

be remembered with affection and gratitude for a lifetime dedicated so affectionately to making our part of the world a fairer and more loving place in which to live.

HONORING MR. LERONE BENNET,  
JR.

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a remarkable public servant and hometown hero, Mr. Lerone Bennet, Jr.

Mr. Bennet was a native of Clarksdale, Mississippi, and was an editor at Ebony Magazine during the time the publication published the photos of Emmett Till. In addition, he was also a journalist, author, and historian. A friend and Morehouse College classmate of Rev. Dr. Martin L. King, Jr., Mr. Bennet worked tirelessly in the struggle for Civil Rights. In 1994, Mr. Bennet was appointed to President Clinton's Committee on Arts and Humanities. He also served as an early adviser on the development of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture.

During the last years of his life, Mr. Bennet suffered from vascular dementia. Last night, at 89-years-old, he passed away.

Today, we honor the life of Mr. Lerone Bennet, Jr. and his family.

HONORING ANGELO NERO

**HON. JOHN J. FASO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and honor that I rise today to recognize the retirement of Columbia County Coroner, Angelo Nero.

Mr. Nero retired January 1 of this year, after dedicating over forty years of his life as Columbia County Coroner. He is remembered for his professional, compassionate, and timely service during his career.

Angelo provided exceptional service to the people of Columbia County, while maintaining a professional relationship with local law enforcement and first responders. His colleagues knew they could always depend on Angelo to respond to phone calls at all hours of the night.

During his career, Angelo served as Valatie village trustee and mayor for ten years. Prior to his service at the local level, he served in our Armed Forces during the Korean conflict.

Angelo's selfless service to Columbia County and our nation is greatly appreciated, and I wish him and his wife Barbara the best in their next adventure.

SERBIA AND THE USA

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is a distinct honor for me to talk about the great rela-

tionship we have with Serbia as co-chair of the Congressional Serbia Caucus along with EMANUEL CLEAVER of MO.

Serbia is a great friend of the United States. As a Texan, I have great admiration for the people of Serbia. Our strong opinions and habit to speak our minds make us natural allies.

In fact, one of the first people to settle Texas was a Serbian named Dorde Sagic, or George Fischer as he was known in the U.S. After settling in Texas, Sagic went on to become a justice of the peace in my hometown of Houston.

But Serbia has contributed much more to the cause of justice than just Mr. Sagic keeping the early streets of Houston safe.

Today we honor the service of Serbia's armed forces who have fought side-by-side with Americans to preserve justice during history's most horrific conflicts.

In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson gave a speech marking the fourth anniversary of Austria-Hungary's invasion of Serbia. Speaking of the bravery of the Serbian armed forces, President Wilson said:

"Nobly did they respond. So valiantly and courageous did they oppose the forces of a country ten times greater in population and resources . . . While their territory has been devastated and their homes despoiled, the spirit of the Serbian people has not been broken."

As a Texan, I admire such defiance against overwhelming odds.

Like President Wilson, I am proud to share the stories of Serbia's bravery here in Washington.

I believe the most meaningful for Americans is the story of the Halyard Mission during the dark days of the Second World War.

While under Nazi-occupation, the Serbian people demonstrated their bravery as they played a crucial role in the largest rescue operation of American airmen in history.

In 1944, American bombers were flying frequent missions to strike Germany's vital oil supplies in Romania as part of the allied advance into Europe.

The 15th Air Force led this effort by launching nearly 20,000 sorties into Eastern Europe, with many of the missions flying over Nazi-occupied Yugoslavia. As many as 1,500 pilots and airmen were shot down during these courageous air raids.

Serbian, who had been resisting German forces since 1941, risked their own lives to rescue American airmen and hide them from patrolling Nazis.

For months these brave and noble Serbians cared for and protected American and allied pilots.

By August 1944, the Allied forces, including the 15th Air Force and Office of Strategic Services, devised a daring operation to evacuate the hundreds of Allied pilots being sheltered by the Serbian resistance.

American aircraft flew into enemy territory and evacuated these airmen from an air field built and protected by local Serbians near the village of Pranjani.

For over 60 years this operation was kept secret. But now we can remember the courage of our Serbian friends and say thank you.

The spirit of the Halyard mission still lives on today as a remarkable story of resistance and heroism.

As was the case in both World Wars, Serbia and the U.S. still face shared threats.

About 600 foreign fighters in Syria have come from the Balkan states. ISIS and al-Qaeda terrorists present a threat to Serbia and the region just as they present a threat to the U.S.

We must continue coordinating with our Serbian partners to stop returning terrorists and neutralize networks that recruit fighters in the Balkans.

The U.S. is also working with Serbia to improve its independent judiciary and fight corruption. A democratic Serbia with a strong rule of law is in America's interests.

But there are others who do not support this goal.

Russian disinformation efforts are designed to keep Serbia in its sphere of influence and poison our warming friendship.

Nevertheless, Serbia's integration to the West has continued to move forward.

In 2006, Serbia joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program and, in 2015, signed an Individual Partnership Action Plan with the alliance to strengthen cooperation.

Recently the European Union announced that Serbia could join the EU as early as 2025. I applaud this step which will strengthen Belgrade's political institutions and economic ties with the West.

Together we share the same dreams of a bright and free future for both our countries.

We are blessed to have brave men and women that ensure our futures are bright and free.

Thanks to the Serbian armed forces for standing with America in the wars of the past and in the challenges we will face together in the future.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING CORA BEASLEY

**HON. VIRGINIA FOXX**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, when tragedy struck in 1957, the Surry County, North Carolina community came together, honored its' own, and remained strong.

I rise to commemorate the selfless sacrifice of Mrs. Cora Beasley, a third grade teacher. Sixty-one years ago, a fire consumed Flat Rock Elementary School in Surry County. Mrs. Beasley ignored the danger and helped students out of a second-floor window, saving their lives.

During the blaze, Mrs. Beasley attempted also to save third-grader Larry Adams, but sadly, they both perished. This month, the Flat Rock School community will rename its main building the Cora F. Beasley Building, a fitting tribute to one woman's selfless heroism.

I salute the efforts of this tight-knit community and offer my prayers for Mrs. Beasley, Mr. Adams, their families and all of those affected by the fire that day.

RECOGNIZING AL-ROSS SCREEN  
PRINTING AND EMBROIDERY AS  
BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

**HON. BRIAN HIGGINS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Al-Ross Screen Printing & Embroidery as the West Seneca Chamber of Commerce's choice for the 2018 Business of the Year Award on Thursday, February 15th at Kloc's Grove.

For 45 years, Al-Ross has provided embroiders and screen print clothing and apparel for the Western New York area. Through their talented work, Al-Ross allows people and organizations of all sorts a sense of identity, professionalism and an unforgettable local brand.

Along with Al-Ross's strong business sense comes an equally strong sense of community and giving back. Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Al-Ross raised and donated more than \$20,000. Locally, the business founded and supported the Athlete of the Month Club in West Seneca schools, giving students athletes t-shirts promoting their achievements. Al-Ross consistently donates to basket raffles and fundraisers for schools, clubs, churches, benefits, and charities.

Embodying community spirit, when the Buffalo Bills made the NFL playoffs for the first time in seventeen years, Al-Ross rose to the challenge and quickly created customized shirts for fans. The Seneca Street fixture saw lines out the door as excited Western New Yorkers rushed to support their team and their business.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to honor Al-Ross Screen Printing & Embroidery as they receive the 2018 Business of the Year Award from the West Seneca Chamber of Commerce. The contributions to our community made by this business are commendable, and I wish them much continued success in their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING ILDEFONSO  
GUAJARDO VILLARREAL

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Secretary of the Economy of Mexico, Ildefonso Guajardo Villarreal. Mr. Guajardo has been chosen as Mexico's honoree for the prestigious League of United Latin American Citizens Council No. 12 (LULAC) Señor Internacional award.

Mr. Guajardo, a Mexican economist and public servant, was born April 19, 1957 in Monterey, Nuevo León. He received his Bachelor's degree in Economics from the Autonomous University of Nuevo León. Subsequently, Mr. Guajardo pursued graduate studies in Economics at Arizona State University and the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Guajardo began his long and successful career in the 1980s. He would hold several important positions, including Economist at the International Monetary Fund, Director of the North American Free Trade Agreement Affairs

Office, and Chief Clerk at the Foreign Affairs Ministry. He would later serve in Nuevo León as head of the Governor's Executive Office and soon after, Mr. Guajardo would be elected as a congressman. In 2012, Mr. Guajardo assumed the office of Secretary of the Economy of Mexico, appointed by President Enrique Peña Nieto. He is currently negotiating the ongoing North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to recognize Mr. Guajardo's accomplishments and tireless service to Mexico. I congratulate him on receiving the prestigious LULAC No. 12 Señor Internacional award. His dedication to others has had a very significant impact on the lives of many citizens in Mexico and the United States.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FACILITATING VETERANS' EDUCATION ACT

**HON. J. LUIS CORREA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Defense provides exceptional training and experiences to our nation's servicemembers. For each occupation in the military, servicemembers undergo a series of formal military training courses.

For years, the American Council on Education (ACE) has evaluated that training and related experiences to provide colleges and universities with guidelines and recommendations to consider when awarding credit for such training. For instance, ACE may recommend that colleges award one semester credit hour of first aid for a soldier who has taken basic combat training.

Since 2013, the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Coast Guard have produced the Joint Services Transcript (JST), an official documentation of a servicemember's military training and their corresponding ACE credit recommendations. The JST allows veterans to earn college credit for their military service, helping them attain a college degree sooner.

While the document is available through an online portal, there are reports of servicemembers leaving the military unaware of the JST.

Therefore, I am introducing the bipartisan Facilitating Veterans' Education Act, which directs the Department of Defense to issue the Joint Services Transcript to servicemembers separating from the Armed Forces.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE  
WAUSEON HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING TEAM FOR WINNING THE  
OHIO STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

**HON. ROBERT E. LATTA**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Ohio High School Athletic Association Division II Team Wrestling State Champion Wauseon Indians. After finishing runner up in

2016 and 2017, Wauseon topped Mentor Lake Catholic in the championship to capture the first team title of any sport in school history.

Wauseon has a rich tradition in wrestling, winning the Northwest Ohio Athletic League twelve times. Under the tutelage of coach Mike Ritter, Wauseon was able to win the title by first going through Washington Court House and Canfield High School on the way to the finals.

These student-athletes gave it their all, and the Wauseon community should be proud of them. Wrestling tests the mettle of its competitors, and it takes grit, determination, and toughness to compete at a high level. In addition to practice, student-athletes are asked to meet certain academic standards and exceed them as well. These competitors deserve our recognition.

Once again, congratulations to Coach Mike Ritter and the rest of the Wauseon wrestling team on a job well done.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR.  
BILLY JOE WESTBROOK

**HON. BRIAN BABIN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 15, 2018*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of World War II veteran and dear friend, Dr. Billy Joe Westbrook of Channelview, Texas. Dr. Westbrook went to be with the Lord on February 13, 2018 at the age of 91.

He was born on November 8, 1926 in a house three miles west of Electra, Texas. His parents were caring and hardworking people who instilled those same qualities in their sons. His long life was defined by determination and honor and like his parents, he worked hard and gave much.

He served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a medic, which led him to dentistry. He graduated from Midwestern University with a B.S. in Chemistry then earned a D.D.S. from the University of Texas, graduating in the top 10 percent of his class.

During the Korean War he entered the Air Force as a dental officer. After serving honorably, B.J. opened a dental practice in Columbus, Texas then moved to the Northeast area of Houston where he became heavily involved in its civic, political, medical and educational communities. In 1958, he and a group of local businessmen founded the Rotary Club of North Shore, Houston, Texas. Their signature event, the Rotary Club Catfish Crawfish Boil currently raises over \$300,000 annually.

B.J. was passionate about serving people above himself. He served on many state and collegiate boards and was president of the Harris County Fresh Water District 51 for fifty years. In recognition of his many contributions Westbrook Street, located in East Houston, was named after him. Though an avid hunter, fisherman, scuba diver and pilot, his first love was people. His vision, philanthropy and laughter made him an icon and hero to all who knew him.

B.J. was married to Rosalie Westbrook for sixty years until she passed away in 2007. Their middle daughter, Marcie, died in 2015. He is survived by his two daughters René