

## TRIBUTE TO GORDON HENNICK

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Gordon Hennick on the occasion of his 100th birthday on March 30, 2016.

Our world has changed a great deal during the course of Gordon's life. Since his birth, we have revolutionized air travel and walked on the moon. We have invented the television, cellular phones and the internet. We have fought in wars overseas, seen the rise and fall of Soviet communism and witnessed the birth of new democracies. Gordon has lived through seventeen United States Presidents and twenty-four Governors of Iowa. In his lifetime, the population of the United States has more than tripled.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent Gordon in the United States Congress and it is my pleasure to wish him a very happy 100th birthday. I invite my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Gordon on reaching this incredible milestone and wishing him even more health and happiness in the years to come.

HOSTILITIES BETWEEN  
AZERBAIJAN AND ARMENIA**HON. RYAN K. ZINKE**

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my deepest concern over the recent surge in hostilities along the Line of Contact between Armenia and Azerbaijan which needlessly claimed dozens of lives on both sides.

These skirmishes come just days after a successful visit by Azerbaijani President Aliyev with Vice President BIDEN and Secretary Kerry. Azerbaijan has been a staunch ally to the United States. It is critical to regional stability and global security that the recent hostilities be deescalated.

It is no secret that Russia does not support the Southern Gas Corridor Project. This pipeline has been championed by Azerbaijan and would provide critical energy security for America's friends and allies in Europe. Accordingly this latest upsurge in fighting is another sign of Moscow's meddling in the affairs of states along its borders. As we have seen in Eastern Ukraine and Georgia, Russia continues to exploit separatist movements along its periphery to pressure our friends and allies in the region. Unfortunately, this is not the first time that Armenia, Russia's key regional ally, has been used as a proxy to intimidate our partners, including Azerbaijan and Georgia.

These latest hostilities between Azerbaijan and Armenia remind us of the urgency to find a peaceful solution to the protracted conflict. I urge the Administration to step up its efforts towards a peaceful solution and work with both sides to stabilize the region. Meanwhile, in the face of increasing Russian interference and aggression against its neighbors, the United States must remain steadfast in its support of friends like Azerbaijan.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. SE-  
BASTIAN LUJAN "BEN"  
BENAVIDEZ**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Sebastian Lujan "Ben" Benavidez, a longtime Fresno civil rights leader, who passed away on April 4, 2016, at the age of 69. Mr. Benavidez will undoubtedly be remembered by the legacy he created through serving the community as a positive role model to all of those he encountered.

Born on November 4, 1946 in Miami, Arizona, Mr. Benavidez was the son of Arizona copper miners. He moved to Fresno, California in 1962. He graduated from Washington Union High School, and continued on to attend Fresno City College. After college Ben worked for Parlier Unified School District. Mr. Benavidez is appreciated by many individuals throughout California, but he is especially treasured in the San Joaquin Valley, where he worked tirelessly to improve civil and economic rights for individuals throughout the region.

Mr. Benavidez was a leader and spent decades advocating and working to improve the lives of immigrant families in the rural communities of the San Joaquin Valley and California. He became actively involved in the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA), serving as President for 13 years. As President of MAPA, Mr. Benavidez fought to expand opportunities in education, and led an effort to increase minority participation in local government. In the 1980s and early 1990s, he led boycotts and walkouts that helped more Latinos win city and school board positions. His efforts to expand opportunities for minorities in education decisions led him to take on Dinuba, and Kings Canyon Unified School districts in a battle to eliminate at-large elections, to ensure that school boards were reflective of the communities they served.

Mr. Benavidez's unrelenting pursuit for social justice made him known to be fearless, and he demanded fairness. He fought for equality and improved educational opportunities for immigrant, migrant and minority children. He educated parents about their civil rights and their enormous political potential. Mr. Benavidez's contributions to his community, his philanthropic endeavors, and his work to expand small minority owned businesses led him to be honored by Parlier Unified School District with an elementary school named after him. In 2007, The Fresno Bee recognized Mr. Benavidez with the Latino Legends of the 20th Century Award, and in 2011, Mr. Benavidez was honored for his civil rights work, in advocating for minority civil and economic rights by the Greenlining Institute.

Without question, Mr. Benavidez's integrity, honor and long-lasting involvement in the Central Valley made him a reputable man. He was well known, beloved, and shown enormous appreciation by anyone who had the pleasure of calling him a friend. Mr. Benavidez leaves behind his loving family, including his wife of 49 years, Gloria, their two sons and two daughters, their respective spouses, twelve grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It is my honor to join his family in celebrating the life

of this amazing man, who will never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to honor the life of Mr. Ben Benavidez. He will be remembered for his contributions and service to our country.

## TRIBUTE TO DAN MEHMEN

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mr. Dan Mehmen of Atlantic, Iowa, for being recognized as the Ambassador of the Year by the Atlantic Area Chamber of Commerce.

Dan is new to the Atlantic area, stepping into the community in 2015. To be a friendly neighbor and community leader, Dan has taken an active role in the Atlantic Area Chamber of Commerce. As an Ambassador for the organization, he visits local businesses to welcome them to the community, attend grand opening ribbon cuttings, and shares information beneficial to a new or local business. In presenting the award, his peers recognized his faithful attendance at Chamber-related events throughout the year, while showing enthusiastic support for area businesses and his fellow Ambassadors.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Dan for earning this award and for taking an active role in his community. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Dan and in wishing him nothing but continued success.

## GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Wednesday, April 13, 2016, has been designated "Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy." I am pleased to join my colleagues in recognizing the unique contributions to our civilization from those of Greece and of Greek American descent.

Democracy was first born in Greece over 2,000 years ago, based on the fundamental principle of consensual government self-determined by free citizens. The ideas forged in ancient Greece by brilliant minds of the day have such clarity and force that 2,000 years later they still hold more power than a host of armed weapons.

The priceless ideas of democracy and equality born in ancient Greece have strongly shaped the American national identity, which became a beacon of freedom and dignity to individuals. They continue to give hope and inspiration to the millions around the world who yearn to live in a free society like ours. Greece set the example for us and we, in turn have set the example for countless others.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that the Congress has set aside this national day of celebration again in 2016. Each year, it seems, we

have a greater appreciation for the tremendous contribution of Greece to our American values and our priceless democracy.

TRIBUTE TO THE DEAN ROBINSON  
FAMILY

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Dean Robinson Family for being awarded the Cattleman of the Year award from the Madison County Cattlemen's Association. The Madison County Cattlemen's Association is an organization of beef producing families and associated companies dedicated to the future of Iowa's beef industry.

Accepting the coveted award were Robinson family members and producers Dave, Gina, Dean, Kristin and Bradley Robinson. Many Iowans, as well as the Robinsons, have a long tradition of raising quality beef for world consumption. Their farming operation is based on pure dedication to feeding the world while being good stewards of their product and the land.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate the Robinsons for this award and I share their love and passion of raising cattle to feed the world. I am proud to represent them in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating the Robinson Family and wishing them nothing but continued success.

IN MEMORIAM BRUCE MERRILL  
MAY 13, 1937–APRIL 9, 2016

**HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Bruce Merrill. Bruce was a prominent Arizona political scientist and pollster who taught and conducted research at Arizona State University for the past forty years. Bruce was an Arizona native who taught political science and conducted regular opinion surveys of Arizona voters and provided political commentary to news outlets.

No elected official in Arizona was elected to office without the knowledge of Merrill's research. He was a factual, objective voice focused on finding out what Arizonan's wanted from their leaders. His perspective and deep knowledge of the Arizona electorate will be deeply missed.

Bruce was also a U.S. Navy veteran who served as a liaison officer to members of Congress and other political leaders. He studied political research at Brigham Young University and joined the faculty at ASU in 1970. He retired from the university in 1998 as a professor emeritus and served as a fellow for the Morrison Institute, a research center focused on public policy in Arizona.

Bruce is survived by his wife, Janis, daughter Kathryn Sorensen, son Christopher and his wife's children, Laura Sonius, Brian Sandler

and Heather Lauth and a host of grandchildren. Please join me in honoring his memory.

TRIBUTE TO WALT TITUS

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Walt Titus on his recent retirement from the Gravity, Iowa Fire Department. Walt served as a firefighter for more than 58 years.

Walt became a volunteer firefighter in the mid-1950s in Kirkman, Iowa and has worked for the Sharpsburg and Gravity Fire Departments over the course of the next 58 years. He did anything that needed to be done in service to the department. He was quoted in the Bedford Times-Press stating that commitment is the key to a volunteer fire department. "If a fire alarm goes off, there is a blizzard and it's 10 below zero, some want to stay home. When you're committed, you get up and go whether you feel like it or not." It is that attitude which exemplifies the Iowa spirit of volunteerism and pride.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending Walt for his service to Taylor County. I consider it an honor to represent Walt in United States House of Representatives and wish him the best in his retirement from his firefighting duties.

CELEBRATING THE 2016 CONGRES-  
SIONAL ARTS COMPETITION

**HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 18, 2016*

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, once again, I come to the floor to recognize the great success of strong local schools working with dedicated parents and teachers. I rise today to congratulate and honor a number of outstanding high school artists from the 11th Congressional District of New Jersey. Each of these talented young men and women participated in the 2016 Congressional Arts Competition, "An Artistic Discovery." Their works of art are exceptional.

Sixty six participated. That is a wonderful response, and I would very much like to build on that participation for future competitions.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the winners of our art competition. First place was awarded to Jane Lee from Wayne Valley High School for her acrylic painting entitled, "Chrome Still-Life." Second place was awarded to Emma Jang from West Morris Mendham High School for her acrylic painting on canvas entitled, "Tenacity." Tyler Harker received third place for his etching titled "Opal."

Honorable Mentions were awarded to: Connor Sokol of Sparta High School for his photograph titled "Freedom's Flight," Jasmine Shaw for her photograph entitled "There's No Place Like Homeland," Camila Rosario for her colored pencil sketch entitled "Stressed Out," and Leonela Moyoli of Boonton High School for her acrylic painting entitled, "Tyran Moore."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize each artist for their participation by indicating their high school, their name and the title of their contest entries.

Boonton High School:  
Alexis Manfredi, "The Lorax"  
Leonela Moyoli, "Tyran Moore"  
Theodore Perri, "Phelps"  
Elizabeth Sayles, "Elizabeth"

Chatham High School:  
Jane Ewald, "Teddy"  
Connie Han, "Like Father Like Son"  
Phoebe Nichols, "Eliza"  
Amanda Leyens, Untitled

Delbarton School:  
Joseph Gambetta, "Patriotism"  
Santiago Robertson-Lavalle, "Girl in the Archway"

Hanover Park High School:  
Samantha Wingerter, "Sam I Am"  
Jefferson Township High School:  
Skylar Lewis, "Moonlight Serenade"  
Melanie Rodriguez, "Reflections"  
Nina Thogulura, "Hues of Contemplation"

Kinnelon High School:  
Samantha Flayderman, "Miss Believer"  
Patrycia Glowiak, "Shadows"  
Ava Lutz, "Aviary Reflection"  
Amanda Pita, "The Old Man by the Sea"  
Livingston High School:  
Lanie Esralew, "July in Manhattan"  
Yana Sang, "Around the World"  
Jasmine Shaw, "There's No Place like Home-land"

Julia Zeman, "Passionate Polaroid"  
Jennifer Zheng, "Where to Next?"

Mewe Art Academy:  
Siyu Cao, "2011/07/01 Shanghai"

Montville High School:  
Kristen DiGiacomo, "Lost"  
Destinee Garrido, "Style"  
Alexander Tullo, "Back Street Lot"

Morris Catholic High School:  
Patrick Green, "Sunset Over the Marine Corps War Memorial"

Roxana Ponce, "Reminiscence"  
Haoming Zhu, "Zi Tai [Posture]"

Morris Knolls High School:  
Austin Braddock, "Censored"  
Jenna Ford, "Fractured Self-Portrait"  
Adam SanGiovanni, "Stephanie, the Free Soul"

Ryan Sullivan, "Hypnotized"

Mountain Lakes High School:  
Joy Xie, "Worn Out"

Nutley High School:  
Barbara Benda, "Relief in the Farm of Nusty Pages"

Jacob Michels, "Bridge"  
Omar Morsi, "Making the Best of a Rainy Day"

Gregory O'Connell, "Smooth Criminal"

Parsippany High School:  
Christine Li, "Don't Burst My Bubble"

Parsippany Hills High School:  
Karoline Xiong, "The Joy of Sunrise"

Passaic County Technical Institute:  
Christopher Cortez, "Norma"

Jamie Loverdi, "Candice Swanepoel"

Passaic Valley High School:  
Claudia Barone, "Piano Keys"  
Melanie Capalbo, "Fall Foliage"  
Andrew Fucntet, "Fear in Clouds"  
Santiago Gomez-Vargas, "All the Dry Peaches"

Randolph High School:  
Nicole Gehan, "Brave"

Sparta High School:  
Brandon Ancis, "Unspoken Wisdom"  
Katlyn Connelly, "Father and Son Bonding"  
Mitchell Coyle, "The Dream Within Us All"  
Connor Sokol, "Freedom's Flight"

Wayne Valley High School: