

VQ-1, VW-1 completed its mission with an astonishing nineteen years of accident-free flight, totaling more than 160,000 flight hours. For its efforts, VW-1 was twice awarded the Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation. Individual aircrew members have received more than 1,200 Air Medals, and the unit also includes two Purple Heart recipients, whose injuries were sustained in Southeast Asia.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring the brave men of Airborne Early Warning Squadron One, designated VW-1. The squadron represented an important part of the United States Military, and its gallant members are a true example of unwavering patriotism. Let us never forget their service and the sacrifices they made in defense of our nation and their fellow service members.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND COMMITMENT OF VERNA MACDONALD TO THE WESTPORT COMMUNITY AND GRAYS HARBOR REGION

**HON. DEREK KILMER**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 10, 2014*

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding community service of Verna MacDonald, who has dedicated herself to enriching her fellow citizens through her affiliations with the Westport Senior House, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #3057, the American Legion Post #140 Lady Auxiliary, the Westport and Grayland area Volunteer Fire Departments, and the Coastal Harvest food distribution warehouse.

Verna MacDonald first moved to Westport with her husband Donald MacDonald in 1986. The unexpected passing of her husband in 1999 inspired her to get out and interact with her community. She has since been recognized as the "Grandma" of the city of Westport. It is difficult to find a person within the community that has not heard of the service Ms. MacDonald has provided. Her positive disposition and can-do attitude is well known.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. MacDonald has displayed a constant commitment to serving those in need through her varied volunteer activities. One of her most notable contributions to the Westport community has been her engagement with the Westport Senior House. Starting as secretary, Ms. MacDonald dedicated years to improving the building and providing meals and resources to its residents. One of her many accomplishments was securing a grant to fund a new handicapped access ramp named for her late husband. Later, as director, she worked to transform the Senior House into a certified Red Cross Emergency Shelter, equipped with cots, bedding, emergency food supplies and even a generator. Ms. MacDonald didn't stop there; she spearheaded the Westport Freedom Walk in 2006 to honor the victims of the September 11, 2001 attack, has organized a holiday gift donation program serving the senior citizens in Grays Harbor and northern Pacific counties, and volunteers at Coastal Harvest Food Bank. Ms. MacDonald's work is boundless, and her retirement does not appear to have decreased her commitment to serving those in need.

As I close, I say with pride that our region is a better place thanks to the dedicated and selfless service of Verna MacDonald. Her unprecedented community involvement will impact the Westport community for years to come. I am pleased to recognize this service today in the United States Congress.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF COLORED CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES IN SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

**HON. DANIEL B. MAFFEI**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 10, 2014*

Mr. MAFFEI. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to commemorate Black History Month and recognize the 150th anniversary of the National Convention of Colored Citizens of the United States in Syracuse, New York.

On September 9, 1864, the anti-slavery newspaper *The Liberator* included a call for the convention. Frederick Douglass, a writer, statesman and leader of the Abolition Movement, annotated an "Address to the People of the United States." In his address to the people, Frederick Douglass explains, "No notice should be taken of the color of men; but justice, wisdom, and humanity should weigh alone, and be all-controlling."

The National Convention of Colored Citizens of the United States convened on October 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th of 1864 in Syracuse, New York.

In October of 1864, Frederick Douglass came to Syracuse to discuss the state of the ex-slave following the Civil War. Douglass served as convention president, which drew nearly 150 delegates from all across the nation. During the meeting, the delegates crafted a document modeled after the Declaration of Independence, entitled "Declarations of Rights and Wrongs", which was read during the Convention in Syracuse.

Central New York has a rich connection in history to the Abolition Movement. From Harriet Tubman and her tireless devotion to the cause, to Frederick Douglass with his Address to the People of the United States and "Declaration of Rights and Wrongs," Central New York and the City of Syracuse have continued to lead the charge for equality.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the 150th anniversary of the National Convention of Colored Citizens of the United States in Syracuse, New York. Let us never grow old or weary of the struggle that our predecessors led, and let us work every day to uphold the values that Frederick Douglass and so many others demanded us to do at the National Convention of Colored Citizens of the United States.

SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY EMERGENCY WATER DELIVERY ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 5, 2014*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3964, a bill that undermines long-standing local, state, and Federal agreements on the California water supply and creates a dangerous precedent for similar Congressional overreach in other states.

As the Governor of California said, this bill "falsely suggests the promise of water relief when that is simply not possible given the scarcity of water supplies." Instead, it picks winners and losers, prioritizing some interests above others and disrupting years of collaboration to balance water needs.

The President has directed his Administration to work with California and local jurisdictions to provide information, flexibility in federal law, and emergency grant assistance to respond to the drought. Congress should not act unilaterally to preempt the efforts the State has already undertaken to respond to this disaster.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 10, 2014*

Mr. COFFMAN. 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 \$17,258,482,479,004.37. We've added \$6,631,605,430,091.29 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING THE RUSSELL HOUSE FOR ITS 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

**HON. JASON T. SMITH**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 10, 2014*

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Russell House for its 20 years of service to South Central Missouri. Since its founding in 1994, the Russell House has provided a safe haven for victims of domestic violence. In addition to shelter, the Russell House provides a wide range of free services to both residents and non-resident families as they transition to a life free of abuse. The Russell House also educates the community on preventing violence and intervention.

During the first years of service, the house could only shelter seven victims but thanks to the continued support of the Phelps County Family Crisis Services organization the Russell House now has the capacity to provide shelter for 64 people at any given time. Over the past 20 years of service to the community the Russell House has sheltered more than 2,000 adults and 1,800 children. I applaud the hard working staff and supporters of the Russell House for their hearts of service and dedication to the families of Missouri. It is my pleasure to recognize their efforts and achievements before the House of Representatives.

IN TRIBUTE TO DR. NICHOLAS J.  
CONTORNO

**HON. GWEN MOORE**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 10, 2014*

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a published composer, arranger, educator, guest conductor, saxophone soloist and composer in residence. He was a highly successful and visible educator at all levels of school bands both as a conductor and clinician. On February 2, 2014 Dr. Nicholas J. Contorno passed away leaving his wife Lucille, two daughters, Camille and Gina, and a host of family and friends to remember his many accomplishments.

Dr. Nicholas J. Contorno retired in 2007 after 24 years as the Director of Bands and Orchestra at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He received his undergraduate and master's degrees in music education from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and was granted a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Composition from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

He began his teaching career in 1961 as an Instrumental Music teacher in the Glendale (WI) Public Schools and also served as Director of Bands at Dominican High School in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin. He served as Music Curriculum Supervisor and Director of Bands at Kettle Moraine High School in Wales, Wisconsin. Dr. Contorno's work with young musicians made him one of the most beloved composers for concert and jazz bands.

Dr. Contorno was an A.S.C.A.P. award winning composer and arranger. He is listed in "Leaders of Secondary Education" (1972), "World's Who's Who of Musicians" (1977), and "Encyclopedia of Band Composers" (1991). As an active professional musician, he performed with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Holiday on Ice Orchestra, Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus Band, Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, and Les Elgart Orchestra. In addition, he performed with many national shows and artists, including "Annie," 42nd Street, Linda Ronstadt, Natalie Cole, Manhattan Transfer, Vic Damone, Johnny Mathis, Mel Torme, and Sonny & Cher, to mention a few. His many honors include the Hugo Anhalt Music Achievement Award (1973); National Band Association Outstanding Jazz Educator Award (1982); and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Music Alumni Achievement Award (1990).

Dr. Contorno also held memberships in numerous professional organizations, such as

the American Federation of Musicians—Local 8, ASBDA, the National Band Association, and the Wisconsin Bandmasters Association. He served on the board of directors of the Festival City Orchestra of Milwaukee and the Waukesha Symphony Orchestra. He was the musical coordinator of Festa Italiana-Milwaukee, Wisconsin from 1982 to 1998, served as the Musical Director/Conductor of the First Brigade Civil War Band of Wisconsin from 1970–1982 and The Milwaukee Concert Band from 1996–2002. In addition, he served as guest conductor of the Goldman Band of New York and the "President's Own" United States Marine Band. Dr. Contorno has a music school named after him in Gonaïves, Haiti.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I am honored to a tribute to Dr. Nicholas J. Contorno. Dr. Contorno's contributions have greatly benefitted the citizens of the Fourth Congressional District, the State of Wisconsin and the global community.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MIKE  
BREWER

**HON. ALAN GRAYSON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 10, 2014*

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Mike Brewer, who passed away at Hospice House in Sumterville, Florida, on January 4, 2014. Mr. Brewer was born on August 8, 1953, in Chicago, Illinois to Stanley and Patricia Brewer. He married his wife, Mary Eaton Brewer, on March 22, 2003 in Orlando, Florida. Mr. Brewer, aged 60, was a devoted husband and a tradesman whose presence in the community will be deeply missed.

Mr. Brewer worked for the Building Trades in Orlando, Florida. He previously served as Business Agent for the Carpenters Local 1765 before helping to form the Carpenters Local 1820 in 1985. In the same year, he was elected Chairman of the Walt Disney World (WDW) Craft Maintenance Council, a position he would hold for twelve years. From 1987 until 2007, Mr. Brewer served as Executive Secretary and Treasurer for the Florida Council of Industrial and Public Employees. In 2008 he became a member of the Florida Council of Carpenters' Office of President. Most recently, Mr. Brewer was appointed to serve as the administrator of the AFL-CIO's collective bargaining proceedings with the Walt Disney Company.

Mr. Brewer devoted his career to his fellow tradesman and made it his life's work to better the lives of workers. He is survived by his wife Mary; daughter Sarah; stepson Robert Phan; his mother Patricia Brewer; his brother Tommy Brewer; and his sisters Janis Murphy, Susan Bane, and Debbie Cozart.

I am saddened by the loss of this valuable member of the Central Florida community and extend my heartfelt condolences to his family.

HONORING RHONDA WHITE-  
WARNER

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 10, 2014*

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Minister Rhonda White-Warner, a former minister and a social activist. Known throughout the Bay Area as a scholar, teacher, activist, preacher, and as a dedicated mother and grandmother, Minister White-Warner has left an indelible mark on our community. With her passing on January 15, 2014, we look to the outstanding quality of her life's work and the inspiring role she played in many lives through her community activism and as a spiritual leader.

Born and raised in Oakland, Minister Rhonda White-Warner's passion for helping people began at a young age. After graduating from Oakland Technical High School in 1969, she received her Masters of Divinity from the American Baptist Seminary of the West, graduating with the highest GPA in her class and advancing to candidacy for a Doctor of Ministry degree at the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Minister White-Warner graduated with honors and received the Jessie Drexler Award for outstanding competency in Biblical Studies.

Minister Rhonda White-Warner had a profound sense of dedication to helping the people in her community. As HIV/AIDS began to take its toll on the community, she knew it was important for faith based groups to step up and take action. She helped to establish the East Bay HIV Faith Collaborative. This collaborative is comprised of a group of HIV/AIDS advocates who educate and provide tools to African American Faith leaders. Aside from managing programs for HIV/AIDS, Minister White-Warner also worked to address domestic violence and mental health services.

Minister White-Warner also appreciated and promoted the arts. During the 1990s, she published a monthly magazine called Tibbets. This publication served to promote African American arts. Later, she became a founding member of the Oakland Ensemble Theatre in 1993, which established itself as the sole professional theater company in Oakland.

Minister Rhonda White-Warner has left a lasting imprint on our society and communities of faith. She was a charter member of the Womanist Symposium Project at the Graduate Theological Seminary in Berkeley, California. This project engages womanist theology within the context of Black women in the local church setting. Their mission is to energize African American women to live positively and productively, as well as to empower and liberate African American women in the context of biblical scripture.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual and social activist, Minister Rhonda White-Warner. As an Oakland-native, Minister White-Warner's efforts have truly paved the way for minorities and impacted so many lives throughout the nation. I join all of Rhonda's loved ones in celebrating her incredible life. She will be deeply missed.