

Moreover, Curtis is a devoted husband, father and son who dedicates his life to his family and many charitable and non-profit organizations. In a very brief time, Curtis has completed more than most people could in three lifetimes and I have a tremendous amount of respect for him, even selling him one of my precious guns at one point in time. That never happens as I really love my guns—but I gave him a great deal.

Curtis has a great wit, a sharp mind, and sometimes a sharp tongue, but you can always count on him to be there for you. He epitomizes loyalty, honesty and courage. He has stood by my side through all of the political and personal ups and downs and I cannot thank him enough for all he has done for the great State of Alaska and for me as a politician and a person. He is just simply a great guy with an even better wife and son.

Mr. Speaker, Curtis's wife Josie and his son Matthew stand beside a great man who will have many more years to make Alaska an even better place to live. Fifty is just the beginning for this young man.

Happy birthday to my friend, Curtis W. Thayer.

#### HONORING THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

##### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 26, 2018*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the staff of The Press Democrat for being awarded the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News Reporting “for lucid and tenacious coverage of historic wildfires that ravaged the city of Santa Rosa and Sonoma County.”

The Press Democrat is a locally-owned, daily newspaper that was founded in 1897 and is headquartered in Santa Rosa, in my district. This national recognition of its exemplary reporting reinforces what our community already knows—that The Press Democrat is a world class newspaper with exceptional reporters, photographers, editors, online producers and page designers.

During the historic October 2017 wildfires, the staff at The Press Democrat filled a dual role. They told the larger stories, reporting on the devastation and community-wide heartbreak and photographing the looming flames and incredible heroism. They also kept people in our community informed of whether they needed to evacuate, where they could go if they did and how to search for and locate missing family, friends and neighbors. Their updates were critical in keeping people in the Sonoma, Napa and Lake Counties aware of the rapid movement of the fires and events unfolding in our community.

The Pulitzer Prize is well-deserved acknowledgment of the hard work of the staff of The Press Democrat. During the long days and nights and extreme uncertainty, the reporters, photographers and editors worked on the front lines and around the clock to keep the community informed and shared the horrors with the rest of the country and the world. Reporting on the fires demanded everything of them and they delivered, even as some were evacuated from their homes and unsure if they would have a home to return to.

Mr. Speaker, The Press Democrat is an important newspaper and institution in our community. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor the staff and their accomplishment of winning a Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News Reporting.

#### HONORING RABBI STEVEN KUSHNER ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM TEMPLE NER TAMID

##### HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 26, 2018*

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rabbi Steven Kushner upon his retirement from serving as the spiritual leader of Temple Ner Tamid in Bloomfield, New Jersey. Since its inception in 1980 when two Bloomfield congregations—one reform and one conservative-merged, the Jewish community at Temple Ner Tamid has not just grown, but thrived, under Rabbi Kushner's tenure.

Rabbi Kushner has been instrumental in the growth and expansion of the Ner Tamid congregation to hundreds of families serving three generations of members. In that time he has developed adult education, interfaith, social action, outreach, and family programming at the synagogue. Whether officiating at B'nai Mitzvah, confirmations, weddings, bris ceremonies, baby namings, or funerals, Rabbi Kushner has played an integral role in major life events of thousands of New Jersey families. His high-holiday sermons were always thought-provoking, and included the right dash of movie references or popular culture.

By all accounts, Rabbi Kushner took his title very seriously. The word “rabbi” means Jewish teacher in Hebrew, and Rabbi Kushner is a tremendous educator. In fact, Rabbi Kushner helped prepare my Chief of Staff, Ben Rich, for his Bar Mitzvah almost three decades ago. And through leading his confirmation class trip to Washington, D.C., helped influence Ben's path toward what has been a long career working for the people of northern New Jersey on Capitol Hill.

Rabbi Kushner is certainly a figure of respect in the Jewish community, and he has made his mark in the community at large as a distinguished and respected member of the clergy in Essex County and throughout New Jersey.

Rabbi Kushner is past president of the New Jersey Association of Reform Rabbis, the Coalition of Religious Leaders of New Jersey, and the Metro West Conference on Soviet Jewry, and also served on the Ethics Committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR). Rabbi Kushner is a member of Reform Judaism's Commission on Worship, Music and Religious Living, and chairs the Beth El Memorial Park Foundation of the United Jewish Communities of Metro West. He is a Trustee of The Blue Card, a unique charity that provides emotional and monetary assistance to Holocaust survivors and their families.

A native of Michigan and long suffering Lions fan, Rabbi Kushner received a Bachelor of Arts from Wayne State University in Detroit before earning a Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Rabbi Kushner has also re-

ceived Certification in Pastoral Counseling from the Postgraduate Center for Mental Health in New York City, and was awarded a Doctor of Divinity from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in March of 2002.

Rabbi Kushner served on the faculty of Bloomfield College from 1983 to 2003. In May of 1995, the college honored him with a Doctor of Laws honoris causa degree.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the dedicated service given. Let us come together to join Rabbi Kushner's family, including his daughters A viva and Hannah, his friends, and the Ner Tamid congregation, clergy and staff, in congratulating Rabbi Steven Kushner on his retirement after thirty-eight years of serving the Jewish community of northern New Jersey and Temple Ner Tamid of Bloomfield.

#### HONORING POLICE CHIEF RONDA WALLACE

##### HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 26, 2018*

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the career and achievements of Chief Ronda Wallace of Kodiak, Alaska, who has served her community and the Kodiak Police Department with distinction for the past 20 years. Chief Wallace first joined the Department in 1997 as a Public Safety Dispatcher, and the next year was commissioned as a patrol officer. She steadily rose through the Department's ranks and held numerous positions including Narcotics and Investigative Detective, Patrol Sergeant, and Lieutenant, until becoming Kodiak's first female Police Chief in 2013.

Chief Wallace's leadership by example, care for the community of Kodiak, and compassion for its citizens have come to define the Kodiak Police Department. During her career she has gotten countless drugs off our streets, solved homicides, worked tirelessly to help women and children who are victims of abuse and assaults, and consistently raised the bar for professional police work. And, like all true leaders, her shining example will continue through the legacy she has created in Kodiak and the many people she has mentored, both within her police department and the community at large.

Throughout her 20-year career she has displayed the highest possible standards of police work, and is an inspiration to future generations of law enforcement professionals and public servants. I greatly appreciate and admire her selfless dedication to Kodiak, to her fellow citizens, to our great State of Alaska, and to our Nation as a whole through her cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Coast Guard Investigative Service.

Therefore, it gives me distinct pleasure to honor Chief Wallace today, and I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Ronda and wishing her continued success.

ALEXANDER OLSON

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 26, 2018*

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

Alexander Olson is a student at Drake Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Alexander Olson 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 Alexander Olson 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.

IN HONOR OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF VULCRAFT  
GRAPELAND

**HON. KEVIN BRADY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 26, 2018*

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the fiftieth anniversary of the Nucor Corporation's Vulcraft Steel Plant in Grapeland, Texas.

In 1946, a small steel fabrication company, the Vulcraft Corporation, was founded in Florence, South Carolina. For sixteen years, the company grew and prospered, ultimately transforming into an exclusive manufacturer of steel span joints, before the Nuclear Corporation, a company tracing its roots to the founder of Oldsmobile, purchased its facilities in 1962.

After expanding its steel manufacturing operations to facilities in Nebraska and Alabama, Nucor, previously known as the Nuclear Corporation, made its move to the Lone Star State on April 1, 1968, when it opened a fourth steel plant in Grapeland, Texas.

With this foundation, Vulcraft's operations expanded to three additional states and two production facilities in Canada. Despite experiencing such massive growth and success in business, Vulcraft maintained its high levels of customer satisfaction and standards of excellence. In fact, Vulcraft is known worldwide for exceptional safety standards, high-quality steel products it manufactures, and the commitment it has made to producing environmentally friendly products.

Look no further than Vulcraft's Grapeland facility for proof that the company is dedicated to serving its customers and its employees. Since its foundation in 1968, Vulcraft Grapeland has tripled in size, and it continues to serve as a beacon of success and excellence in our community.

Notably, Vulcraft and its parent company, Nucor, are now looking to use their years of experience, successful business practices,

and high standing in the steel industry to advocate for free trade policies and the safety of men and women in the workplace.

On April 1, 2018, Vulcraft celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its plant in Grapeland. I am proud to join the men and women of Vulcraft, and the entire Eighth District of Texas to recognize this significant mile-marker and their continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF SIERRA PACIFIC HS GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

**HON. DAVID G. VALADAO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 26, 2018*

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Sierra Pacific High School Golden Bears Girls Basketball Team for their victory as California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Division V Basketball Champions.

The Golden Bears of Hanford, California defeated Lowell High School of San Francisco, California by a margin of 52–26 at the Golden 1 Center in Sacramento, California. Their victory capped a 32–5 overall record for the 2017–2018 season.

Starting varsity play in 2011, Sierra Pacific's basketball program quickly evolved from the upstart to champions. This season, the Golden Bears were undefeated both at home and in East Sequoia League play.

Led by Head Coach Amy Bush and Assistant Coaches Heather Brasil and Victor Chavarin, Jr., Sierra Pacific High School was proudly represented by Cristina Avila, Haley Bettencourt, Kylie Brasil, Kalea Bush, Arianna Chavarin, Ciana Gonzales, Hailey Leslie, Celeste Lewis, Rose Miller, Alana Roberts, Kaylie Rocha, Annabelle Saavedra, Janae Tolbert, and Savannah Torres.

I further congratulate players Kalea Bush, Haley Bettencourt, and Alana Roberts for their terrific performance this season. By the conclusion of the season, Miss Bush became the all-time leading scorer for the Golden Bears, earning 1,099 points.

Miss Bettencourt, who is the second all-time leading scorer for Sierra Pacific, was awarded the Pursuing Victory with Honor Award for her performance and sportsmanship during the State Championship game.

In the Championship game, Miss Roberts led Sierra Pacific in both scoring and rebounds, collecting twenty points and twelve rebounds.

The success of the ladies of Sierra Pacific High School is an inspiration to our Central Valley community, their victory is a testament to the bonds of sportsmanship, dedication, and camaraderie.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the players and coaches of Sierra Pacific High School Golden Bears Girls Basketball Team for their terrific athletic achievement during their 2017–2018 season.

CONGRATULATING LINDSEY JENSEN

**HON. ADAM KINZINGER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 26, 2018*

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lindsey Jensen, who was named the 2018 Illinois Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Jensen began her teaching career 12 years ago, and her positive spirit and passion for education has profoundly impacted countless lives across our community.

As an English teacher at Dwight Township High School for the last 10 years, Mrs. Jensen has continually demonstrated her passion for teaching and her commitment to serving students, her colleagues, and her community. High School is such a pivotal and exciting time for students, especially as they prepare themselves for their next steps. These young adults need teachers like Mrs. Jensen who can inspire them, motivate them, and push them to reach their full potential.

Colleagues of Mrs. Jensen have described her as an educator who radiates with infectious positivity, saying she is more than a teacher of English, but rather a teacher of the people. As the son of a public-school teacher, I know the importance of having passionate and creative teachers in the classroom, and I know how important a good education is to giving a student hope and opportunity for a brighter future.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 16th District of Illinois, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to Mrs. Jensen for her dedicated service to our students and the Dwight community. It is my honor to congratulate Mrs. Jensen on this much deserved recognition as the 2018 Illinois Teacher of the Year, and we are truly proud to have this exemplary educator representing our community.

DAIMON OSWALT

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 26, 2018*

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

Daimon Oswalt is a student at Wayne Carle Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Daimon Oswalt 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 Daimon Oswalt 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.