

IN RECOGNITION OF MARY ELLEN  
BENNINGER

**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2014*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mary Ellen Benninger who has volunteered her time and talents to our schools in Hillsborough, California for decades. She is being honored tonight as the Citizen of the Year by the Associated Parents Group.

Mary Ellen's dedication to our schools and our community is an inspiration to parents, teachers and students alike. Her leadership and contributions have made Hillsborough's schools the best they can be for our children.

Mary Ellen started to volunteer when her children attended South School and then Crocker Middle School. For the last eight years she served on the Hillsborough City School District Board of Trustees where her board colleagues lovingly call her MEB. She was board president from 2008–2010 and has served on the Citizen Oversight Committee, Bond Finance Committee and as Trustee Liaison to Hillsborough's School Foundation during her tenure.

Wherever Mary Ellen gets involved, her leadership helps set the direction of the organization or initiative she takes on. While on the HCSD board, Mary Ellen simultaneously served as a Hillsborough Recreation Commissioner from 2005–2007 and on the Hillsborough Schools Foundation from 1999–2013. She also volunteered for the South School Parent Group Board, the Hillsborough Little League and Concours d'Elegance and was deeply engaged in passing Measure B. At St. Bartholomew's Catholic Church, she was a Catechism teacher for ten years.

I feel fortunate to count Mary Ellen as a friend and am a long-time admirer of her lasting contributions to our community. She is altruistic, passionate, intelligent and has an extraordinary memory. Her superb service has not gone unnoticed. She received the Eric Award and the South Hillsborough School's Outstanding Service to Youth Award.

Mary Ellen was born in Seattle, Washington. She graduated from Mayo High School in Rochester, Minnesota in 1975 and earned her BA in Economics from Stanford University in 1979. She had a successful career in retail management for 16 years.

In 1986, she married her freshman dorm sweetheart, Tom Benninger. Six years later they moved to Hillsborough and raised their two children Will and Claire. When Mary Ellen is not giving her time, she enjoys tennis, skiing and hiking.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Mary Ellen Benninger whose big heart runs over with love for all children in our tony town of Hillsborough. Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." Mary Ellen has made an exceptional life for herself benefitting our entire community.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MASONIC LODGE #74 IN BLACK RIVER FALLS, WI

**HON. RON KIND**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2014*

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Black River Falls Masonic Lodge #74. The historic building, located in downtown Black River Falls, WI, was built in 1914 to accommodate the growing membership of Lodge #74.

One of the basic purposes of Freemasonry is to "make good men better," and the men and women of Lodge #74 take this purpose to heart. The Free and Accepted Masons that belong to Lodge #74 strive to live by the three core tenets of Freemasonry: brotherly love, relief and truth, and improve character and moral and spiritual outlook. The Freemasons work tirelessly to promote the principles of personal responsibility and morality, and encourage their colleagues to incorporate Freemasonry's lessons into their everyday lives.

The Freemasons of Wisconsin are active in charity work throughout the state. The Charities of the Grand Lodge include the Wisconsin Masonic Home, Inc., Three Pillars, The Wisconsin Masonic Foundation, and the Medical Fund. These charities serve thousands of individuals each year through programs that support masonic relief, education, community health, safety, and youth engagement. The Black River Falls Masonic Lodge #74 gives back to the local Black River Falls community in a number of ways. For example, the Lodge holds a pancake breakfast every spring on Palm Sunday where all of the proceeds are used for scholarship and local charity efforts.

It is with great pride that I rise today to congratulate the Black River Falls Masonic Lodge #74 on its 100th anniversary and re-dedication. The commitment of its members to bettering themselves and their community is truly deserving of recognition. The Black River Falls community and the state of Wisconsin are fortunate have the Freemasons making a difference in the lives of individuals.

APRIL IS IBS AWARENESS MONTH

**HON. JAMES P. MORAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2014*

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize April as IBS Awareness Month.

IBS, or Irritable Bowel Syndrome, is a gastrointestinal disorder that alters how the digestive tract functions.

It can cause extreme pain, alter lifestyles, and cost an individual thousands of dollars on healthcare expenditures.

There is no single cause of IBS, and no single cure.

Studies estimate IBS affects up to 20 percent of the adult population. However, only 5 to 7 percent of the adult population has been diagnosed with the condition.

This is partly because individuals with IBS are less likely to seek treatment.

Many are afraid of the stigma that is associated with the disorder.

People need to know that they don't need to suffer in silence. There are many ways to treat and manage IBS.

The first step is to find out about IBS, and have your questions answered.

As an institution, let's agree to lessen the stigma for IBS patients and urge those who may be affected to find out more and seek treatment.

APPLAUDING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT'S HISTORIC FIRST OPEN ENROLLMENT

**HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2014*

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. I rise today to applaud the Affordable Care Act's historic first open enrollment along with the 8 million people who now have the health security they deserve.

And I am proud of the immense contribution California has been to these surging numbers. More than 3 million California consumers enrolled in health insurance plans or in Medi-Cal.

Moreover, after connecting my district to over 20 events and enrolling over 2,300 residents through my "Enroll OC" initiative, Orange County alone represented 10 percent of all California enrollments.

These final enrollment numbers are promising and although we have surpassed our goals, enrollment is only the first step.

We must now shift our focus to educating these new consumers about the services available to them through their health insurance providers.

Therefore, as an effort to educate new consumers in my district, I will be initiating a new campaign and hosting "Know Your Benefits" events throughout Orange County.

And I urge my colleagues to go beyond the kind of work necessary to reach those who the law was meant to help.

CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS FOR A UNIFIED CYPRUS BETWEEN GREEK AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2014*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the continued negotiations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots as critically important towards peacefully resolving the dispute surrounding a unified Cyprus. I am pleased to learn that progress has been made following the issuance of a joint statement that resumed negotiations between Greek Cypriot negotiator Andreas Mavroyiannis and Turkish Cypriot negotiator Kudret Ozersay in February of this year.

The United States remains committed to supporting peace and cooperative relations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Cyprus was, by legend, the birthplace of the ancient Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite. However, its modern history has, in contrast, been largely dominated by enmity between its Greek and Turkish inhabitants. However, I commend President Nicos Anastasiades of the Republic of

Cyprus and President Dervis Eroglu of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus for their leadership and coming together for the future of all Cypriots.

It is my sincere hope that we may soon see an end to the Cyprus question once and for all, and welcome a unified Cyprus into the international community of nations. To this end, I encourage President Barack Obama, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and their respective governments to continue their efforts to help facilitate a peaceful resolution. As called for by the United Nations in various statements and declarations, I believe that the reunification of Cyprus based on a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality represents the most sustainable path to peacefully uniting the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities.

A unified Cyprus would positively impact the entire region through improved multilateral relations, greater economic opportunities, and increased security. In particular, the reunification of Cyprus would be a significant step towards strengthening the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) at a time of renewed tensions with Russia. Furthermore, it may signal the beginning of closer cooperation between Greece and Turkey, as well as revitalized discussions for Turkish accession to the European Union.

Mr. Speaker, the resumption of negotiations for a unified Cyprus is a most welcome development. I remain a friend and ally to the people of Cyprus, and support their aspirations for peace and unity.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE GRAND  
REOPENING OF THE ORIGINAL  
GROSSMONT HIGH SCHOOL  
BUILDING

**HON. DUNCAN HUNTER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2014*

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the rich history and proud legacy of the Grossmont Union High School District in my congressional district of East San Diego County. On May 1, 2014, the District will host a grand reopening of their District Office building to rededicate a historical landmark in the City of El Cajon, the original Grossmont High School Building.

Originally constructed in 1922, the Grossmont High School Building for decades was home to the teachers and students that made up the oldest high school in East San Diego County. As the campus expanded, new buildings were added and this facility eventually became the District Office. The project was actually two buildings, a stone veneer

over cast-in-place (CIP) concrete at the front and a two-story conventional wood-framed and plaster building in the rear. The structures were independent of each other and both required seismic upgrades. The necessary improvements consisted of a shotcrete membrane for the inside of the exterior walls at the stone section and full-height steel brace-frames in the wood-framed building.

Standard improvements to the building include all new HVAC, plumbing, electrical, lighting, Fire Alarm and communications. Newer styles have been blended with the traditional as significant efforts were made to honor the features of the original structure. The original stone veneer has been refurbished and upgraded original-style wood windows have been installed in line with the original theme. Also keeping with the original motif is the reuse of existing wood flooring. Newer amenities such as modern steel and tile stairs with stainless and glass handrails, glass conference rooms and curvi-linear (arched panel) ceilings have been added to complete the transition to new as well as honoring the old traditions.

The majority of the funding for this project was provided from former redevelopment funds, primarily from the City of El Cajon. The remaining balance of the project funding was allocated from the District's capital facilities fund and Propositions H and U, which were specifically utilized to bring the structure into compliance with ADA standards, including an elevator and wheelchair accessibility.

Besides refurbishing this proud local landmark, I am particularly proud to see redevelopment funds stay within the City of El Cajon thereby benefiting students in the District and those who support student achievement. I have always appreciated the hard work and dedication the Grossmont Union High School District has shown to furthering the educational goals of our students and I congratulate them on this achievement and continued investment into our community.

HONORING WANDA FULLMORE

**HON. MARK POCAN**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2014*

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Wanda Fullmore, who, after 39 years of dedicated service to the people of Madison, Wisconsin, is retiring from the Mayor's Office.

Her welcoming voice, warm smile and engaging personality greeted the visitors of five Madison mayors since 1975. Regardless of who sat in the mayor's chair, her unofficial title was "The Real Mayor." You knew you had become a local community leader when Wanda knew you well enough to call you "Honey!"

Mayors would come and go, but Wanda was the consistent presence and institutional memory that guided residents through the complications of local government for nearly four decades. Her knowledge of Madison city government was unparalleled. Better than any directory, organizational chart, or 211 referral system, Wanda could find the one person in city government who could solve even the most esoteric of problems. And chances are, she not only knew their phone number by heart, but also the names and ages of their children.

As anyone who answers phones for a living knows, her job was not always pleasant or easy. She incurred the wrath of many constituents upset about everything from parks to potholes and taxes to traffic. She handled them all with patience and grace.

Wanda Fullmore: greeter, listener, case-worker, gatekeeper, public servant, sounding board, advocate, friend. She will be missed by all who had the pleasure of working with her and the thousands of people whose lives she touched.

I ask the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in wishing her an enjoyable and well-deserved retirement.

RECOGNIZING AMMA SRI  
KARUNAMAYI

**HON. BILL FOSTER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2014*

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Amma Sri Karunamayi, a prominent Hindu spiritual leader who has devoted her life to promoting public service and peace.

Amma is best known for her acts of charity, which include providing spiritual guidance to those in need, establishing a free school for more than 700 students and constructing a hospital that provides free care to patients in need. After spreading her teachings in India for many years, Amma sought to take her mission overseas.

In 1995, Amma took her first tour of the United States and returned every year thereafter. This year, she will be back for her 20th anniversary tour. To commemorate this occasion, Amma will be hosting an interfaith World Peace prayer ceremony in Atlanta, Georgia from May 1st until May 11th.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Amma Sri Karunamayi's achievements, and to congratulate her on 20 years of spreading spirituality and peace throughout the United States.