

Elements in Sudan's Islamic clergy and in the government interpret the Koran to give them license to tell people how they will live out their faith whether they consider themselves Muslim or not. In Meriam's case, her father has been absent from her life since she was a small child. Her Christian mother raised her as a Christian.

Sadly, Meriam is not the only Sudanese who chose differently on the matter of faith only to be faced with a death sentence for that choice. Sudanese civil activist Mahmud Muhammad Taha was arrested and charged with apostasy in 1984 for his efforts to end Sharia law in Sudan. He was subsequently executed.

In some countries, Christian converts have been forced to renounce their faith and conform to the version of Islam favored by the government of the day. Some of these countries have constitutions that ostensibly guarantee religious freedom even as they may also have laws that actually contradict those rights. Except for Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the other 15 countries including Sudan, have signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guaranteeing freedoms for their citizens.

Article 18 of that document enshrines "the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion." Speaking of the rights of the individual, that article also forbids "coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice. Article 18 also guarantees "the freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching."

The current report by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, or USCIRF, cites Sudan as a "country of particular concern" due to its government engaging in "systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of freedom of religion or belief." According to USCIRF, Sudan is the world's most violent abuser of the right to freedom of religion or belief.

USCIRF's Zudhi Jasser recommended in his testimony that not only should the U.S. Government take appropriate actions against Sudan as detailed in the International Religious Freedom Act, but that our government should also make religious freedom and human rights a centerpiece of U.S.-Sudan bilateral relations.

The troubling case of Meriam Ibrahim Ishag should warn of future incidents in which those who do not believe in Islam as defined by a government are persecuted or placed in fear of death or torture.

#### THE RETIREMENT OF CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT WENDELL L. PEACOCK

**HON. DOUG COLLINS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Chief Master Sergeant Wendell L. Peacock of the 94th Airlift Wing at Dobbins Air Reserve Base on the occasion of his retirement.

Chief Peacock enlisted in the Air Force in 1981 and served eight years of active duty before joining the Air Force Reserve. He has held various assignments in the security forces career field. In 2007, he moved to Dobbins Air Reserve Base as a Security Forces Manager. Chief Peacock became the Command Chief Master Sergeant for the 94th Airlift Wing at Dobbins in May 2011.

In this position, Chief Peacock has been the principal advisor to the commander and staff. He has been responsible for influencing mission readiness, utilization, morale, and quality of life for more than 1,600 enlisted Airmen. He has also coordinated with staff agencies and assists with the implementation of wing policies.

I had the privilege of working alongside Chief Peacock as a chaplain in the 94th Air Wing and had a close relationship with him. He exemplifies the very best traits that can be found among the ranks of our Armed Forces. I stand with many Airmen at Dobbins who will miss the Chief and wish him all the best in his retirement.

#### HONORING CELANESE CORPORATION AND HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

**HON. SAM JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my fellow colleagues to join me in thanking and congratulating Celanese Corporation as they celebrate their 10 year partnership with the South Collin County Habitat for Humanity.

Over the past decade, Celanese and Habitat have changed countless lives and have improved the future for families in our communities. In fact, since 2005, Celanese has donated over \$400,000 and over 7,500 volunteer hours towards building 10 Habitat for Humanity Homes. This year, almost 300 volunteers devoted 2,500 hours to complete a home for a family over 14 weekends. They must be proud of these accomplishments, I sure am.

When the strength of corporations and the hearts of volunteers come together the results are limitless. The noble work done by these two groups is to be commended and emulated by all.

A strong relationship between outstanding companies and selfless volunteer organizations is one of the fundamental building blocks of a safe and prosperous community. I thank all of those involved for their hard work, dedication, and promise of a brighter future for North Texans.

I look at the extraordinary accomplishments over the past 10 years, and can't help but look forward to the next 10 years. I'm confident that your hard-work, generosity, and compassion will continue to guide you and lead you to continued success.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Celanese for their dedication to enhancing the lives of Collin County families. It is an honor and a privilege to represent the Celanese Corporation and its numerous employees in the United States Congress. God bless you. I salute you.

#### CONGRATULATING JOHN HANCOCK COLLEGE PREP HIGH SCHOOL ON THEIR AWARD AT THE 2014 MATE INTERNATIONAL REMOTELY OPERATED VEHICLE COMPETITION

**HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate John Hancock College Prep High School and their Underwater Robotics team on their award in the 2014 MATE International Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Competition. I appreciate all of the hard work and dedication the team members have put in to build their ROV and would like to congratulate them on this tremendous accomplishment.

The Marine Advanced Technology Education (MATE) Center created the ROV competition in partnership with the Marine Technology Society ROV Committee to encourage students to excel in mathematics and science and to pursue careers in these fields. The MATE competition brings together K-12, community college, and university students from all over the world to design and build ROVs based on scenarios from the ocean workplace. In addition to engineering their ROVs, students were required to create technical reports and presentations to be delivered to competition judges.

In June, John Hancock College Prep High School traveled to Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary in Alpena, MI after advancing from the Midwest regional. In competition with 29 other teams, they were awarded the "Biggest Bang for Buck Award" in the Ranger category for spending the least amount of money on a vehicle that performed exceptionally. Their underwater ROV, the "Aquatic Eagle", was designed to be a low-cost option for shipwreck and science investigations, as well as for conservation efforts. It was equipped with a camera, four motors, two hooks, and flotation devices. This is the first year that John Hancock College Prep High School has competed in the MATE contest.

The team included Hancock seniors Irving Alamilla, Jesus Caballero, Vincent Calderon, and Marisol Ramirez as well as juniors Carlos Barrios, Ivan Lopez, and Jennifer Mondragon. Ms. Jennifer McConnell Stites, a science teacher at John Hancock College Prep, was a mentor to the team.

John Hancock College Prep High School is a high school focused on college preparation, community service, and leadership. The school opened in 1999 and is located in the Third Congressional District on the Southwest Side of Chicago.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating John Hancock College Prep High School on their remarkable achievement and I wish them the best in the future.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF RONALD W. WALKER

**HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ronald W. Walker of Pierson, Tennessee. Today, Mr. Walker retires from the

Federal Aviation Administration as a Supervisory Air Traffic Control Specialist after 32 years, 7 months, and 2 days of faithful service to the people of the United States of America and the Memphis Air Route Traffic Control Center.

I thank Mr. Walker for his service, and I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

IN APPRECIATION OF EARL F. BROWN, JR.

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, South Carolina today is giving loving recognition and appreciation for Earl F. Brown, Jr. His achievements are recognized with the article of July 24, 2014, by Jason Old for WIS television, and the obituary of July 30, 2014, in The State newspaper.

(WIS)—Earl F. Brown, a longtime community servant, has died at the age of 82. Brown was most recently Congressman Joe Wilson's deputy district director. He worked in the Second Congressional District Midlands office for 11 years. "This is a time to recognize an appreciated Patriot of our State," said Wilson. "From his Army service, his Columbia Rotary Club dedication, to rising to being Director of the Human Affairs Commission to the Congressional Office, Earl was driven by his love of people." Brown served as chairman of the Richland County Airport Commission among other public service positions with several groups including the Riverbanks Park Commission, Central Midlands Regional Council, SC Human Affairs Commission and others. He was also an active member of numerous organizations including the Columbia Rotary Club, Columbia Urban League, NAACP, National Teachers Association, and United Way of the Midlands. "His ready smile and can do attitude will be sorely missed by those who knew and served with him," said Jim Hamilton, former airport manager of Jim Hamilton—L.B. Owens Airport. Brown is a graduate of Savannah State College, Benedict College and University of South Carolina's Criminal Justice Masters Program. He served in the U.S. Army and also worked as a public school teacher. His daughter Kim says her father was active in the community well into his retirement and wants people to know Brown believed it's never too late to get involved. "His loss is personal to the Wilson Family where four generations have affectionately identified him as 'Uncle Earl', a tradition that started with the births of our four grandchildren at Lexington Medical Center as Earl was always the first visitor bringing flowers," said Wilson. "Our sympathy to his daughter Kim, son Felton, and his beloved church family at Brookland Baptist Church," said Wilson. Brown's funeral will be Thursday, July 31 at 12 noon at Brookland Baptist Church. He will be buried at the National Cemetery at Fort Jackson.

Obituary of July 30, 2014, in the State newspaper.

(The State) Earl Felton Brown, Jr. COLUMBIA.—Funeral services for Mr. Earl Felton Brown, Jr. will be held Thursday at 12:00 noon, at the Brookland Baptist Church, with burial and military honors in the Ft. Jackson National Cemetery. A family visitation will be held this evening beginning at 6:30

p.m., at the Leevy's Funeral Home, Taylor Street Chapel. Born in Jacksonville, Florida, Mr. Brown graduated from Savannah State College and Benedict College. He completed additional studies at Duke University and the University of South Carolina School of Law, Court Administration Program. Throughout his distinguished career, he worked at W. A. Perry Middle School, Cheney State University, Vorhees College, the S.C. State Human Affairs Commission, and retired as the Deputy District Director of the Second Congressional District of South Carolina. He served his country in the United States Army, was a dedicated member of Brookland Baptist Church and Kappa Alpha Psi, Fraternity, Inc. Surviving are his former wife of 25 years, Rudyne Davis Brown; children, Felton Earl Brown, II and Kim Lanette (Marshall) Brown-Jackson; grandchild, TaiLa Sacarian Brown; great-grandchild, Juelz Domini Brown; his brother, Ernest Arnell (Beverly) Brown, sister, Doretha (Lester) Turner, other loving relatives and friends. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Brookland Foundation, 1066, Sunset Blvd., West Columbia, 29169.

At the services S.C. Attorney General Alan Wilson presented a eulogy on behalf of the appreciative Wilson family.

#### THE 2014 MEDICARE TRUSTEES REPORT

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this week, the Medicare Trustees' report projected that the Medicare Hospital Trust Fund would remain solvent until 2030, four years beyond last year's projection and 13 years longer than was projected in 2009.

In the 50 months since the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, health care costs have risen at a slower rate than any comparable period in the last 50 years.

And per capita spending is projected to continue to grow slower than the overall economy during the coming years.

This is in part due to the reforms implemented in the Affordable Care Act.

We have made progress in reducing hospital readmissions, improving patient safety and transitioning to new payment models that reward quality and reduce costs.

Thanks to these important steps, the quality of care for Medicare beneficiaries has improved, along with the long-term solvency of Medicare.

For the second year in a row Medicare Part B premiums will not grow, meaning that seniors will be able to keep more of their annual Social Security COLA.

The ACA has also saved America's seniors over \$11.5 billion in prescription drug costs by improving drug benefits and closing the "donut hole."

I am proud to have played a significant role in the authorship of ACA and hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will come together and look for ways to further improve ACA and Medicare.

Now is the time to build on these successes and ensure all Americans have access to quality affordable care and that our health care system remains on a path to fiscal solvency.

HONORING LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOSEPH E. MARTZ

**HON. JOHN R. CARTER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Lieutenant General Joseph E. Martz of the U.S. Army. With his retirement approaching, he will soon close out an incredible thirty-six years of service to his nation and begin the next chapter of his life.

LTG Martz currently serves as the Military Deputy for Budget to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management and Comptroller) and is responsible for the accountability and execution of the current fiscal year Army budget. He shoulders the responsibility of requesting and resourcing the appropriate funds to defend the nation. His profound knowledge is of immense value to the Army and our national security.

A native of New Kensington, Pennsylvania, LTG Martz enlisted in 1974 and later graduated from both the United States Military Academy and the U.S. Army Ranger School. His career of service took him from Germany to Korea to Kuwait. Whether commanding prestigious units or serving in key staff positions, he kept the needs of the mission first and always took care of his soldiers.

LTG Martz knows that a great warrior is also a great scholar. After earning a Master's in Education from the University of South Carolina, he served as a tactical officer and as the Executive Officer to the Commandant of Cadets at the United States Military Academy. While at the academy he influenced and groomed the future officers of the Army.

LTG Martz's great work has not gone unnoticed. He is a unique officer who excelled in his assignments and earned the Pace Award—a prestigious award that recognizes a single staff officer for his or her extraordinary achievements.

His devotion to country is matched only by his commitment to family. He is married to his lovely wife Barb and is the proud father of two sons—Josh and Tim, both of whom are graduates from the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Penn State.

Retirement is to be celebrated and enjoyed. It is not the end of a career, but rather the beginning of a new adventure. I commend LTG Martz for his selfless service to his nation and to the United States Army. His leadership has positively impacted soldiers and families across the world. I wish him and his family only the best in the years ahead.

HONORING REVEREND THADDEUS J. WILLIAMS

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Reverend Thaddeus J. Williams, a native of Yazoo City, Mississippi.

Reverend Thaddeus J. Williams is married to the former Teresa L. Buckner and the father