

HONORING VERA JUENGER

HON. MIKE BOST

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Vera Juenger of Millstadt, Illinois on her upcoming 102nd birthday. Known for her outgoing and active lifestyle, Vera is also recognized for her popular pecans, which she sells to loyal customers who come back year after year.

Born on December 31, 1917, Vera still lives in the home that she and her husband, Albert, built on a large farm in 1962. You can find Vera tending to her pecan trees or driving herself to Ott's fish stand, where she enjoys dinner and a beer with her family every Friday. Her impact on the community was exemplified by the turnout of over 200 people who attended her 100th birthday celebration. This year on her birthday, she plans to go to her favorite sports bar to celebrate with her friends and family.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Vera Juenger on a life that continues to be well-lived. On behalf of Southern Illinois, happy birthday.

HONORING BRIAN JOSEPH KELLER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Brian Joseph Keller. Brian is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 495, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Brian has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Brian has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Brian has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Brian Joseph Keller for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN MEMORY OF GARY MAZZONE

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to observe and mourn the passing of retired Police Captain Gary Mazzone of East Windsor, Connecticut. Sadly, Gary's death was the result of a tragic plane accident that occurred on October 2, 2019 at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks, Connecticut.

Gary's full and productive life touched thousands of his fellow citizens. First, as a police

officer in the town of Vernon, Connecticut where I reside, later as an inspector in the office of Chief State's Attorney, the highest office in the Connecticut criminal justice system, and eventually as the lead inspector in the office of the Litchfield State's Attorney. Altogether his service in the police and court systems of Connecticut totaled 42 years of diligent, competent, ethical professionalism. As a lawyer in practice in Vernon before entering Congress, I personally witnessed Gary's relentless work ethic, as well as his commitment to upholding the laws and Constitution of the state of Connecticut and the United States. His exemplary service and friendliness made him a natural role model to young officers who served under him as he rose to the rank of Captain. Despite his high rank and the extensive powers that go with it, Gary never "put on airs" and always kept a very grounded perspective on life. He had a great sense of humor and was always willing to listen to an opposing view point with respect and consideration. He was the quintessential American police officer—tough but fair, fearless but human.

As the many accolades and reminiscences poured forth in statewide media and in North Central Connecticut in response to the heart-breaking news, stories abounded not only of his work in public safety, but also of his volunteerism in the town of East Windsor, his support of the special Olympics, and his devotion to honoring our country's veterans.

Madam Speaker, perhaps most powerfully, his family shared with the people of Connecticut stories of his abiding love for his wife Joan, their children Daniel, Brian, Maureen, Kim, and Stacey, and his father Pasquale. He took an active and enthusiastic interest in all their pursuits and successes. In particular, the Hartford Courant sports page published a wonderful story describing his passionate love of high school football, particularly the Stafford/Somers/East Windsor Bulldog high school team that his son Brian coaches. He attended all their games and was always there to positively help his son and the players succeed. Three days after the crash, Brian summoned his father's memory to find the strength to coach the Bulldogs to an emotional victory against rival Valley Regional/Old Lyme. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD, the Courant's story by Mr. Shawn McFarland dated October 6, 2019 which captures so well the essence of Gary's lively spirit, family devotion, and deep impact he made on all who knew him.

Madam Speaker, I ask that the House join me in expressing our profound admiration for Gary Mazzone's lifetime of public service and deepest condolences to his family for their loss.

[From the Hartford Courant, Oct. 6, 2019]

THREE DAYS AFTER HIS FATHER DIED IN THE B-17 CRASH AT BRADLEY AIRPORT, BRIAN MAZZONE IS BACK ON THE SIDELINE COACHING

After each Stafford/Somers/East Windsor football game, Gary Mazzone would be the first to greet his son, Brian, the team's head coach, with a hug. Those close to the team say that Gary never missed a game.

Gary Mazzone, 66, a retired police inspector in the Litchfield State's Attorney's office, was one of seven killed in Wednesday's B-17 crash at Bradley International Airport. Boarding the World War II era bomber was described as a "bucket list" type event for Gary Mazzone, who had a passion for history.

Saturday was Brian Mazzone's first game coaching without his father; the first game in which he wouldn't receive the traditional hug and "post game report," as Stafford assistant Bob Grant described.

As the final seconds ticked off in the Bulldogs' 21-7 win over Valley Regional/Old Lyme, one by one, Stafford players surrounded Brian Mazzone until the entire team had formed one giant hug around their coach. The final whistle blew, and Mazzone—who had remained composed for the entire game—broke into tears.

"I never used to cry, ever," Mazzone said. "My mom died 10 years ago. Once my mom died, you say 'hi' to me and I start crying now. When someone grabs you and hugs you . . . there's a lot of emotion in that."

Mazzone was a walking tribute to his father during the game. He wore Gary's Stafford football hoodie, which Brian picked up early Saturday morning at his father's home in Vernon. He wore a camouflage Bulldog hat, an homage to his father's love for hunting. Mazzone said he had gotten the hat for his father as a Christmas gift years back, and ironically enough, Gary Mazzone had requested a normal Bulldog cap instead. Brian Mazzone then went and got a camouflage hat for himself.

"He went to every game," Grant said. "Big Gar was something special. We'd go down and sit in the coach's room, and he'd sit with us. He was one of a kind."

Prior to kickoff, a "moment of celebration" was held in lieu of a standard moment of silence. All in attendance applauded Gary Mazzone's life, as Brian broke down in tears and was consoled by Grant. Brian Mazzone said his dad would have loved it.

"We've been crying a lot, and we've been watching the news," Mazzone said. "[Gary Mazzone] would be patting his chest, going, 'See me on the news? I was on CBS nightly news. You see that? I'm on the front page of the paper.' Every time, even back when he was working, he'd be, 'I'm in the news today. I'm in the news today.' He would eat up the attention. I'm very similar to him."

Mazzone described his dad as "funny as hell" and as a man who was full of life and loved having fun. He was known for his famous prank calls, where he would call a business and apply for an internship, and then never show up. In the days since Gary's passing, Brian has had many reach out to pass along their condolences. Almost all of them have had a new Gary Mazzone prank story to share, too.

Like Gary, Brian is lively. When his team forced a fumble early in the first quarter, Mazzone sprinted onto the field, pumping a fist and pounding his chest. When senior Tyler Ouellette connected with junior Trent Kology on an 84-yard touchdown pass in the second quarter, Mazzone sprinted the length of the field celebrating, nearly stride-for-stride with Kology.

"They always make fun of me when we watch the film and I'm jumping around and running," Mazzone said with a laugh. "If you notice, I run like an idiot. I've got my chest out like this. I don't know who taught me to run."

There was never a doubt for Mazzone that he would coach Saturday's game, though he said it had less to do with his father and more so to do with the fact that he didn't want to rearrange the schedule. The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference granted the team permission to move Saturday's game to a later date, though Mazzone didn't want to force his players to sit through back-to-back bye weeks.

That was to be expected of Mazzone, as his assistants, current and former players will tell you. In the face of an unbearable tragedy, his motives were for his team.

"We knew that we had to pick him up, because he's supported us all this time," said Ouellette, who threw two touchdown passes in the win. "We knew that we had to come through and support him. It was great to see him here. We all came together, and we all played hard for him."

Each Bulldog helmet had a "GM" decal in memory of Gary Mazzone. Valley Regional/Old Lyme also wore the decals on their helmets.

Tim King, head coach of the Warriors who opposed the Bulldogs on Saturday, is a long-time friend of Brian Mazzone, and understands what he was going through Saturday. In 2015, King coached two days after his father, George Sr., passed away at age 92.

"It's a football family," King said. "For 48 minutes, you battle on the field. But reality is this type of stuff. When I heard about it, it's the first thing I told our kids. You can worry about grades, you can worry about whatever, but when something happens as horrible as what happened to Brian's dad, that's reality. The game of football means absolutely nothing. All respect in the world, I know exactly what he was going through."

A handful of former Stafford players were in attendance, standing behind the Bulldogs' sideline, many wearing team gear. Mazzone greeted each with a hug following the end of the first quarter.

HONORING AUSTIN MCCOY

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Austin McCoy. Austin is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 393, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Austin has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Austin has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Austin has earned the rank of Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and become a Brotherhood member in the Order of the Arrow. Austin has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Austin worked with the Platte Land Trust to build a sign for their new Charlotte Sawyers Nature Area located in Parkville, Missouri.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Austin McCoy for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING LEGAL SERVICES FOR SENIORS

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Mr. PANETTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask that my colleagues in the House join me in congratulating Legal Services for Seniors on the occasion of their 35th Anniversary. Beginning in 1985, Legal Services for Seniors

has been dedicated to facilitating attorneys and legal advocates for senior residents of the 20th Congressional District of California. More specifically, Legal Services for Seniors has a history of providing no-cost legal representation to elderly low-income individuals residing in Monterey County who would otherwise not have access to the resources necessary for protecting their legal rights.

Legal Services for Seniors has made it their goal to address and correct legal harm done to Monterey County seniors. They have offices and outreach locations in Seaside, Carmel, Carmel Valley, Pacific Grove, King City, Greenfield, Soledad, Gonzales, Castroville and Monterey. Legal Services for Seniors' attorneys and advocates provide free legal advice and complete legal representation to local seniors in order to address legal problems including physical, financial, and emotional abuse. More than 90,000 seniors have benefited from no-cost legal support over the past 35 years. Many of the issues are very dramatic or life-threatening, and include abuse, Medicare, landlord-tenant conflicts, medical and private insurance issues, Social Security problems, consumer fraud, scams, identity theft, probate guardianships, wills and advance health care directives. Thankfully, approximately 3,000 citizens are assisted with these issues each year by Legal Services for Seniors. In 2018 alone, Legal Services for Seniors restored one million dollars in property fraudulently appropriated by the individuals which prey upon our seniors on the central coast of California.

In addition to direct client representation, Legal Services for Seniors provides community-wide presentations to approximately 2,000 seniors and their family members annually. These presentations provide information regarding issues which are vital to seniors' wellbeing, including recognizing and preventing elder abuse, scams, and consumer fraud as well as providing resources for affordable housing and end of life healthcare and decision-making. These services are crucial to informing citizens of their rights and resources. Additionally, the agency presents information on challenges faced by local seniors through public service announcements, newspaper articles, resource fairs, workshops, and other public venues.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the dedication and commitment to compassion and justice that Legal Services for Seniors provides to the 20th Congressional District. We are fortunate to have this non-profit establishment call the Central Coast home as the only nonprofit agency in Monterey County providing no-cost legal services to our elderly residents. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the 35th Anniversary of Legal Services for Seniors.

HONORING MR. CEDRIC FLOUNORY

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Mr. Cedric Flounory for his many years of federal service to the Internal Revenue Service, on the occasion of his retirement.

During his forty years of public service, Mr. Cedric Flounory has worked tirelessly within both the United States Air Force and the Internal Revenue Service. Mr. Flounory rose through the ranks ultimately becoming an Air Force Major. Throughout his military service, Mr. Flounory garnered awards for his steadfast dedication, earning the Air Force Good Conduct Award, the Marksmanship Award, and the Meritorious Service Medal with an Oak Leaf Cluster. After eight years in the Air Force, Mr. Flounory continued serving the public with a career that has stretched more than thirty years at the Internal Revenue Service. A caring professional, Mr. Flounory has been praised for his work at the IRS, receiving awards like Employee of the Month and a Performance Award. His service both on the ground through military service and in the office through the Internal Revenue Service, portrays his dedication to the nation.

In short, Mr. Cedric Flounory has honorably served our country and the people of the 13th Congressional District. Please join me in honoring him for his forty years of federal service as we wish him well on his retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF BALLET WEST'S THE NUTCRACKER

HON. BEN McADAMS

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Mr. McADAMS. Madam Speaker, this December, Utahns and visitors to my state are breathlessly waiting for the curtain to go up on the 75th anniversary of a beloved holiday tradition—Ballet West's performance of "The Nutcracker". This season's \$3 million production restores the original choreography by Ballet West's founder William Christensen—or Mr. C—as he was fondly known to dancers and audience members alike. He passed away in 2001 at the age of 99.

William Christensen was known as a champion of American ballet, who headed important companies in Portland, San Francisco and Salt Lake City. He was born in 1902, in Brigham City, Utah. In San Francisco, in 1944, Christensen staged the first complete American production of "The Nutcracker." In 1951, Mr. C. moved with his ailing wife to Salt Lake, seeking a better climate for her health. He began teaching ballet at the University of Utah and founded what would become Ballet West in 1968. His production of "The Nutcracker" soon became a Utah holiday sensation. Many an aspiring young Utah male or female dancer traces the start of a career from being on stage in "The Nutcracker" party scene, where the story unfolds of young Clara's dream journey into the magical land of the Sugar Plum Fairy. Thousands of Utah children and their parents and grandparents have been transported from their seats in a darkened theatre to a place with waltzing snowflakes and a marvelous dancing bear.

When Ballet West performed "The Nutcracker" at the Kennedy Center in December of 2018, the Washington Post's dance critic wrote: "This is not only a beautifully danced and gorgeously designed production. It's also historic. The result is a fine balance of textural spectacle and elegant dancing."