

The Bryants have lived in Opelika their entire lives and have been pastor at three churches in Waverly, Dadeville and Fort Davis, all in Alabama.

Leonard and Mary raised four daughters including: Lindie Bryant-Payne, Carmella Bryant-McGhee, Dale Bryant-Williams and Janyce Bryant. They have seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Leonard and Mary Bryant for their tireless service in the Lee County community.

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY

#### HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 9, 2014*

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize September 12, 2014 as National School Spirit Day, which was created to recognize the great efforts of cheerleaders on behalf of their schools and communities. On this day, cheer teams nationwide will galvanize their schools to perform community service projects.

Varsity Brands began National School Spirit Day in 2009 in order to highlight all of the ways our nation's cheerleaders and dancers make a difference in their schools and communities as mentors, community service leaders, and positive role models. As part of National School Spirit Day, cheerleaders and dancers will hold pep rallies, and invite all students to volunteer with local charities and perform at least four hours of community service.

Students have volunteered in a number of ways including by visiting community nursing homes, cleaning school facilities and grounds, fundraising for charities, getting involved with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, and holding car washes for charity. Since 2009, cheerleaders and dancers have pledged more than 500,000 community service hours as a result of National School Spirit Day efforts. National School Spirit Day is an opportunity for America's future leaders to stand out and have a positive impact in their communities.

I ask my colleagues to please join me in recognizing September 12, 2014 as National School Spirit Day.

#### COMMEMORATING THE CENTENARY OF THE PASSENGER PIGEON'S EXTINCTION AND THE PASSENGER PIGEON PROJECT

#### HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 9, 2014*

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following.

Whereas; the Passenger Pigeon, *Ectopistes migratorius*, was once the most abundant bird in North America with a population exceeding 3 billion; and

Whereas; due to unregulated market hunting in the 19th century, the population plummeted towards extinction; and

Whereas; the death of Martha, the last Passenger Pigeon, on September 1, 1914, and

the extinction of the Passenger Pigeon helped assemble the American conservation movement of the early 20th century; and

Whereas; the story of the Passenger Pigeon can serve as a cautionary tale and raise awareness of current issues related to human-caused extinction, explore connections between humans and nature, and inspire the building of sustainable relationships with other species; and

Whereas; the history of the Passenger Pigeon is relevant today due to the fact more than 30 percent of amphibians are threatened with extinction, many species of birds, bats and honeybees are in rapid decline and when it is projected that 25 percent of the U.S.'s native plant species may go extinct by mid-century; and

Whereas; Project Passenger Pigeon, a consortium of over 150 institutions, scientists, conservationists, educators, artists, musicians, filmmakers and others throughout the nation is using the centenary of the species extinction to tell the story of the Passenger Pigeon; and

Whereas; the story of the Passenger Pigeon, once an example of nature's abundance, and its subsequent extinction is unique to American history;

Now Therefore, be it known that the undersigned Member of the United States Congress, the Honorable L. Tammy Duckworth of the Eighth Congressional District of Illinois, hereby recognizes the anniversary of the Passenger Pigeon's extinction and its importance in remembering our natural heritage and nation's wildlife and the role we can play in conserving them.

#### HONORING GARY LESSER

#### HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 9, 2014*

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Gary Lesser, who has received the 2014 American Jewish Committee Judge Learned Hand award for his outstanding accomplishments in the legal profession and exemplary service to the community. Gary is an individual dedicated to maintaining the highest ethical legal standards and has displayed a level of commitment to his clients and profession that can be admired by all.

Gary Lesser is the Managing Partner of Lesser, Lesser, Landy, & Smith, PLLC, and concentrates in general personal injury matters. As a member of the Florida Bar Board of Governors and past chair of the Florida Bar Professional Ethics Committee, Gary has demonstrated an incredible commitment to the ethical practice of law. Highly regarded in the legal community, he is frequently called upon to lecture on personal injury law and various ethics issues and has been interviewed by local and national media regarding cases, important ethical and legal issues, and his service to the community. Aside from his successes in the legal profession, Gary is also a devoted member of the Jewish community. He has served as Chair of the Jewish Federation Business & Professions Cabinet and as Legal and Fundraising Vice President of the Arthur Meyer Jewish Academy, where he has been a member of the Board of Directors for over twenty years.

It is a privilege to represent a district with citizens who not only work tirelessly to help those in need but strive to achieve a higher professional standard. His passion and dedication is an inspiration to the Jewish community, and I have no doubt that we will continue to see great things from Gary in the future.

#### HONORING DEREK JETER

#### HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 9, 2014*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of history's most distinguished New York Yankees, Derek Jeter. Derek has spent the last 20 years thrilling Bronx residents and Yankees fans across the nation with his unparalleled performances on the field. He has been one of the greatest shortstops in the modern game, and as his final season comes to a close, he has received many accolades and messages of thanks for his dedication to this illustrious franchise.

Derek Jeter has spent his entire career with the Yankees organization, from the time he was drafted as an 18-year-old out of Kalamazoo, Michigan. He has excelled at whatever he was asked to do for the organization, and has led the Yankees during one of their most successful eras. During his time as a Yankee, the organization has won 5 World Series, and Derek played an important part in those victories. His incredible baseball skills are only surpassed by the maturity and leadership he has shown on the field. In almost every aspect, he has earned the nickname bestowed upon him: The Captain.

His statistics show what an influence he has had on the field, and his hard work and success has been recognized by baseball fans, writers, and peers. He won the Rookie of the Year award in his first full season in the American League, and went on to become a 14-time All-Star and a 5-time Golden Glove winner. He has a lifetime average of .310, and has amassed an astounding 3,448 hits as of Friday, September 5th, a total surpassed by only 5 other players in baseball history. He has been even more vital when the Yankees have needed it most—during his seven World Series appearances, he batted .321, and was named MVP of the 2000 World Series.

Derek has also led in his actions off the field. Through the Turn 2 Foundation, a charity he founded in 1996, Derek has helped children in Western Michigan, New York City, and the Tampa-St. Petersburg area to live healthier lives and to turn away from drugs and alcohol. In New York City, the foundation has partnered with the New York City Parks and Recreation Department to create four free after-school programs that serve more than 300 children.

Derek Jeter will be retiring at the end of this season, ending an illustrious, Hall of Fame-worthy career. He has become a part of the fabric of the Yankees and of the Bronx. Although we will get used to seeing him succeed in other endeavors, for Yankees fans it will be difficult to imagine the shortstop position without number 2 there. I congratulate Derek on an outstanding career, thank him for his contributions to the Yankees and to the

Bronx, and wish him well in whatever the future brings.

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IN RECOGNITION OF GERALD AND  
MARY SYKES

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**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 9, 2014*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize Mr. and Mrs. Gerald and Mary Sykes who

have been married 59 years and serve as clergy in Lee County, Alabama.

Gerald and Mary Sykes met in Lanett, Alabama, while attending a birthday party in August of 1952. They dated for three years and married June 3, 1955.

Gerald entered the ministry in 1968 in Atlanta, Georgia and has served five churches as the full-time pastor. He retired in 2012 and served three churches as interim pastor and is currently serving as full-time pastor at Waverly Baptist Church in Waverly, Alabama.

The Sykes raised two daughters and have two grandsons and four great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Gerald and Mary Sykes for their tireless service in the Lee County community.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

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**HON. STEVE KING**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 9, 2014*

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 481, 482, and 483 I was not present to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes," "yes," and "yes."