

to the underlying bill to ensure there is an adequate supply of water from reservoirs or other surface waters to help fight wildfires); and

Nay on Roll Call vote 352 (passage of H.R. 23, the GROW Act).

THANKING VICKIE PLUNKETT FOR
TWENTY-THREE YEARS OF
SERVICE TO THE UNITED
STATES CONGRESS

HON. MADELINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Vickie Plunkett for her over twenty years of service in the United States House of Representatives. As we consider the Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization bill in the House Armed Services Committee, for the tenth and final time with Vickie as a Professional Staff Member on the Committee, I would like to take a moment to reflect on her decades of service to this body, and our nation.

Vickie has served as the lead staffer for the Readiness Subcommittee, which oversees the largest account in the Department of Defense, Operations and Maintenance, to include military operations, readiness, and training issues, funding, and programs. In this capacity, she has fought to ensure that our men and women in uniform are trained, ready, and equipped to carry out missions we ask of them, while ensuring that we are acting as responsible stewards of the taxpayer dollar. As the Ranking Member of the Readiness Subcommittee, I have deeply valued Vickie's counsel and advice, as well as her candid perspectives.

Vickie joined the House Armed Services Committee in 2007 after more than a decade of working on defense issues in Congress. From 1989 to 2002, she served as the Deputy Chief of Staff and Military Legislative Assistant to my friend and the former Chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee, Solomon Ortiz, as well as former Congressman Glen Browder, another member of the Subcommittee. Prior to relocating to Washington D.C., Vickie honed her critical thinking and journalistic skills as a publisher, editor, reporter, and photographer for daily and weekly newspapers in Alabama and Georgia. Her editorial expertise and deliberative approach served her and the Committee well not only as we crafted the annual defense authorization bill, but also through countless hearings, markups, and meetings. Her efforts have been instrumental to enacting good public policies for our military and our servicemembers and their families are better equipped, trained, and resourced because of them.

Mr. Speaker, Vickie's departure from the House Armed Services Committee will leave us without the decades of experience and wisdom that she brought to each and every challenge we encountered. I am proud of the work she did, as well as the intelligent, thoughtful manner in which she approached it. On a personal level, Vickie has been a tremendous friend of Guam and the men and women who serve on our island. So on behalf of my constituents and the people of Guam, I extend her my sincere un dangkulo na si Yu'os ma'ase

(deepest gratitude). I wish her, her husband David, and their families well as they enter the next chapter in their lives.

KHANG TRAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Khang Tran for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Khang Tran is a student at Oberon Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Khang Tran is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Khang Tran for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL
(LTC) ROBERT B. NEWELL, SR.

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Robert B. Newell, Sr., for the eleven years of his life that he dedicated to the Army as a surgeon, and the countless years he dedicated as a civilian to saving the lives of others.

After growing up in Buffalo, NY, LTC Newell attended Colgate University, leaving for financial reasons before he could achieve a full degree. However, this did not prevent him from earning his M.D. at the University of Buffalo Medical School. Colgate University would later issue LTC Newell a degree based on his medical school credits at the request of his son, although LTC Newell passed away shortly before hearing this news.

His service to our country started shortly after his graduation from medical school, when LTC Newell joined the army as a trauma surgeon during World War II. He saved the lives of many wounded allied soldiers in England, France and Germany until after the end of the war in 1946.

LTC Newell re-enlisted in the Army in 1948 and served as a Major and head of the Department of Surgery at Fort Lee. He was soon advanced in rank to Lieutenant Colonel and dispatched to Korea, where he served as commanding officer of the 2nd Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) Unit, the 8225th. LTC Newell received the Bronze Star Medal for his heroic achievements and service in combat zone in Korea as part of the MASH Unit. He gave soldiers the immediate and encompassing care that saved many lives

throughout his years of service. He retired from duty in 1953.

Even after his time in the Army, LTC Newell continued to serve the community and save lives as a surgeon and as a leader. Over his long career, in addition to his surgical practice, he also served as the president of medical staffs at three different Illinois hospitals, and as head of the High Point Emergency room in North Carolina.

I am here today to honor LTC Newell after his countless years of service to both the U.S. Army and to injured civilians. His service and commitment to saving lives is commendable, and he is well deserving of this honor. His son, five grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren still remember the great deeds and legacy of their beloved father and "Grandfather Beach," as well as the positive influence he had on their lives. As his grandson Danny writes, Lt. Col. Newell "was the epitome of Brokaw's Greatest Generation."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for Roll Call vote 349 on Wednesday, July 12, 2017. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on Roll Call vote 349.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNUAL
FRANKLIN COUNTY FAIR

HON. STEVE STIVERS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Ohio's 15th Congressional District to recognize the 100th Annual Franklin County Fair. Since 1917, the Franklin County Agricultural Society has given our Central Ohio community countless memories of summertime fun had at the County Fair.

Central Ohio has a rich agricultural heritage, and that heritage is on full display at the Franklin County Fair. Its craft marketplace allows patrons to purchase the exquisite and well-made products of local vendors, and its Junior Fair provides young student farmers with the chance to showcase their hard work and skill in agriculture.

But most importantly, the County Fair provides friends and families from Obetz to Hilliard time to reconnect with one another. They can forget their hectic lives and enjoy traditions that have been appreciated by generations for 100 years.

I am grateful to the Franklin County Agricultural Society and the Franklin County Fair Board for ensuring the success of this year's event, and I am proud to recognize all who have been a part of its storied history.

JOSIAH VIGIL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Josiah Vigil for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Josiah Vigil is a student at Arvada K-8 School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Josiah Vigil is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Josiah Vigil for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

ADDRESSING DIGITAL CURRENCY

HON. ROGER WILLIAMS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address digital currency. This new financial platform is recreating the structures of international finance, and in part offers many exciting opportunities for our future.

However, our nation must ensure that the rise of digital currency, and its use within our borders, does not help aid the actions of terrorists, criminals, and others who want to hurt us.

In recent weeks, the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Illicit Finance of the House Financial Services Committee, led by its chairman, Congressman Steve Pearce, held a critical hearing entitled "Virtual Currency: Financial Innovation and National Security Implications."

Mr. Speaker, at this hearing, the serious national security implications of digital currency, and its use by terrorists was examined. Unless we in Congress develop rational and balanced policies, we may be enabling the very terrorists who wish to destroy us.

Of particular concern is that many of the leading digital currencies are not compliant with the "Anti-Money Laundering" and "Know Your Customer" requirements that we demand of our other financial institutions. This lack of compliance provides a widely opened door for forces of evil to finance their terrible endeavors.

The question, Mr. Speaker, is how we are able to balance our desire to protect our nation and innocents around the world from terror, while not losing our freedoms or economic opportunities.

At this time, virtually all the world's digital currencies are not compliant with the critical AML/KYC standards we expect of our other institutions. Some in the digital currency world argue that digital finance requires a relaxation of these standards. This is absolutely incorrect.

I encourage Congress to continue its efforts to study digital finance, and I am hopeful that, in the coming weeks, our focus will attend to the issue of AML/KYC compliance, highlighting those currencies that refuse to provide this safeguard, and examining and encouraging those who do.

RECOGNIZING CAPE CORAL SWIM TEAM

HON. FRANCIS ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the nine swimmers from the Cape Coral swim team who qualified for the Florida Age Group Championships this weekend.

Swimmers Brent Baker, Evan Baker, Maddie Lehman, Jacob Bilancione, Hayden Tedhams, Skylar Gusler, Natalie Handzlik, Anne Kokosinski and Melana Greene have displayed tremendous skill and determination to qualify for this competition. All under fourteen years of age, these swimmers have shown commendable character as they have practiced tirelessly for this opportunity.

I would also like to honor veteran coach Ed Collins for his dedication to the swim team and the City of Cape Coral. His hard work has brought a record of nine swimmers from the team to this elite competition this year and his three decades of service have inspired many children in our community.

I am honored to have the Cape Coral swim team and Coach Collins represent our district at the championships in Sarasota this weekend.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Rollcall No. 349.

BELOVED: CHILDREN OF THE HOLOCAUST

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2017

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on June 18, 2017, The State newspaper of Columbia, South Carolina, published a remarkable article by John Monk entitled, "In S.C. artist's portraits, Holocaust children live."

The following portions of the article reveal how the memories of these children are kept alive through an extraordinary heartfelt achievement:

"I draw their eyes first," said Mary Burkett, "and I reach a moment where I just make some little subtle shading, and all of a sudden, I see the little person, and I just sort of say, 'Hey, darling.'"

"It is so wonderful that they are there. They seem to me as though they are hiding in the paper, and I just reveal them. I just find them."

Since January, Burkett, 64, of West Columbia, has created 19 pastel portraits of children. Using old grainy black and white photos she printed from the Internet, she has spent hours, dabbing on minute amounts of pastel with a Q-tip or a rolled paper stump called a tortillon, creating the pictures on light brown paper.

She works at home, surrounded by high windows, or on the third floor of the Richland County's main library—both places with natural or bright overhead light. It takes her 25 or 30 hours over a week to draw just one image.

They aren't just any children. They are Jewish children who died in the Holocaust. Their faces exude happiness, though, for the photos that Burkett worked from were taken when the children were with their families, before being sent to the horror of the death camps created by Nazi Germany.

To those who have seen them, Burkett's portraits radiate life, love and loss, intertwined in a way digital or photographic images can't convey.

Many viewer tear up. They might have come across photos before of Jewish children killed in Hitler's concentration camps during World War II. But none like Burkett's, they said.

"I've never seen anything like it, personally," said Barry Abels, executive director of the Columbia Jewish Federation. "Something gets yanked right out of me when I look at these pictures."

Abels heard about Burkett's portraits. After showing them to some friends, he invited her to Holocaust Remembrance Day at Columbia's Tree of Life Synagogue in April. She set up a table, and people dropped by to see her sketches, still in her sketch book.

"Everybody was amazed," Abels said. "The images jump out of the paper. She had captured the essence of the children. 'Remarkable' was a word I heard more than once . . ."

Because of the positive reactions from others, Burkett has made her goal with the pictures to share them with others in a way that lets others learn their stories . . .

Burkett showed her first portrait, of Hersch Goldberg, to her husband of 40 years, Ronny. He liked what she had done, encouraged her to continue, and advised her that if she felt she had to do the portraits, she should continue.

"I started looking for pictures of children from the Holocaust, wanting their pictures to be from the 1930s, before the Holocaust happened. The reason for that is, they were children. They laughed, and they cried, and they fussed, and they giggled, and they ran, all the things that kids do."

Back then, Burkett said, cameras were a novelty and children didn't make faces when you took their picture. "Whatever emotion they were feeling, is actually on their little faces . . ."

Belinda Gergel, a Burkett friend and retired history professor at Columbia College who now lives in Charleston, said, "Quite frankly, these drawings are about as powerful as they could be."

"Mary has a gift, and it's a gift that transcends time, and it brings the past right back into the present," Gergel said. "When you look at these drawings, you are confronting the central question about human experience: How could we have lost these very special children?"

Gergel, Hamm, Abels and Filler all hope Burkett can find a way to share what she's done with wider audiences.

Whatever happens, Burkett doesn't want herself to be the focus of attention.