

River, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, and Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. He has also done international conservation work in Mexico, Canada, the Republic of Georgia and China.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to conclude my remarks by asking my colleagues to join me in recognizing and thanking Parks Superintendent Jim Northup, an extraordinary public servant and patriot who has gone significantly beyond what would be expected of any individual, to learn about the magnificent beauty of our natural resources, our fascinating national history, and to do all that he could to protect, preserve and share what he had learned with his fellow citizens and with visitors from around the world.

RECOGNIZING COACH TIM THORNTON

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor Tim Thornton, Head Coach of Peoria High School football, for his outstanding season and recognition as Coach of the Year.

Recently, Coach Thornton's football team won the Class 5A Illinois High School Association State Football Championship. In addition to this incredible accomplishment, Coach Thornton was honored with the title of Illinois Coach of the Year by Friday Night Football Magazine, and received Athletico's Coach of the Year Award.

Since Coach Thornton began his tenure as head football coach of Peoria High School, the team has made remarkable strides. This season, Coach Thornton achieved a record of 13–1, the best in the school's history. However, their success did not stop there as the team also went on to win the Big 12 Conference Championship and the Illinois State Championship, another best for the school's football program.

Coach Thornton has worked tirelessly with his players not only on the field, but also off, helping them to become valuable members of our community. As an extraordinary coach and mentor, Coach Thornton exemplifies what can be achieved through hard work and dedication. He is an invaluable member of our community and the 18th District, and I am honored to share the same hometown and values.

Coach Thornton is an extraordinary role model for the youth in our community, and I look forward to the great accomplishments that he will achieve in the future. I congratulate him on not only a fantastic season, but also a most deserved recognition as Coach of the Year.

IN MEMORY OF LAWRENCE K. DODGE

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of Lawrence K. Dodge, who passed away on December 1, 2016.

A third-generation Californian and San Bernardino County native, Mr. Dodge grew up on a citrus farm in Redlands. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps after high school and served as an aviator with the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. In 1969, at the age of twenty-seven, Mr. Dodge became the youngest CEO of a national insurance group. Dodge went on to found the American Sterling Corporation in 1977.

Through the years, Mr. Dodge was a generous philanthropist who gave back significantly to his community, including a gift to his high school, Redlands High School, which enabled the construction of Dodge Stadium. Dodge was also instrumental in the development of the Lawrence and Kristin Dodge College of Film and Media Arts, through what was, at the time, the largest single gift in Chapman's history. Dodge supported a wide range of organizations and projects serving families and children.

Many future generations will continue to enjoy the benefits of Mr. Dodge's perpetual kindness. Always the optimist, Mr. Dodge will be remembered for his interminable service to his country and his community.

JOHN TUCK BEING NAMED THE RECIPIENT OF THE WASHINGTON POST'S 2016 AGNES MEYER AWARD

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize John Tuck for being named the recipient for the Washington Post's 2016 Agnes Meyer Award. Mr. Tuck is the fifth grade math and science teacher at Rolling Ridge Elementary School in Sterling, Virginia.

Mr. Tuck has served at Rolling Ridge Elementary with distinction for the last five years. He has been lauded for embracing out-of-the-box techniques to ensure that his students have everything they need to succeed in the classroom. Instead of desks, Mr. Tuck opts for four stations in order to involve every student, from the highest skill level to the lowest. He uses real life math situations in order to engage his students while creating a base for solid math concepts that his students will need throughout life. For these actions and many others, Mr. Tuck received the Washington Post Agnes Meyer Award this year.

Coming from a family of educators, I appreciate the invaluable role that educators play in inspiring our students and communities. The work Mr. Tuck has done, and continues to do at Rolling Ridge will inspire and shape the lives of countless young men and women for decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize John Tuck for being named a finalist for the Washington Post's 2016 Agnes Meyer Award. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating him on this honor, and I wish him nothing but success in his future endeavors.

OPINION PIECE BY BERNARD ARONSON

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to include in the RECORD an excellent opinion piece by Bernard Aronson, the United States Special Envoy to the Colombian Peace Process, which was published in the New York Times on December 14, 2016. Mr. Aronson has played a crucial role in supporting Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos in bringing an end to his country's 52 year war with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). I very much appreciate Mr. Aronson's service to our country.

Moving forward, I believe we must support Colombia in peace just as we have supported the country through years of war. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the next Congress in doing just that.

COLOMBIA NEEDS HELP TO MAKE PEACE LAST

(By Bernard Aronson, Dec. 13, 2016)

OSLO.—On Nov. 29, a 6-year-old Colombian girl, Yisely Isarama, was killed by a land mine in Choco Province. The same day, the Colombian Senate voted 75 to 0 to ratify peace accords to end the 52-year war between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known as the FARC.

In microcosm, the two events encapsulate Colombia's past and its potential future.

In his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech here on Saturday, the president of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, the architect of the peace settlement, called the war "a half-century nightmare." It claimed 220,000 Colombian lives, most of them civilians', and drove six million from their homes. In United States population terms, that would translate into 1.3 million dead and 36 million displaced Americans. Colombians year after year are killed or injured by land mines at rates higher than in any country except Afghanistan.

Under the agreement, FARC combatants will disarm and demobilize over 180 days under United Nations supervision. For most Colombians, it will be their first day living in a nation at peace. But the peace settlement, hammered out in Havana after four and a half years of negotiations, and revised following the loss of a plebiscite, aims to do far more than silence the guns, as welcome as the end of the conflict is.

The peace accord sets out to bridge the great historic divide between what President Santos calls "the two Colombias": the Colombia of developed, modern urban centers and the Colombia of the vast, impoverished interior, where historically there has been little or no government presence and, as a result, little security, justice, rule of law or access to roads, health care and education. That is where the war was fought.

To close this gap, the government has committed itself to a far-reaching program of rural development for the largely peasant population that includes provision of land, titles, credit, roads, and crop substitution programs. To allow arable land to be cultivated safely, land mines must be removed.

The Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, which is monitoring the enforcement of the agreement, reports that half of all negotiated peace settlements fail and the conflict resumes. Those that succeed address not just security, but also the social and economic

roots of the war. The institute says Colombia's agreement addresses root causes more comprehensively than any other negotiated settlement has.

Every weekday, get thought-provoking commentary from Op-Ed columnists, the Times editorial board and contributing writers from around the world.

That is no accident. More than in any previous conflict negotiation, Colombia put victims at the center of the process. Victims' issues were not only on the table; victims themselves were at the table, regularly and often, asserting their rights and concerns. As a result, the agreement stipulates that the worst perpetrators of wartime atrocities—whether guerrillas, paramilitaries, or state actors—must confess their crimes, make reparations and accept sentences that include up to eight years of “restorative justice,” such as removing land mines, that are deemed acceptable to their victims and “effective restrictions on liberty.” Displaced persons must be compensated or returned to their homes and the remains of the disappeared, where possible, identified and returned to loved ones.

To fulfill these and other commitments, the government must create far-reaching programs and policies that will cost billions of dollars and take years to carry out. It must establish a system of transitional justice, a truth commission and investigative and protective units to safeguard the lives of demobilized former combatants and human rights activists.

Colombia will bear the largest burden, but the international community, led by the United States, must continue to help.

The United States has no closer strategic partner in Latin America than Colombia, and our interests in the region are intertwined. Colombian trainers and troops are working today with their American counterparts to help Mexico and Central America's Northern Triangle countries—El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras—combat the drug cartel violence that is fueling refugee flows, largely of unaccompanied minors. If, in turn, Colombia with American assistance can reverse its recent upturn in coca leaf production, it will take pressure off the Northern Triangle's embattled governments and institutions.

Two decades ago, Colombia was nearly overrun by guerrilla armies, paramilitaries and drug cartels. Colombians, at great sacrifice, fought back, strengthened their democratic institutions, and created today's opportunity for peace. Colombian leaders and citizens deserve the greatest share of the credit. But steady, sustained bipartisan American support and assistance for 16 years under Plan Colombia made a crucial difference.

If the peace agreement succeeds, Colombia will emerge as the strongest democracy in Latin America, a political and economic model for the region. As in the past, the United States should help Colombia reach that goal with continuing bipartisan support. Passage of President Obama's request for \$450 million in fiscal 2017 for an economic assistance program called Paz (Peace) Colombia would send the hemisphere, where support for Colombia's peace process is universal, an encouraging signal about American staying power.

In September, at the United Nations General Assembly, Secretary of State John Kerry and his Norwegian counterpart, Borge Brende, secured commitments of \$106 million from a coalition of 25 countries to help Colombia clear its land mines by 2021. President Santos showed the group a pamphlet that teaches Colombian children how to avoid land mines on the way to school.

Mr. Santos said he dreamed of the day when such pamphlets would teach Colombian

students only science, art, mathematics or poetry, because Colombia would be landmine free. Helping turn that dream into a reality would be a fitting memorial to Yisely Isarama.

HONORING LORI HARJU

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge and express my deep appreciation to Lori Harju for 25 years of government service the last five dedicated to serving me and the people of Texas' 8th Congressional District.

Lori began her career working for her local Congressman, Guy Vander Jagt of Michigan. She grew up not far from the shores of Lake Michigan, in the town of Kaleva, and misses it to this day. I can't tell you how many times I've seen pictures of Lake Michigan, and of her many nieces and nephews as they have always been displayed in her office and on her screen saver. She brought with her to Washington the upper Midwest values of hard work, common sense, and humility—perfect attributes for working for a Member of Congress.

From Representative Vander Jagt's office, Lori moved on to work for some of this body's most prestigious Members. She worked for Congressman Dave Camp of Michigan, who served as Chairman of the Ways & Means Committee, and for Congressman Phil Crane, another one of the Ways & Means Committee's most powerful and storied Members. Lori then moved to a senior political position in the Administration of George W. Bush, serving as the head of congressional affairs at the Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration.

I was fortunate to be able to hire Lori at the end of President Bush's second term. Few people know Congressional procedures or how to get things done in Congress like she does. She originally served as my Legislative Director, and later became my Chief of Staff. When I became Chairman of the Ways & Means Committee a little over a year ago, I asked her to help on the Committee as my Senior Advisor, because of her vast experience working with Ways and Means Committee members. Indeed, Lori has now worked for three senior Members of the Ways & Means Committee, a record few congressional staffers can match.

I have always relied upon Lori's counsel and appreciate her forthrightness and her integrity. Lori has always served with humility and grace. I hope Lori will now have a little more time to spend with her family near the shores of Lake Michigan, but I also hope, as she leaves government service and begins the next phase of her career, that she won't move far and will continue to offer her valuable counsel. I and the rest of this House will miss her.

H.R. 4680, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CENTENNIAL ACT

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2016

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the National Park Service Centennial Act. This year, our nation is celebrating the first one hundred years of what filmmaker Ken Burns so accurately labelled “America's best idea”. With this legislation, we are helping to strengthen the National Park Service for its second century of serving visitors and conserving our national treasures.

America's National Parks are the best example of our commitment to preserve and celebrate the natural wonder and cultural heritage of the United States. It is our responsibility to ensure that future generations can have the same chance our families do to experience our national landscapes and history.

The Centennial Act will support that goal by building upon the public-private partnerships created by the extremely successful National Park Service's Centennial Challenge. Federal investments of \$25 million over the past two years have been more than doubled by private investments. These public-private collaborations provide an opportunity to reinvest in our parks and to re-engage with the hundreds of millions of visitors who come to our parks every year. In Minnesota's 4th District, the Centennial Challenge supported a vibrant new visitor center in the heart of St. Paul to connect families to an urban National Park: the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

In addition, the Centennial Act establishes an endowment for the National Park Service. The gifts and donations that go into the endowment will form a base of funding to address future park projects and needs. This endowment fund will protect ancient landscapes and tell the ever evolving story of the American people and our nation. It will help to preserve the unique ecosystem within our oldest parks, like Yellowstone and Yosemite. It will demonstrate the diversity of the American dream at the newly created Stonewall and Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monuments.

For a century, the National Park Service has conserved our natural treasures, preserved our cultural heritage, offered unparalleled opportunities for recreation, and taught young and old alike about the history of our land and our people. This is an impressive legacy, and it is one we must build upon to keep our national parks a part of our national fabric for generations to come.

The National Park Service Centennial Act is an important step forward to protecting that legacy, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

IN HONOR OF WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a school in my District which was