

TRIBUTE TO CENTRAL OREGON
VETERANS OUTREACH

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay special tribute to Central Oregon Veterans Outreach (COVO) for their tireless efforts on behalf of homeless veterans in Oregon's Second District. Since its founding in 2005 by members of the Bend/La Pine Vietnam Veterans of America, COVO has grown from a handful of concerned veterans reaching out to other veterans in the homeless camps around the area to a full-fledged non-profit organization with countless volunteers, a dedicated staff, and a truly professional board of directors.

In the early years of this organization, a small group of Vietnam veterans took it upon themselves to visit homeless camps on the High Desert, providing much needed supplies and support to those veterans who fell upon hard times and were in desperate need of a hand up. Today, COVO has a full time staff that coordinates continuing volunteer efforts to deliver food, water, tents, sleeping bags, clothing, and propane to the region's homeless camps. In addition to making weekly trips with supplies, COVO has transformed a van into a mobile medical clinic that is staffed by volunteer doctors, nurses, and medical staff who provide free care to the homeless population each week. This is an invaluable service to those in need.

COVO continues to provide free assistance to veterans in the form of benefits claim-filing, bus passes, medical shuttle reservations, and assistance with accessing resources like the HUD VASH housing voucher program and transitional housing at their 6-bed "Home of the Brave" facility. COVO continues to advocate for those veterans who are most in need of assistance and who are unable to be their own voice in times of need.

Mr. Speaker, we like to say, "We will never forget what our veterans have done for our way of life." They put their lives on the line for this country, and we cannot turn our backs on them. Any of them.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my fellow colleagues join me in recognizing COVO for their staunch and invaluable advocacy on behalf of our most vulnerable veterans: President Linda Heatley; Secretary/Treasurer Rob Bryce; Directors Susan Steves, Craig Jorgensen, Rickie Gunn, Jerry Chinn, Dan Lauderback, Lauri Imholt, and Dr. Elizabeth Leeburg; Executive Director Chuck Hemingway; Counselors Alex Weiss and Allen Wilson; Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program staff Steve Wilkes, Ruth Clark, and Yvonne Devine; Outreach Coordinator Lisa Miller; Volunteer Coordinator Kim Darling; Office Administrator and DAV Shuttle Coordinator Chuck Man; Housing Manager Steve Haupt, and; Veteran Service Officer Patricia White and VSO Intern Kim Burger.

Mr. Speaker, the staff, board, and volunteers who comprise COVO deserve the thanks of a grateful nation for all they have done and continue to do for the veterans of Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson Counties.

IN HONOR OF CORRINE CODY

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Corrine Cody, who passed away on Saturday March 3, 2012. Mrs. Cody was originally from Queens, New York, but she moved to Bucks County Pennsylvania with her husband and children in 1966 and remained in Doylestown for 45 years. Corrine worked for the Central Bucks School District for almost 30 years, where she taught elementary students for 15 years, served as principal for several years, and finished her career as a teacher in the gifted program.

Mrs. Cody was incredibly passionate about teaching. One of her greatest accomplishments was creating the Central Bucks School District's program for gifted students. At one point in her career, Corrine actually decided to leave her job as principal at Paul W. Kutz Elementary School because she believed she could do even more to help children reach their full potential. She would go on to become the coordinator of the social studies and science curriculum for all C.B. elementary schools.

Her teaching and activism went beyond the classroom too. Corrine worked closely with the Peace Valley Nature Center to start a program that would teach fifth and sixth graders about clean water, storm water runoff, and other aspects of the Bucks County environment. As a member of the Bucks County League of Women Voters, she was instrumental in the formation of the Kids Voting program in Central Bucks. Corrine also played a huge role in the development of the Doylestown bike and hike trail, which many of my constituents take advantage of today.

Mrs. Cody leaves behind an inspirational legacy on generations of Bucks County children. I am proud and pleased to speak on her behalf today, and am grateful for all that she did for our area.

ROBY ANNOUNCES

CONGRESSIONAL PEANUT CAUCUS

HON. MARTHA ROBY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the newly formed bipartisan Congressional Peanut Caucus that I have co-founded with Representative SAMFORD BISHOP. The caucus will serve as an informal group of Members of Congress dedicated to all issues related to peanuts and the role they play in on our Nation's agriculture industry.

Representative BISHOP and I formed this caucus to promote and support peanut production—a crucial part of the agriculture industry in the Southern States we represent. Representative BISHOP has been a strong force in shaping Federal policies to advance the U.S. peanut industry and ensure it remains competitive. I am grateful for the opportunity to work on this initiative with such a strong advocate.

Agriculture remains the number one industry in my State of Alabama, and has been a top

priority for me since taking office. The peanut industry—specifically—is an essential and recognizable commodity for Alabama. Seven States account for approximately 99% of all peanuts grown in the U.S. Alabama is among the top few States, along with Georgia, Florida, and Mississippi that produces a major share of our Nation's peanut crop.

Our country's reliance on domestic agricultural production is rising with continuous population growth. Peanuts are the 12th most valuable cash crop grown in the United States with a farm value of over one billion dollars. The World Bank and the U.S. Agency for International Development are both looking at peanuts and peanut producers as vital components in fighting global malnutrition. In addition, the spectrum of new and emerging research related to peanuts and health is broadening quickly. The application of this research may lead to a better understanding of ways to reduce the risk of certain diseases, including Type Two diabetes and some cancers. Therefore, we must ensure that our farmers across the Nation have the resources necessary to maintain successful peanut crops from year to year.

Congressional Caucuses are an important way to increase awareness of principal issues and identify legislative priorities. As Representatives, it is our responsibility to bring the voices of farmers from all over the country to the forefront of the discussion and to ensure that all of their interests are fairly represented. Members of the Peanut Caucus will have the ability to collectively advocate in Congress for peanut farmers and producers of this important crop.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues and I begin to prepare for the next Farm Bill, we believe it must contain provisions that are beneficial to American farmers, while also maintaining fiscal restraint. With that in mind, it is my hope that this Caucus will serve as a working group for members from our Nation's peanut States and will help streamline communication between Congressional offices. I urge any interested colleague to join us on the Peanut Caucus, and I look forward to working with Chairman LUCAS and the House Agriculture Committee on the next Farm Bill as we consider legislative issues that affect our Nation's peanut farmers.

HEAVY TRUCK TAX FAIRNESS ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, nothing is more essential to restoring the economy, revitalizing our communities, and protecting our environment than the effort to rebuild and renew America. The U.S. faces steep infrastructure challenges. Our infrastructure inventory is in poor repair and much of it is outdated—not just decades, but often centuries old. Our effort to rebuild and renew that infrastructure is stalled because of a funding impasse. The Highway Trust Fund nearly exhausted its funding several times recently and it is clear that our existing funding mechanisms are insufficient to meet our current, much less future, needs. Congress must consider new revenue sources to meet our infra-

structure challenges and must work with transportation users to find the most efficient means of raising this revenue.

I rise today to reintroduce the Heavy Truck Tax Fairness Act, bipartisan legislation to ease barriers to investment in new, heavy trucks. The funding sources for the Highway Trust Fund can be volatile, depending on the health of the economy. Current law places a 12% tax on the sale of new heavy trucks, trailers, and certain tractors. This tax is an important source of Highway Trust Fund revenues. In times of economic stress, these sales fall dramatically, badly limiting Trust Fund resources. These lost sales have several important effects. By reducing revenue to the Trust Fund, the decline hinders economic productivity by imposing costs from poor infrastructure. It also reflects an increase in the average age of the trucking fleet. New trucks have significant environmental and safety advantages, and Congress should reduce the barriers to new truck acquisition. To meet the demand for new trucks, most truck manufacturers will add employees, as most have significant engine and final assembly operations in the U.S.

The Heavy Truck Tax Fairness Act would replace the 12% excise tax currently levied on new truck, trailer, and certain tractor sales with an off-setting increase in the diesel fuel excise tax of \$0.064 per gallon. This modest change will ensure that the aggregate tax burden stays roughly equivalent over 10 years; it will also have the effect of smoothing the resources available to the Highway Trust Fund and ensure the U.S. can continue investing in our vital transportation infrastructure. I also note that this legislation does not affect all transportation stakeholders equally. In particular, smaller companies and owner-operators could see fewer benefits. I pledge to work with affected groups as this legislation advances to ensure that the legislation, as enacted, is as carefully tailored and broadly beneficial as possible.

HONORING AUSTIN ROPER

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Austin Roper of the Kriskville High School Wrestling team for winning the Class 2 Missouri State Wrestling Championship in the 132-pound weight class.

Mr. Roper and his coaches should be commended for all their hard work throughout the regular season and for bringing home the State title in the Class 2 132-pound weight class to his school and community. This is his third State title.

I ask that you join me in recognizing Mr. Roper for a job well done.

RECOGNIZING GEORGE DEAN CARDEN'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th birthday of George Dean Carden, a man from southwest Missouri who went from humble beginnings to becoming the largest producer of Shrine Circuses in the country.

George Carden was born on March 19, 1952 in Springfield, Missouri. It was in Springfield he was raised, staying with his grandparents as his parents traveled the country working in a circus. After a few years his parents bought a circus of their own, but this time George came along. It wasn't too long before George started his own circus company—George Carden Circus International—in 1981. Eventually, he bought out his father's circus, combined the two, and after years of hard work became one of the largest circus producers in North America. In fact, George and his father have produced the Abou Ben Adhem Shrine Circus for almost fifty years.

The circus is usually a family affair and the Cardens are no different. George's wife, Alexandra, is also involved with the circus, as are his two sons, Larry and Brett Carden. George also has a daughter, Michelle, and two grandsons, George Brett and Cash Carden. Working in the circus means a life on the road, but when it comes time to relax, George and his family spend their time on their 800-acre ranch in Hickory County, Missouri, enjoying deer hunting and fishing.

Giving back to the community is also important to George. He is a lifetime member of Abou Ben Adhem Shriners and is very active in the Shriner community, even financially supporting renovations to the Shrine Mosque. George also has a soft spot for children and has taken care of over 100,000 special and needy children over the past thirty years. For his service, George has become honorary member of many Shrine Temples.

Mr. Speaker, George is a great man and I am privileged to honor him on his 60th birthday.

HONORING BOLIVAR COUNTY HEAD START

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Bolivar County Head Start Program (BCHSP) which began as

an affiliate program under the umbrella of the Bolivar County Community Action Agency, Inc. The program was chartered on June 16, 1965 by the State of Mississippi under Governor Paul B. Johnson. Bolivar County Head Start Program is a non-profit corporation organized for the purpose of eliminating poverty and the causes thereof in Bolivar County, Mississippi.

The Association of Communities of Bolivar County began its operations the summer of 1965 and enrolled 1,308 children in seventeen centers. At its inception, the Bolivar County Head Start Program was housed in multiple buildings and churches. It began its operations the summer of 1966 with an enrollment of 1,550 children served in eight centers located throughout the county. Unfortunately, they have had to reduce the number of sites over the years due to inadequate funding.

Most recently, Bolivar County Head Start Program has made tremendous strides in its development. After years of record growth the Bolivar County Head Start Program was able to transition out of make shift facilities such as churches and old homes to mobile units stationed throughout the county. Thanks to funding from several sources they were able to build three state of the art head start centers in the communities of Rosedale, Shaw and Mound Bayou. In 2012 they added the Early Head Start Program for children 0-3 years of age and expectant mothers, increasing their total enrollment to 890 children.

It has been through strong leadership that the agency has been recognized not only throughout the State of Mississippi, but also nationwide for its performance and service provided to children, families and communities. Mr. Amzie Moore was the first Head Start Director under the Association of Communities of Bolivar County; Mr. Dick Gurnie, the first Executive Director and later Mr. Billy J. McCain was both Head Start Director and Executive Director. After Mr. McCain's untimely departure in 2009, the charge was passed on to Mr. Adolph Hilliard to continue the agency legacy. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Hilliard retired, Mrs. Elnora Littleton was appointed the interim Executive Director. Mrs. Littleton is currently serving as the first African American female to head the Bolivar County Head Start Program.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Bolivar County Head Start for its outstanding commitment to improving the lives of children and families throughout Bolivar County, Mississippi.