is in harm's way. That they chose to use their first-hand knowledge of these struggles to craft a renowned military support program speaks to their capacity to turn hardship into an outstanding gift for others.

Mr. Speaker, while all of us appreciated the valor and sacrifices of our troops, only the most talented and proactive among us are able to act on this appreciation in a way that makes an impact on thousands of lives. The Somerset County Military Family Support Group has not only accomplished this, but has done so while spreading the spirit of service throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. All of us should seek to emulate the selfless efforts of its members in our own efforts to promote the greater good.

TRIBUTE TO SUNY CANTON FIRST  
RESPONDERS

**HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the heroism of those responsible for safely controlling a fire that broke out on campus at SUNY Canton this month.

Following a fire in the chemistry lab inside Cook Hall, it was the unquestionable valor and commitment of these men and women that protected students, faculty and administrators.

These individuals acted with the utmost professionalism and courage when called to duty and protected members of their community. These first responders prevented untold amounts of injury to our friends and neighbors, and saved the school from a much worse situation.

On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, I commend and thank these emergency personnel, agencies and individuals for their bravery, selflessness, and assistance.

AAC Contracting, Atlantic Testing, Aubertine and Currier, Canton Fire & Rescue, Canton Police Department, Clean Harbors Environmental, David Sullivan—St. Lawrence County Law Enforcement Academy, Ecology & Environment, Inc., Gouverneur Fire Department, Heuvelton Volunteer Fire Department, Morley Fire Department, Murnane Building Company, NYS Office of General Services, NYS Police