

# HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE AND THE 69TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

## HON. SCOTT TAYLOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD on behalf of my constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman. Rabbi Zoberman is the Founding Rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Born in Chu, Kazakhstan (USSR) in 1945, he is the son of Polish Holocaust Survivors. Rabbi Zoberman asked me to include the following remarks in the RECORD:

We remember lest the world forgets or denies the genocidal tragedy that befell the Jewish people at the hands of Nazi Germany and its collaborators of the greatest crime in human history. We dare not forget the six million innocent Jewish victims who were all begrudged their covenantal bond with Israel's God of compassion, caring and love, ever prodding the human family to rise higher and higher. So much that is precious has been forever lost. Nazi ideology sought to eradicate Western civilization's life affirming Judeo-Christian system. We remember the survivors whose numbers are now being naturally diminished, and their resilient spirit that allows them to rebuild their lives with the affirmation of life's undying goodness and the human capacity to overcome evil. We remember the rescuers, those righteous gentiles, who risked their own lives and the lives of their loved ones to protect and save vulnerable Jewish lives. Last but not least, we remember the liberators and heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice, fighting to preserve human dignity.

My Jewish friend, Ed Shames, is one of the greatest of the Greatest Generation whose legendary legacy is captured in *Airborne* (the Combat Story of Ed Shames of Easy Company) by Ian Gardner. Edward David Shames was born on June 13, 1922, in Virginia Beach, when it was but a rural community. He was the youngest of the four children, of David and Sadie, who ran the "Shames Provisions" country store, with the family living above it. The father's sudden death at age 42 and the Great Depression challenged the family. He grew up rowing and fishing in Chesapeake Bay, target practicing with his father's pistols and learning navigation when hiking with a gift of maps and a compass from his sacrificial mother. Shames went to great length to firmly train his third platoon. Though his strictness was resented by some, it did pay in saved lives. Not only did Ed hold the best record for saved lives among the Division's 500 platoons, he also was the Division's first to receive a battlefield commission following D-Day. Furthermore, he was the first officer of his Division to enter Dachau a few days following its liberation and the horrors he faced are still with him today. The book's sales proceeds admirably go toward wounded warriors and their families. I can personally attest to Col. Shames' keen convictions, biting humor, and profound humility of a soldier's soldier and a hero's hero. He was honored by the French Government and the legislature in Richmond, Virginia.

As we celebrate Israel's 69th Anniversary, we look forward with lasting gratitude to the 50th Jubilee of the 1967 Six-Day-War miraculous victory, and the reunification of Jerusalem, the Jewish people's eternal capital. We recall the preceding gripping fear of another Holocaust, this time by the sur-

rounding and menacing Arab states begrudging the triumphant survival of European Jewry's remnant which includes my own family. At last, all of Jerusalem's holy sites are safeguarded and respected. We pray for Shalom's blessing of elusive peace to embrace Israelis and Palestinians with the latter finally accepting the exceptional return of an ancient people uprooted from its native land by the Roman sword's power. For two trying millennia, Israelis, never abandoned its divine bond with Zion and Jerusalem, thus proving the superiority of the human soul's power.

We marvel at Israel's world-class, astonishing accomplishments and innovations in its brief and challenging years of renewed sovereignty, even as it faces existential threats from a nuclear capable seeking Iran, its proxies, and the close presence of ISIS and Jihadist groups. The genocidal tragic Syrian scenario is entering its seventh year of massive human destruction and the greatest refugee crisis since WWII. President Trump's military response to the latest gas attack on the long abandoned Syrian civilians including children, reminiscent of the Holocaust, is deeply appreciated. New opportunities have emerged for rapprochement between Israel and the Sunni Arab states. We bemoan the precipitous and alarming global rise of anti-Semitism, the world's oldest hatred that made the Holocaust possible. The threats within the United States against Jewish institutions, the desecration of Jewish cemeteries and anti-Israel/Jewish activities in American schools make mockery of sacred memory, justice and truth, while enabling aggressors to persist and delay peace.

The United Nations, created in the wake of WWII and the Holocaust, has shamefully turned into a bastion of anti-Israel propaganda as we praise Israel's valiant defense as well as staunch opposition to the destructive BDS movement by American Ambassador Nikki Haley, a shining light in a house of darkness. The unique bond of genuine brotherhood with the United States, vital to both countries, is between the world's leading democracy and the only democracy in the Middle East. The constructive role of American Jewry cannot be overstated.

## HONORING THE CLAY COUNTY PARK RANGERS

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I pause to thank and honor the Clay County Park Rangers for their efforts in serving Smithville following the March 6, 2017 tornado.

The EF-2 rated tornado left a trail of destruction up to 1,000 feet wide and 18 miles long. In Smithville, over 60 houses were damaged with several completely destroyed, resulting in over 65 tons of debris. Miraculously, no injuries were sustained during the storm.

After the storm, officers from the Clay County Park Rangers helped set up a perimeter, went door-to-door making sure residents were safe, and helped protect the neighborhood with a 24/7 presence in the days that followed. The effect of the rangers on the neighborhoods affected by the tornado cannot be understated, whether through making the victims feel safe from scroungers or looters or by helping residents with their physical needs throughout the recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and the community of Smithville in thanking Interim Park Security Manager John Davis and the rangers and staff of the Clay County Park Rangers for their service following the March 6 tornado and wishing them God's blessings and protection in the years to come.

## PRaising LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED IN SOLVING THE MURDER OF CHIEF DEPUTY CLINT GREENWOOD

### HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep appreciation and admiration to all of the Texas federal law enforcement officers who worked so diligently in getting to the bottom of the tragic and senseless murder of Harris County Precinct 3 Constable, Assistant Chief Deputy Greenwood.

My hat goes off to the Baytown Police Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Marshals Service, Houston Police Department, Gulf Coast Violent Offenders Task Force, Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), Texas Rangers, Harris County Sheriff's Department, and Harris County District Attorney. These men and women showed tremendous determination and commitment in their efforts to find this evil perpetrator and deliver justice. While we continue to mourn the loss of another one of our brave Texas law enforcement officers, their hard work and tireless efforts have helped bring healing and closure to the family and the entire law enforcement community.

My prayers continue to be with the family of Assistant Chief Deputy Greenwood.

## HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

### HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the outstanding public service of the Vlahakis family on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the founding of their family's company, Earth Friendly Products. The success story of the Vlahakis family is one of love, labor, and perseverance. This family owned and operated company began with the vision of Van Vlahakis, who immigrated to America from Greece with just \$22 in his pocket. He spoke little English, yet he made something of himself, studying chemistry at Roosevelt University and founding the company out of his garage in 1967.

Born out of Van's own experience suffering the effects of exposure to harsh chemicals, Earth Friendly Products was a green company before being green was fashionable.

The Vlahakis family's commitment to sustainability is evidenced by their decision to use safe ingredients, earning recognition as the 2015 EPA Safer Choice Partner of the Year. Just last year, they opened a new Carbon

Neutral Platinum Zero Waste manufacturing center, demonstrating leadership in the cause of sound environmental stewardship.

The Vlahakis' dedication to a healthier and happier planet applies not just to their corporate philosophy, but to their community. They have created good jobs and voluntarily implemented a \$17 per hour company-wide minimum wage, one of the highest in the nation. They also bring interactive educational programs directly to kids in schools, and host field trips at their facilities.

Although Van Vlahakis passed away in 2014, his legacy lives on under the leadership of his daughter and my friend, Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks. Kelly is a champion in the Greek-American community and she has been an inspiration to those in the green movement.

Fifty years after Van Vlahakis had the foresight to make products with safe ingredients and sustainable practices, much of America has caught up to his vision. We now expect the goods we purchase to be both effective and safe and we demand that companies not exploit the environment in pursuit of profits.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks and Earth Friendly Products as they celebrate this momentous anniversary.

IN HONOR OF MARK MARINI

**HON. JOHN B. LARSON**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chief Warrant Officer Five (CW5) Mark S. Marini, Sr. for his dedicated service to our Country, the United States Army, and the Connecticut National Guard.

This week, Mr. Marini retires from the Connecticut Army National Guard after 42 years of uniformed service. For over four decades, Mr. Marini has served the State of Connecticut and our Country with the utmost dignity and respect, and it is my profound honor to recognize him as he retires this Thursday from his position as the Command Chief Warrant Officer of the Connecticut Army National Guard.

CW5 Marini's accomplishments while serving at home and with his unit deployed into harm's way are extensive—his full engagement, leadership and contributions have had a significant and long lasting impact upon the numerous formations that make up our Connecticut National Guard. His dedication to his country, the National Guard, and the men and women of the state is unparalleled.

I extend my deepest congratulations to CW5 Marini upon his retirement, and extend my appreciation to him for enduring so much for so long on our behalf.

ISRAELI HOLOCAUST  
REMEMBRANCE DAY

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, Israelis commemorated Holocaust Remembrance Day. Carrying out what they

called their "final solution" to the "Jewish problem," the Nazis gassed millions of Jews at Auschwitz, and then collected their corpses like waste to be burned in the camp.

Mr. Speaker, this happened just 72 years ago, though many seem to forget. From the ashes of Auschwitz the Jewish people returned to their ancient homeland and established the sole democracy in the Middle East.

Unfortunately, the Jewish people of Israel are again targets of elimination. Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, and a growing list of others have openly called to "eliminate" the Jewish state and "wipe it off the map."

We must honor the memories of the 6 million Jews murdered by the Nazis by vowing that Jews will never again stand alone before those seeking their extermination. The American people stand with Israel and with Jews everywhere remembering those that perished.

We remember. And we vow: never again.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING THE CLAY COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

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After the storm, officers from the Clay County Sheriff's Office helped set up a perimeter, went door-to-door making sure residents were safe, and helped protect the neighborhood with a 24/7 presence in the days that followed. Their experience and training in emergency management was crucial as the city and residents began to put their lives back together. The effect of the Sheriff's Office on the neighborhoods affected by the tornado cannot be understated, whether through making the victims feel safe from scroungers or looters or by helping residents with their physical needs throughout the recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and the community of Smithville in thanking Sheriff Paul Vescovo and the officers and staff of the Clay County Sheriff's Office for their service following the March 6 tornado and wishing them God's blessings and protection in the years to come.

A BOW TO A LAWYER WITH AP-  
PEALING SKILLS—JOAN O'HARA  
JOINS VICE PRESIDENT PENCE'S  
'RIGGEROUS' NATIONAL SECUR-  
ITY CREW

**HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today out of gratitude for the service and friendship of

Joan O'Hara—formerly my General Counsel for the House Homeland Security Committee—who now holds the post of Deputy National Security Advisor to Vice President Mike Pence.

Joan would tell you she owes her professional success not to the Halls of Congress but to the skulls and shells of crew. In fact, the first 15 years of Joan's adult life were dedicated to competitive rowing—not law or politics. She approached rowing as she has since approached any obstacle or opportunity in her life: with genuine curiosity and an undeterrable will for success.

Joan took up rowing in her senior year at Loyola College in Maryland. Shortly thereafter, she won a national championship in the single scull competition and was part of a winning team in a quad scull. The former is a testament to Joan's individual determination and perseverance, the latter—her leadership and teamwork. Both of these qualities have since expressed themselves explicitly in Joan's political career.

After her own competitive career was over Joan coached rowing at the collegiate level. As a mentor to young women, she shared her personal experiences and insight to help others better themselves. Joan taught that it is not just the strength of one's back that contributes to rowing success but a cognizant awareness of the route to the finish line and humble understanding of what it takes to get there; and that when there are multiple people in the scull, it is not about how well any one person rows but how well they row as one.

This same mentality has guided her political career. In 2007, Joan noticed a political fervor at the grassroots level that she had never seen before. With her interest sparked, she decided to pursue a law degree and career in public service. Similarly to rowing, Joan excelled at an impressive rate. She joined the Homeland Security Committee as a legal intern and was hired on as a counsel—quickly ascending to General Counsel.

In her tenure as my General Counsel, she was a trusted advisor and close confidant. She positioned herself at the forefront of the encryption debate by drafting legislation to create a national commission to provide recommendations balancing privacy and security. She also played an integral part in facilitating the first congressional agreement to reauthorize the Department of Homeland Security.

Joan's insight, professionalism, and leadership are missed as she departs this Committee. She will be an outstanding advisor to the Vice President, and I am excited to see what she makes of this new opportunity. It will be a pleasure to watch Joan as she once again embarks on a new adventure and accepts nothing less than excellence along her journey.

HONORING DOCUMENTED ORIGINAL  
TUSKEGEE AIRMAN WALTER  
K. ROBINSON, SR.

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2017*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me