

classes annually. Additionally, Martha is known for her celebrity auctioneering in the community, where she has been able to raise over \$2 million to support local charities.

Martha has not only dedicated her life to cooking, but also has generously assisted many local organizations such as SOS Read, the Children's Fund, the Redlands Bowl Association, the Loma Linda University Children's Hospital and Sacred Heart Church. Her genuine spirit and high energy has contributed immensely to these organizations.

On top of her cooking classes, restaurants, and philanthropic events, Martha is a realtor, and also hosts a radio cooking show, which airs on weekdays at 8:33 a.m. and 4:32 p.m. on KVCR 91.9 FM. Additionally, Martha is the author of Martha Green's Cooking Things, a cookbook that offers over 300 recipes.

Martha's generosity and culinary passion has impacted Inland Empire immeasurably. Her bright personality and dedication to charitable events has made a lasting impact in our community. I extend my congratulations to Martha Green as she is honored with the Tzedakah award by the Congregation Emanu El on June 9th 2012.

#### TRIBUTE TO VETERANS OF THE VIETNAM WAR

#### HON. ANN MARIE BUERKLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 2012*

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to our Veterans of the Vietnam War and to reflect upon their courage, strength, and love for the United States of America.

March 29, 2012, has been proclaimed Vietnam Veteran's Day in the State of New York, but it is important that we recognize our Veterans of the Vietnam War throughout this great Nation.

During the Vietnam War, of the more than 3.4 million Americans that were deployed, over 58,000 were killed, 153,000 were wounded, and over 2,000 remain missing in action.

In April of 1975, the Vietnam War came to a close with the fall of Saigon, but the war will go on forever in the hearts and minds of our Veterans and their families. It is important that we remind our Veterans that they are greatly appreciated for their service to this great Nation and that they will never be forgotten. It is because of our service men and women that the United States of America remains the Greatest Nation in the History of Mankind.

The men and woman who served our country in the Vietnam War are shining examples of patriotism, strength, courage, and decency. It is with great honor that I pause and reflect upon their sacrifice and thank our Vietnam Veterans for their dedicated service to the United States of America.

#### HONORING KAREN L. MACON

#### HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 2012*

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following proclamation.

Whereas, thirty-eight years ago a virtuous woman of God accepted her calling to serve in the Educational System; and

Whereas, Mrs. Karen L. Macon began her educational career in teaching in South Bend, Indiana at Muesel Elementary School in 1974 and this year she retires from teaching at Edward L. Bouie, Sr., Elementary Theme School in Lithonia, Georgia, she has served the DeKalb County Public Schools System well and our community has been blessed through her service; and

Whereas, this phenomenal woman has shared her time and talents as a Teacher, Educator and Motivator, giving the citizens of Georgia a person of great worth, a fearless leader, a devoted scholar and a servant to all who want to advance the lives of our youth; and

Whereas, Mrs. Macon is formally retiring from her educational career today, she will continue to promote education because she is a cornerstone in our community that has enhanced the lives of thousands for the betterment of our District and Nation; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Mrs. Karen L. Macon on her retirement from the DeKalb County Public Schools System and to wish her well in her new endeavors;

Now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim May 18, 2012 as Mrs. Karen L. Macon Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

#### A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF RUTHERFORD "BUD" GASTON

#### HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 2012*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Rutherford "Bud" Gaston, who passed away on May 16, 2012 at the age of 91. Bud will be remembered for his groundbreaking work in education, his loyalty to his friends, family, and students, as well as his role as one of Central California's most visionary leaders.

Bud was born in Georgia and spent his childhood in Pennsylvania, where he attended elementary school and high school. His commitment to service was evident early in his life. Bud served our Nation proudly in the United States Army during World War II and ended his service as a second lieutenant.

Bud and his wife made their way to Fresno in the late 1940s. In 1953, he graduated from California State University, Fresno and began his educational career. His remarkable 33-year educational career was marked with milestones. As Fresno Unified School District's first African-American principal, Bud became an inspiration and source of pride for an entire community.

Bud consistently maintained a positive attitude and worked tirelessly to ensure the success of his students. As a teacher, his gentle spirit and big heart put his students at ease and encouraged them to pursue success. In 1963, Bud was named principal of Teilman and Emerson schools. He retired in 1986 after serving as principal at Bethune Elementary School for 14 years. Throughout his impres-

sive career, he served as a mentor to countless students.

Bud's service to our community did not end in the classroom; he also served on a number of boards and commissions. He served as President of United Black Men of Fresno for ten years and was active on the boards of the Chaffee Zoo, Boys & Girls Clubs of Fresno, St. Agnes Medical Center, and the Kiwanis Club of Fresno. His hard work and innovative nature made him a respected member of our community and he served as an example to many.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Rutherford "Bud" Gaston, one of Fresno's most distinguished leaders, a trailblazer for education, and a true champion for the people of Central California. His leadership made him a role model and an asset to our community. His caring nature and vibrant spirit will be sorely missed, but his legacy will live on in the lives of those he touched.

#### HONORING STEVE SIMON THORNTON ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM WILSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#### HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 2012*

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a friend and constituent, Steve Simon Thornton, who has devoted the last 31 years to serving the children of eastern North Carolina. In a few days, Steve will be retiring as Assistant Superintendent of the Wilson County Public Schools.

Steve Thornton is a native of Halifax County, North Carolina. He was born on November 1, 1959 to Stonewall and Garteon Davis Thornton who were role models and inspired Steve to give of his time and talent to disadvantaged children. His parents believed in the power and opportunity offered by an educated mind and from a very early age ingrained in Steve and his three older siblings the importance of education.

Steve was a product of the Halifax County Public School System, having attended T. S. Inborden Elementary School and graduating in 1978 from Enfield High School. Throughout his formative years, Steve learned that education was key to breaking the cycle of poverty that can so often plague traditionally southern communities. He was determined to give back to the community that gave him so much. And so he attended East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina and in 1982 received a Bachelor's Degree in Intermediate Education.

After receiving his undergraduate degree, Steve chose to become an elementary teacher at Benvenue Elementary School in Nash County, North Carolina. He was so highly respected by his colleagues that he was named grade chairman and was also honored as the 1986 Teacher of the Year. The following year, Steve saw a new opportunity to help shape young minds and began serving as Assistant Principal at Carver Elementary School in Edgecombe County, North Carolina.

In 1989, after earning a Master's Degree in School Administration, Steve returned to his

native Halifax County and served as Principal of Pittman Elementary School. While there, he instituted a number of successful programs that helped to create an environment in which every child could learn successfully. In 1992, he was appointed Principal of Brawley Middle School where he was so successful that he was named Halifax County School's Wachovia Principal of the Year. In 1994, Steve returned to the newly merged Edgecombe County—Tarboro City School System where he served as Principal of Stocks Elementary School.

Two years later, Steve Thornton was recruited to serve as Executive Director of Human Resource Services with the Wilson County Public Schools. The following year he ascended to the position of Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Services, the position that he now holds. Steve is well respected and revered by the community and his colleagues in the entire school system. They will miss his spirit of dedication and excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Steve Simon Thornton for 31 years of service to the precious children of eastern North Carolina and for his commitment to education. I ask that my colleagues wish Steve Thornton God's continued blessings as he continues on life's journey.

#### OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

#### HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 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 \$15,713,655,602,953.23. We've added \$5,086,778,554,040.15 to our debt in a little over 3 years. This is debt our Nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

#### HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN PLASTIC TOYS INCORPORATED

#### HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 2012*

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge American Plastic Toys Incorporated, upon its 50th anniversary. American Plastic Toys is headquartered in Walled Lake, Michigan and operates a total of three facilities in Michigan and Mississippi. As a genuine model of American manufacturing, the company has proudly manufactured safe toys in America since 1962.

American Plastic Toys assembles 100% of the toys in their more than 125 item product line in the United States. It is worth noting less than 4% of their toy value content is imported and the majority of this minuscule percentage are sound components and fasteners, none of which are painted. Proudly, American Plastic Toys molds most of the components in their products in their own plants or purchases them from U.S. companies.

Dedicated to providing youngsters with safe toys and furniture for role play, riding and pre-school learning along with summer and winter fun, American Plastic Toys mandates every product be tested by at least one independent U.S. safety-testing lab. They are focused on ensuring their toys comply with every applicable safety standard.

The products manufactured by American Plastic Toys are sold by most major North American mass merchants. Their toys are also available in Central and South America and Australia. No doubt, American Plastic Toys has encouraged the imagination of many a child.

Mr. Speaker, for 50 years American Plastic Toys Incorporated has consistently been committed to a truly American product with a legacy of excellence, ingenuity, and the irrepressible spirit of the American entrepreneur. Today, as the company celebrates this enormous milestone, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating American Plastic Toys and recognizing their years of loyal service to our community and country.

#### HONORING TIMBER POINT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S 5TH GRADE STUDENTS FOR WINNING THE DISNEY PLANET CHALLENGE

#### HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 2012*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jennifer Giordano's 5th Grade Class at Timber Point Elementary School of East Islip, NY. Recently, the class was recognized as the Disney Planet Challenge's 2011–2012 New York State winners. They also placed 5th overall in the entire country. I am honored to have this school, Jennifer Giordano and all these students in the 2nd Congressional District of New York.

The Disney Planet Challenge is a competition designed to encourage American youth to play a key role in impacting the environment classroom by classroom. By learning the merits of conservation and innovative energy solutions, students become aware of the importance of protecting our environment. The challenge's interdisciplinary approach involves math, science, and English in order to motivate students to compete for a common goal. This is being applied on Long Island and across the nation.

Ms. Giordano's 5th Grade Class at Timber Point Elementary School embodies the spirit of thinking globally while acting locally. This all started with the film WALL-E, which inspired the students to launch a project focused on keeping non-biodegradable trash and dangerous chemicals out of local landfills. They met this goal by holding themselves and their community accountable. This included urging local restaurants to use biodegradable materials, setting up compost sites, initiating a battery collection program, and starting recycling programs. These 5th graders have successfully made their community more aware of how their habits impact our environment. Their hard work shows that when we all work together to do our part, we can make a big difference.

I commend these students for their dedication to their community and our planet. I would

also like to honor their teacher, Jennifer Giordano, and their parents for instilling in these children the importance of protecting our environment for future generations. As the New York State winners of the Disney Planet Challenge, I would like to formally submit all of these students' names in recognition of their achievements:

Zaina Abdelbaky, Brittney Amaru, Nicolette Banville, Charlie Curran, Kyle DeLisi, Nickolas Dimitriou, Ryan Engblom, Lauren Florenz, Steven Geisler, Nicole Graziano, Tom Hazell, Shannon Hubany, Dylan Lopez, Natalia Lozinski, Owen Meddis, Julia Ryan, Kerri Smith, Katelyn Spina, Natalie Stergakos, Ryann Tracy, Cassidy Triolo Matthew Pinz.

#### IN HONOR OF POLISH CONSTITUTION DAY

#### HON. ANN MARIE BUERKLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 2012*

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Polish Constitution Day: a day in which we celebrate the signing of Europe's first written constitution.

The Polish Constitution was signed into law on May 3, 1791. It was preceded only by the United States Constitution, making Poland the second nation in the world to establish a written constitution.

Once a monarchy, Poland recognized and declared the sovereignty of its citizens through the renunciation of noble power and the signing of the Polish Constitution.

Much like the United States Constitution, the Polish Constitution grants legal rights for all, freedom of religion, separation of powers, and political equality.

To this day, the principles of democracy have been central to the Polish people, including the many Polish-Americans who have made significant contributions to the United States of America and communities across this great nation.

It is with privilege that I pause and join with members of Congress, people across the United States, Poland, and nations around the world in commemorating and celebrating the Polish Constitution and the many efforts that the Polish people have made towards the development and growth of democracy throughout the world.

#### HONORING DR. THOMAS SMITH

#### HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 30, 2012*

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following proclamation.

Whereas, Dr. Thomas Smith has distinguished himself as an Educator in American government and civic leadership at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. High School in DeKalb County, Georgia; and

Whereas, Dr. Smith for the last ten (10) years has led his ninth grade civic students in the study of civic leadership both through academics and community service; and

Whereas, he spearheaded the effort to bring federal and state legislators to the school on