

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING FT. BLISS GARRISON
COMMANDER COLONEL JOSEPH
SIMONELLI

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2012

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Colonel Joseph Simonelli for his outstanding service to the Army and the nation.

For the past two years, Colonel Simonelli has served as the garrison commander of Fort Bliss. A garrison commander is the Mayor of an Army installation with responsibility for everything from potholes to energy contracts. It is one of the most challenging positions in the Army, and only a few of the most outstanding officers are selected for this top command position.

Colonel Simonelli has lead Fort Bliss at a critical juncture in the post's and the Army's history. With wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, he provided critical support to soldiers training for combat, while taking care of family members. He ensured that the spouses, parents, and children of deploying troops, facing so much stress, felt the warm embrace of the Army family.

As Fort Bliss was deploying combat forces, the post was also continuing to adjust to the impact of the 2005 BRAC which relocated the 1st Armored Division to El Paso. Colonel Simonelli oversaw important projects including construction of the new Lifestyle Center which is now providing upgraded facilities to support military families and has become an important hub for the community. Colonel Simonelli worked to transform the Lifestyle Center into more than a just place to shop or dine; the Lifestyle Center has become the heart of Fort Bliss, open and welcoming to all. This new gathering place is a model, not just for the military, but for all communities.

Colonel Simonelli and his staff tackled this and other projects, including the designation of Fort Bliss as one of the two Net Zero installations, with incredible efficiency and dedication. Colonel Simonelli instilled in all an unwavering commitment to supporting soldiers and their families.

As Joe and Bettye Marie move on to the next chapter in their life in the Army, I rise to offer my thanks for all that they have done to make Fort Bliss a better place to work and live. Their hard work and dedication has touched so many lives, and we owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude for all that they have done for our soldiers, for our community, and for our nation.

TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF JAMES
ARNESS

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2012

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to recognize the life of Mr. James Arness, the legendary actor best known for his role as U.S. Marshal Matt Dillon in the television series, "Gunsmoke." Mr. Arness would have celebrated his 89th birthday tomorrow, on May 26, so it is fitting that we acknowledge his tremendous legacy this week.

Mr. Arness played one of the most iconic characters in the history of television. As a testament to its overwhelming popularity, "Gunsmoke," which was set in Dodge City, still stands out as one of the most popular weekly drama series, running a remarkable 20 years from 1955 through 1975.

Mr. Arness shaped a character that was as beloved as the man himself. His fans spanned the world and were as devoted as any fan base bar none. Clearly, Mr. Arness created a cowboy and lawman that resonated with viewers worldwide.

Before his rise to fame, Mr. Arness served in the U.S. Army during World War II, where he was severely wounded during Operation Shingle in Anzio, Italy. For his heroic actions, he was decorated with the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart.

Following his military service, Mr. Arness hitchhiked to Hollywood and began his acting career. In addition to his wonderful role as Marshal Matt Dillon, he had a lengthy and impressive list of acting achievements in both television and film and was nominated for three Emmy Awards.

For his unparalleled contributions, Mr. Arness was given a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. He was also inducted into the Western Performers Hall of Fame at the National Cowboy and Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City and the Santa Clarita Walk of Western Stars, and was named by People Magazine as one of the top ten television stars of all time. In addition, The State of Alabama House of Representatives passed a resolution in honor of Mr. Arness in 2011.

Mr. Arness was a devoted and loving family man. He left behind his wife, Janet, along with wonderful children and grandchildren. His legacy will forever live on through them.

It is my pleasure to recognize the iconic life of James Arness and ask my colleagues join me in expressing our debt of gratitude to him.

JACOB WILLIAM WARD

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2012

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jacob William Ward. Jacob is a

very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 412, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jacob has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jacob has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jacob has earned distinction of becoming a Fire Builder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. He is a Brotherhood Member of the Order of the Arrow and has served his troop as Senior Patrol Leader, Junior Assistant Scout Master and Troop Guide. Jacob has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jacob constructed, built and placed benches along the walking trails at Smithville Lake so that his community can enjoy Smithville Lake and the surrounding wildlife.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jacob William Ward for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF ARMY STAFF SERGEANT AN-
DREW TREVOR BRITTON-MIHALO

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness and deepest sympathy that I rise to pay tribute to a fallen American hero. Army Staff Sergeant Andrew Trevor Britton-Mihalo died on April 25, 2012, in Kandahar, Afghanistan, while training Afghan Special Operations Forces. SSG Britton-Mihalo, a Green Beret, was assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group; and, prior to his deployment, he was stationed at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

SSG Britton-Mihalo first entered the Army in 2005 after graduating from Royal High School in Simi Valley, California. Just three years later, in 2008, his trademark drive, determination and toughness helped SSG Britton-Mihalo win the right to join the elite ranks of the U.S. Army Special Forces. This impressive accomplishment did not surprise anyone who knew him. Prior to joining the Army, SSG Britton-Mihalo had already distinguished himself as an Eagle Scout and as a champion high school wrestler who won the match that secured his school their first-ever state wrestling title. He was described by those who knew him as one who was always fighting for the underdog and was quick to protect those who could not protect themselves. It was only fitting that such a man would join the Special Forces whose motto, *De oppresso liber*, is translated, "to liberate the oppressed"; and, true to his character, that is exactly what SSG

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Britton-Mihalo was doing for the people of Afghanistan when he was killed just two months before his 26th birthday.

SSG Britton-Mihalo gave his life attempting to secure for the Afghan people the blessings of freedom. We will never forget his ultimate sacrifice toward that honorable end. To SSG Britton-Mihalo's loving wife Jesse, his family, and friends, my wife Vicki joins me in offering our most sincere condolences and prayers.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a grateful United States Congress, I stand here today to honor SSG Andrew Trevor Britton-Mihalo and all of the heroes we have lost. May God continue to bless them and the United States Armed Forces.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
BRIAN M. MOORE

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2012

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer tribute to a truly superb civil servant, veteran, and engineer, Mr. Brian Moore, on the occasion of his retirement as Deputy District Engineer for the Los Angeles District of the United States Army Corps of Engineers. It has been such a pleasure to know and work with Mr. Moore as he has helped address critical water resources and infrastructure needs for this nation during his career. Overall, he has served his country as a young soldier and as a distinguished civilian senior leader for the Los Angeles District spanning a career of over 44 years.

Mr. Moore's technical expertise and superior leadership has been instrumental to the success of the Army Corps of Engineers' many complex projects and programs. As the Army Corps of Engineers transformed itself to a project management focused organization, he was called to lead the role as one of the first Deputy District Engineers for Project Management and is retiring as the longest serving Corps leader in that role. He has been instrumental in the success of the extremely capable Los Angeles District which has nearly 400 projects in navigation, flood control, environmental restoration, military construction, and environmental cleanup. He has led and mentored future engineering leaders supporting our country's critical infrastructure including young military officers who have been assigned to the Los Angeles District.

He has been equally adept at interacting with all levels of government partners, agencies, stakeholders, and public sponsors in meeting the nation's military construction and water resources needs. The organization and teams that he has led have been known for their intricate problem solving, common sense solutions, consideration of stakeholder needs, and teamwork. All in all, I know of no finer member of our esteemed United States Army Corps of Engineers and I wish him the best in the years ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF GREGORY
CHRISTIANSEN

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2012

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Gregory Christiansen in the event of his retirement after many years of dedicated service to music education and the community.

Gregory earned his Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education from the University of the Pacific in 1974, where he graduated Cum Laude. He went on to earn a Diploma from the Grove School of Music's Professional Instrumental Program in 1983. He finished his education by obtaining his Master of Music degree in Music Education from the University of Southern California in 1985. He graduated with distinction as a member of Pi Kappa Lambda, the honorary music fraternity.

Gregory has spent his career teaching music education to students ranging from elementary school through college. He taught a College Jazz Ensemble for 3 years. For 30 years he worked with both instrumental and choral groups at the high school level. There he also developed and organized an effective parent support group. He taught Middle School Instrumental Music for two years where he developed a jazz curriculum for the students. Finally, he taught Elementary Instrumental and General Music for four years, during which he developed a fourth grade exploratory instrumental music curriculum.

Gregory has dedicated many years to supporting not only his students but the community as a whole. He has provided musical performances for many community events, as well as for visiting dignitaries. Gregory also worked with many community members on producing a band review, which attracted groups from over 40 schools in the region. Through his leadership, both Merced High School and Golden Valley High School have performed in the Pasadena Rose Parade. Gregory organized a non-profit parent organization to help raise funds for music students.

Gregory is not only part of the local music scene but he is involved in many national music organizations. He has served on the board of both the International Association of Jazz Educators as well as the Northern California Band Association. He holds professional affiliations with the following organizations: Jazz Educators Network, California Teachers Association, California Music Educators Association and California Band Directors Association.

Throughout his involvement, he has been recognized for his work and dedication to his community and students. In both 1998 and 2005, he received the Northern California Band Director of the Year. He has also received Outstanding Band Director plaques at fifteen different band reviews. Merced County has recognized his work in music education by honoring him with the Teacher of the Year Award in 2008, Superintendent Recognition Award in 2009 and the Rotary Teacher of the Year Award in 2009.

Gregory was not only dedicated to his current students but the future of music education as well. He served as Master Teacher and mentor for many Student Teachers during his

career. He provided opportunities for graduated students to work with and teach present students. Gregory also provided clinics at conferences for new teachers dealing with selecting repertoire, instrumentation and marching band organization.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Gregory Christiansen for his dedication to music education and our community as a whole.

HONORING ALL-STATE CHOIR
MEMBER OF CARROLL SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOL

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2012

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize Paige Stinnett, of the Carroll Senior High School choir, for being selected for the Texas Music Educators Association's All-State Women's Choir.

Every year 60,000 high school musicians in Texas compete for the opportunity to be among the 1,500 chosen for various All-State ensembles. Choir singers first audition before judges in one of twenty-eight Regions, and the highest ranked musicians from each Region then participate in one of seven Area competitions. The best among the Area singers then go on to the annual clinic and convention hosted by the Texas Music Educators Association, TMEA. The clinical consists of three days of rehearsal with prestigious musical experts and culminates in a grand All-State performance.

Being selected for one of the three All-State choirs (Men's, Women's, or Mixed) is indeed a high honor for any high school choir member and is a testament to their hard work, talent, and dedication. That makes it all the more impressive that Paige Stinnett, who is a soprano, not only made it to the 2012 Women's Choir, but also achieved the same honor in 2011. Her success is truly remarkable. I would also like to recognize the valuable contributions made by Chris Hutchinson, the Carroll Senior High School choir director, whose commitment to his school's musical program has shown brilliantly through his students.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating Paige Stinnett on being chosen for the TMEA All-State Women's Choir.

HONORING VINCE HARRIS

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 25, 2012

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. CARDOZA, and I rise today to acknowledge and honor Vince Harris, Executive Director of the Stanislaus Council of Governments, StanCOG, to thank him for his leadership and direction of transportation improvements in the Central Valley.

StanCOG is the Metropolitan Planning Organization, MPO, and the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, RTPA, for the