

HONORING THE LIFETIME MEMBERS OF THE RICHMOND COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the following Lifetime Members of the Richmond County Volunteer Fire Department: Randy Passagaluppi (22 years), Gary Hayes (23 years), Timmy Brann (25 years), Ray Hinson (25 years), Wayne Mothershead (26 years), Leslie Clark (28 years), Ronnie Mundie (37 years), Fred W. Mothershead (44 years), J.D. Jr. Dawson (45 years), Chris Sanders (45 years), and Webster Sanders (64 years). I thank them for their lifelong service to their community and insuring the safety of Richmond County.

RECOGNIZING THE GRAND OPENING OF SIEGFRIED AND ROY PARK

**HON. DINI TITUS**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, on December 3, 2015, the Clark County Commissioners and Department of Aviation are hosting the grand opening of a 20-acre park near McCarran International Airport, appropriately named for Siegfried Fischbacher and Roy Horn.

What began as a simple magic act aboard a cruise ship in 1957, Siegfried and Roy's show became one of the most successful extravaganzas in Las Vegas history.

Ten years later, Siegfried and Roy began performing in Las Vegas at the Tropicana. The duo went on to perform around the world until 1989 when their act found a permanent home at The Mirage in Las Vegas.

Siegfried and Roy entertained in Las Vegas and internationally for over 30 years to sold-out audiences, delighting more than 25 million fans with their amazing magic while showcasing the beauty and majesty of wild animals. Their passion and talent made a lasting impression on everyone who met them, knew them, or just saw their show.

Siegfried and Roy's act came to an end in 2003, but their spirit lives on at the Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat exhibits at The Mirage Hotel and Casino, and through their charitable work with the SARMOTI Foundation.

For the past 25 years, Siegfried and Roy's Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat have encouraged better stewardship of the environment by teaching visitors, students, and scholars about the incredible creatures housed there and about why conservation efforts are so important for maintaining a robust ecosystem and preserving the amazing species that share the earth with us.

Every day at the Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat, visitors can experience firsthand the enchanting world of bottlenose dolphins, white tigers, white lions, and leopards. In August, the Secret Garden welcomed four tiger cubs to the family, continuing a legacy of commitment to conservation.

The SARMOTI Foundation works to conserve and protect endangered and threatened animals around the world, including tigers, lions, cheetahs, panthers, and leopards.

How appropriate that a park which stands at the gateway to Las Vegas, and District One, should bear their name.

Thank you, Siegfried and Roy, for your service to our community.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF PEACETREES VIETNAM

**HON. DEREK KILMER**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of PeaceTrees Vietnam and their continued service to help heal communities affected by war. PeaceTrees Vietnam's tireless work alongside the Vietnamese people honors those who have given their lives in service and fosters trust and collaboration between our two nations.

The story of PeaceTrees Vietnam began on January 6, 1969, when US Army Helicopter Pilot Lt. Daniel Cheney sacrificed his life in the Vietnam War to save the life of a fellow pilot. From this profound loss, his mother Rae Cheney, sister Jerilyn Brusseau and her late husband Danaan Parry vowed to find a way for families like their own to reach out to the Vietnamese people, to honor losses on all sides of the war, and begin building bridges of friendship and understanding. On November 12, 1995, a group of inspired Washington state citizens joined the three founders and pledged their support to launch an organized effort to clear the land of bombs and landmines and plant trees where landmines used to be. That day, PeaceTrees Vietnam was born.

Since 1995, PeaceTrees Vietnam's steadfast humanitarian service has removed more than 89,000 landmines and dangerous weapons from over 846 acres of land, starting in the former "DMZ" on the site of the former US Marine Combat Base at Dong Ha. As the first international nongovernmental organization to be permitted to conduct humanitarian demining work in Vietnam, PeaceTrees has ushered in a new era by bringing together American and Vietnamese people, including veterans from both sides, to work, play, and plant trees as a means of promoting peace, friendship, and renewal through mutual understanding and respect.

For two decades, PeaceTrees' expansive service in Vietnam has gone beyond landmine removal to include building sustainable communities by enhancing education and economic opportunities. Hand-in-hand with the Vietnamese people, PeaceTrees has invested in a safe and healthy future in the poorest and most war-torn regions of Vietnam through the construction of homes, libraries, and schools.

Mr. Speaker, PeaceTrees Vietnam's work has restored land, assisted communities, and created opportunity in partnership with the people of Quang Tri Province of Vietnam. Making the land safe, returning the environment to its natural beauty, and creating new educational and economic opportunities collectively heals the enduring wounds of war that linger for both the Vietnamese and American people.

I am proud to recognize the 20th Anniversary of PeaceTrees Vietnam and thank the family of Lt. Daniel Cheney, the founders, and all those in the United States and Vietnam who have worked to restore the land, build community and heal the wounds of war.

OUR ONE GOD OF FAITH

**HON. E. SCOTT RIGELL**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit a statement on behalf of my constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman. Rabbi Zoberman is the Founding Rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Rabbi Zoberman asked me to submit the following remarks:

We are grateful for our one God's blessings, who bring us together to be one family, gratefully united and gloriously diverse through the divine commandments of loving kindness.

We have gathered during our sixth annual Veterans Day service at the enchanting sites of the Reba and Sam Sandler Campus and the Simon Family JCC of our beloved Tidewater Jewish Community, home to the state-ly Jewish War Veterans Monument and captivating Holocaust sculpture linked to the embracing Gifford Holocaust Memorial Garden. Let us pause for both heartfelt gratitude and sacred reflection in the enviable spirit of our unique Tidewater togetherness.

In this awesome region of perhaps the world's most concentrated military might, we owe much to the descendants of the Maccabees, our heroic sisters and brothers in uniform from past, present and future, for safeguarding our great American nation as well as its undying dream. We continuously advocate for and advance the cause of our leading democracy so that it may ever be a guiding and gracious beacon of light and consecrated resolve to all near and far.

We are painfully mindful of terrorism's darkness unleashed by Iran and its Lebanese and Palestinian proxies, along with Syria's Basher al-Assad and the Islamic State with its affiliates, threatening the very essence of human civilization to which the Jewish people have immeasurably and devotedly contributed. The past Thanksgiving celebration, modeled after the Biblical festival Sukkot, is a poignant reminder of the vital link and unshakeable bond between America's very foundation and the Jewish heritage.

The courageous Pilgrims joyfully regarded themselves as walking in the shoes of the Israelites who fled from Egypt's House of Bondage, and were inspired by the ideals and values of the Hebrew scriptures with which they fell in love. In fact, they wanted Hebrew to be the official language of the New World but there were not enough Hebrew scholars around. Imagine there would have been no need for a separate Hebrew school for our children. The past Thanksgiving eve, my congregation Beth Chaverim and Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church held our 16th annual Joint Interfaith Thanksgiving Service. What an endearing display of the American tradition of sharing across lines of faith.

On November 9, 2015, we commemorated the 77th anniversary of Kristallnacht (The Night of the Broken Glass), the beginning of the end of European Jewry. We shall always cherish our own Arnold Lind, of blessed memory, who at age ten raced into his burning Synagogue in Muhlheim in Germany to

retrieve his beautiful Wimple, witness to the Shoah, a memorial to the great German Jewry. He was fortunate to arrive with his family to these shores of freedom and proudly served in the U.S. Marine Corps.

I humbly stand before you as a member of the family of the surviving remnant miraculously plucked from the burning fires. At the mature old age of three and a half, I was already a veteran of Germany's Wetzlar Displaced persons camp in the American zone of occupation, but I am also a veteran of the Israel Defense Forces of a reborn nation. My father Yechiel, of blessed memory, served in the Russian Army's 118th Infantry Division decimated at Stara Rusa by the German onslaught which he survived.

Let the United States and its partners do their best on behalf of the present day multitude of refugees from war-torn countries, particularly Syria, who seek the shelter of a welcoming home. May Shalom's divine blessings of peace enable us to turn violence into vision, pain into promise, fear into faith, and darkness into light. Amen.

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100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
MANATEE COUNTY FAIR

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**HON. VERN BUCHANAN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the Manatee County Fair's 100th anniversary.

On October 21st, 1915 a group that eventually became the Manatee Chamber of Commerce approved a project that would draw members of the community together for festive celebrations and friendly competition. The Manatee County Fair was born, and opened its tents to the neighborhood for the first time on February 28th, 1916.

The 1916 Manatee County Fair started with a budget of just \$500. Year after year, the fair grew creating an economic boost for the community while providing fun and enjoyment for locals and visitors alike.

Eventually, the fair became so appreciated that the denizens of Bradentown (currently Bradenton, Florida) purchased over 60 acres of land so the fair could continue to thrive for generations to come. As time went on, the Manatee County Fair gave Floridians an opportunity to unite and celebrate in good times and bad.

The Manatee County Fair has fostered community pride for 100 years. Throughout the past century, the fair strengthened relationships between local business owners, shop keepers, vendors, artisans, and civic leaders. Community Members have shared in the pride of hosting such a well-loved event.

It is my honor to recognize the Manatee County Fair's 100th anniversary. This great event has strengthened our community and been a source of civic pride for the past century.

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HONORING DR. JAN SONANDER,  
M.D.

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**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Jan Sonander for his

leadership, commitment, and determination over a decade to update the Geographic Practice Cost Index (GPCI) system in California and abolish the flawed Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR).

Medicare's GPCI system pays physicians based on the cost of providing care in their geographic region. However, since 1997, the Medicare geographic payment localities have not been updated, leading many Sonoma County physicians to be underpaid. This problem was exacerbated by concurrent flaws in Medicare's SGR.

Since 2000, Dr. Sonander has been a tireless advocate for GPCI and SGR reforms. His proposed changes would have updated payment localities for physicians, and improved access to high-quality care for all Sonoma County residents. Dr. Sonander led a nationwide letter campaign, encouraging Congress to consider funding the proposed changes while writing articles to keep peers informed of his efforts. Those efforts ultimately paid off, as the geographic payment system has been updated and the SGR has been eliminated. Dr. Sonander was essential to that progress.

Leading by example, Dr. Sonander focuses a significant portion of his practice caring for the disabled, working as a hospitalist at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital while also serving as Chief of Staff. He has been active in the Sonoma County Medical Association (SCMA) and the California Medical Association for 26 years. He has served on several committees, including a stint as President of the SCMA Board of Directors in 2003. As a civic role model, philanthropist, medical professional, and political activist, Dr. Sonander's work has placed health care for all Sonoma County residents in safe hands.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we acknowledge Dr. Jan Sonander for his extraordinary work.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

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**HON. TOM GRAVES**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 650, had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

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PRESERVE THE EITC FOR LEGAL  
AMERICAN WORKERS

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**HON. KENNY MARCHANT**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, the Earned Income Tax Credit is one of our most successful welfare-to-work tax provisions. The EITC has helped millions of Americans move themselves out of poverty. But, the president wants to use it as a cash bonus for those who have been working in the U.S. illegally.

Under the president's unilateral amnesty, millions of illegal immigrants will get access to the EITC. They will then be able to claim tax refunds on previous earnings from unauthorized work. The refunds could be as much as \$24,000 for each claimant, which may restrict

the EITC's availability for legal American workers.

To ensure this does not happen, I have introduced H.R. 1657—the FAIRR Act. The bill prevents the EITC from going to recipients of the president's unilateral amnesty. This would strengthen the EITC for American families and save taxpayers almost \$9 billion over the next 10 years.

Our immigration system should not reward lawbreakers at the expense of taxpayers and legal American workers. Neither should the EITC.

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IN RECOGNITION OF THE DEARBORN OPTIMIST CLUB'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

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**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Dearborn Optimist Club on their 75th Anniversary. As a Member of Congress, it is an honor and a privilege to recognize the great work they have done for the City of Dearborn.

Founded on December 12, 1940, Optimist International chartered the Dearborn Optimist Club to serve the greater Dearborn Community. Since its founding, the Dearborn Optimists have devoted countless hours volunteering in the community by helping to expand access to quality education through its youth programs and scholarships. They have created collaborations between both the public and private schools and with numerous Dearborn public agencies, including the fire and police departments. Each year, the Dearborn Optimist holds art and essay contests to promote the creativity of our students, where the winners receive scholarship money for their college plans. They host the annual Dearborn Public Safety Awards to honor our fire and police departments and recognize extraordinary individual accomplishments.

At the heart of their mission, the Dearborn Optimists have devoted themselves to community service and providing opportunities to enrich the lives of our youth of Dearborn. Their work for the City of Dearborn is truly appreciated and I know that we will see more of the same over the next 75 years of the group and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Dearborn Optimist Club on their 75th Anniversary and to wish them many more years of success.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

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**HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed Roll Call vote numbers 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651 and 652. Had I been present, I would have voted no on Roll Call vote number 646, 647, 650, 651 and 652 and aye on 648 and 649.