

IN HONOR OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE ARIZONA'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. PAUL A. GOSAR**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 16, 2016*

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the historic Town of Florence, Arizona. Founded in 1866, Florence is one of the oldest European settlements in the state and is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year.

Scenic Florence is home to many prominent geographical landmarks that contribute to Arizona's picturesque beauty such as the Gila River, Box Canyon and the Casa Grande Ruins. Florence serves as the final resting place for the Father of Arizona, Charles D. Poston. Moreover, the town admirably provides the state with employees for the nine correctional operations in Florence. It also serves as a connection point for three major transportation corridors in the state. Over time, Florence has developed a fanciful history as a model wild-west establishment. Its notable downtown, Old Silverbell copper Mine, and wonderfully preserved fuel Coke Ovens from the mid-nineteenth century attract visitors from all over.

I would like to take the time to show my appreciation to the Town of Florence for their positive additions to Arizona through timeless beauty, employment, and state pride. Florence's distinctive history over the last 150 years contributes to the unique characteristics shared in the state of Arizona. It is my honor to serve the Town of Florence and wish them a happy 150th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE BRAIN INJURY CENTER OF VENTURA COUNTY

**HON. JULIA BROWNLEY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 16, 2016*

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with Brain Injury Awareness Month, I rise to recognize the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County, an organization wholeheartedly dedicated to raising awareness, providing support and resources to survivors and caregivers impacted by brain injury.

Beginning as a grassroots organization in 1995, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County has grown into an outstanding network that supports an estimated 16,000 people living with traumatic brain injury in Ventura County, as well as thousands of stroke survivors with acquired brain injuries.

Through far-reaching and impactful community outreach efforts, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County provides education and awareness about the organization's programs, services and brain injury prevention information. In 2015 alone, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County assisted more than 800 survivors and caregivers to re-establish life after brain injury and develop strategies to build social skills, as well as provide support to families and caregivers.

Today, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County is collaborating with community

healthcare partners, including the Ventura County Medical Center's Trauma Department, to launch the "Care Transitions Demonstration Project." This initiative will allow the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County to support severe brain injury survivors from the point of trauma through post hospital discharge. The Brain Injury Center of Ventura County also works diligently to provide information to patients with mild to moderate brain injuries and concussions in emergency rooms.

Moreover, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County has helped caregivers develop strategies to meet their personal goals and deal with the challenges in the caregiver-survivor relationship. Some of the organization's services and programs include support groups, courses in social skills and vocational skills, internships, and referral assistance for medical specialists, neuro assessments, counseling, rehabilitation, housing, transportation, employment, financial planning, education and so much more.

For the organization's extensive history and work to improve the quality of life for all individuals impacted by brain injury and their significant efforts and contributions to provide support, resources and awareness for brain injury survivors and caregivers throughout the region, I am honored to recognize the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County.

MAJORITY RULE

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 16, 2016*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Claire Jeffress attends Dawson High School in Pearland, Texas. The essay topic is: Majority Rule.

While growing up and learning about the differences between right and wrong, one is often taught about being fair. When being first taught about the majority rule, I was told one uses the majority rule to be fair to all parties involved. Majority rule is defined as a political principle in which the greater percentage of people who share the same view should exercise greater power. Intuitively this makes sense. If most people want to pick Joe to be President, then Joe should be President. However, we must make sure that Majority Rule does not become Majority Tyranny. Nazi Germany is an example of how devastating an impact a brainwashed majority can have on the very lives of a religious minority. Majority rule should only be applied until the point that it infringes on the liberty of another.

In America, one of the ways we have balanced majority rule with individual rights is

that we have enshrined each person's rights in our constitution. In many countries, if the majority does not like what you say, they can stop you from saying your point of view. Here, our right of free speech is protected by the constitution. Similarly, I am entitled to go to church and share my religious beliefs even if others feel differently. The majority is not allowed to vote away my right to speak my opinion or my right to exercise my beliefs. In many other countries, I can be thrown in jail just for sharing my views or going to a church that the majority doesn't believe in. America balances the will of the majority with the rights of the individual by enshrining those rights in our Constitution.

America also protects the individual by having checks and balances in our three branches of government. Venezuela is a good example of where majority rule can go wrong. The people of Venezuela elected Hugo Chavez as their leader. Unfortunately, it was an example of one person, one vote, one time. Mr. Chavez used his power of the majority to steal and redistribute money from individuals to his majority. He also put many of his own people in the courts to ensure that only his voting majority was protected. People who disagreed with his policies were jailed and had their property confiscated. In America, we have an independent Supreme Court and Congress that can override the President if he tries to violate individual rights in our constitution. I cannot be punished just because I disagree with the President.

Many people sometimes think of Democracy as a simple example of majority rule. This thinking is too simplistic. Our founding fathers realized that simple majority rule would just lead to another country torn apart by a tyranny of the majority. They ensured individual liberties were protected through our Constitution and three branches of government. Once the individual was protected, the majority could determine our policies and direction.

TRIBUTE TO AIR FORCE 2ND LIEUTENANT ESTEBAN HOTESSE, TUSKEGEE AIRMAN, DOMINICAN-AMERICAN

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 16, 2016*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as Dominican-Americans across our great nation celebrated their heritage and their compatriots commemorated Dominican Independence Day on February 27th, 2016. Today I rise to posthumously honor and pay tribute to Tuskegee Airman Second Lieutenant Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse (Service Number 32218759).

Esteban Hotesse, a Dominican native who immigrated to the country as a child, enlisted during World War II, and served in the lauded Tuskegee Airmen brigade. Though his team was scheduled to go into battle, they never saw combat abroad. As a member of the all-black unit, Hotesse was among a group of 101 Tuskegee Airmen officers arrested for refusing to follow Jim Crow orders from a white commanding officer at a base near Seymour, Indiana, where the KKK had a strong presence.

In March 1945, the last of the Tuskegee groups, the 477th Medium Bombardment Group, was moved from Godman Field, adjacent to Fort Knox, to Freeman Field because of the latter's better flight facilities. Tensions

between the 477th and the white command structure on the base were tense as soon as the 477th arrived, and shortly thereafter, an incident occurred unparalleled in Air Corps history.

Upon their arrival at Freeman, the commanding officer of the base, Colonel Robert R. Selway, moved quickly to set up and enforce a segregated system. The group was housed in a dilapidated building. Col. Selway also created a novel system to deny the Airmen entry into the officers' club. He classified the Black airmen as "trainees," even though they had all finished flight school, and therefore were all commissioned officers. As trainees, they were forced to use a rundown, former noncommissioned officers club nicknamed "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This all occurred despite an order issued in 1940 issued by President Roosevelt himself that no officer should be denied access to any officer's club. On April 5, 1945 a group of the Airmen peacefully entered the officers' club in protest. Sixty-one were arrested within 24 hours. This act of disobedience later became known as the Freeman Field Mutiny. Hotesse perished later that year in an accidental plane crash. His obituary in a Dominican newspaper lists his cause of death as a B-25 crash in the Ohio River in Indiana.

Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse was born on February 2, 1919 in Moca, Dominican Republic, and he came to the U.S. at the age of 4 with his mother, Clara Pacheco, who at the time was 25 years old. Hotesse was also accompanied by his sister Irma Hotesse, age 2. They came through the famous port of Ellis Island and, like many Dominicans at the time, went to live in my Congressional District within Upper Manhattan. At the time of his enlistment, he was living with his wife, Iristella Lind, who was Puerto Rican. They applied for U.S. citizenship in April 1943 after he'd served almost a year. The couple had two daughters before he enlisted. Today, one of his daughters, Mary Lou Hotesse, resides in New York City and two granddaughters, one named Iris Rivera, live in the South.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our distinguished colleagues join me in paying tribute to one of our nation's heroes. In life, he immigrated to our shores to join ranks with our military force in the advancement of peace, justice, and freedom here and abroad.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, March 15, 2016, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: on roll call no. 118, NAY.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on March 15, I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA"

on Numbers 114, 115, 116, 117, and 123 and voted "NAY" on Numbers 118, 119, 120, 121, and 122.

#### SYRIAN IMMIGRATION

#### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Cameron Lavine attends George Ranch High School in Richmond, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

Throughout history, the United States has been a beacon of hope for immigrants around the world. Beginning in the early 1700's, when the first of the Scots-Irish immigrants came to America, we have generally been extremely welcoming to foreigners, even if we did not necessarily want them. The Scots-Irish, more specifically the Paxton Boys, caused many problems for Americans and Native Americans, yet, despite the danger they presented to society, the Scots-Irish were still allowed to enter the United States. Then, in the mid-1800's, there was a wave of Irish immigrants because of the famine and there was a wave of Chinese immigrants into America. Although Chinese immigration was later on restricted, people were still allowed to enter this country. There are many other groups of people who have been able to seek refuge in the United States as well, and the latest asylum seekers are the Syrians who have been displaced by the poverty and violence that resulted from a civil war. However, instead of opening our arms and providing assistance to those in need as we have done in the past, many people want to close off the United States.

The number of Syrian refugees has increased severely over the past year, creating a large burden on European and Middle Eastern nations such as Greece, Germany, and Turkey. Many of these countries are calling upon the United States to take action since they are the current hegemonic power. However, a majority of American politicians believe that we should ignore that call. This humanitarian crisis has turned into an ethical dilemma: Should the United States accept the Syrian refugees who are trying to escape poverty and violence despite the potential dangers, or should we close our doors in order to protect national security? This event has really sent the traditional belief that the United States is safe haven for anyone trying to escape persecution, violence, and poverty into a tailspin. For the first time, the U.S. is considering turning its back on those in need, a direct contrast to past events where America was a willing safe-haven for those seeking asylum.

HONORING JOHN AND DENISE  
KURTZ OF PENNSYLVANIA

#### HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to honor John and Denise Kurtz on their retirement after more than 62 years of combined Federal service to the United States of America.

With 32 years of service, John began his Federal Government career as a GS-1 Clerk Typist with the United States Army Logistics Evaluation Agency. He rose through the ranks primarily working in financial operations and concluding his career as Director, DLA Finance Distribution. Through his financial acumen, I understand he was instrumental to the success and execution of the Defense Management Review Decision 902, as well as, numerous Base Realignment and Closure and A-76 actions. Always committed to continuous process improvement and stewardship excellence, John shared his innovative ideas and proactively developed financial solutions that enabled DLA Distribution to provide premiere distribution support to the Department of Defense and other government agencies.

With 30 years of service, Denise began her Federal Government career as a Payroll Clerk, GS-3, with the Defense Depot Mechanicsburg and rose through various diverse assignments, concluding her career as Acting Director, Distribution Policy and Processing at Defense Logistics Agency Distribution. Denise was instrumental in spearheading major initiatives integral to the organization's Inventory Integrity and Stock Readiness Programs, while regularly seeking opportunities to improve processes and procedures ensuring that the organization provided effective, efficient and best value logistics solutions to our Nation's military.

From the beginning of their careers, the Kurtz's exhibited professionalism and devotion to duty—the standard by which all civil servants are to be measured.

On behalf of the people of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, it's with great pride that I congratulate John and Denise Kurtz on their retirement after more than 62 years of combined service to the United States of America.

#### HONORING MR. JOHN BILLINGSLEY

#### HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the honoring of John Billingsley, a founder and Chief Executive Officer of Tri Global Energy, in the Dallas Business Journal's "2015 Who's Who in Energy." Mr. Billingsley has worked in a variety of industries including commercial real estate, banking, and manufacturing. However with Tri Global Energy, headquartered in Dallas, Texas, his focus is on wind power in Texas.

Mr. Billingsley was born south of Lubbock, Texas on a cotton farm and attended college at Texas Tech University where he graduated