

and Urban Development's Section 202 Housing for the Elderly Program, which offers affordable housing to senior citizens in Alabama, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota and Texas. Recently, the Daughters of Penelope has also demonstrated support for senior nutrition and isolation with support for Meals on Wheels of America.

In addition to helping the elderly, the Daughters of Penelope Foundation, Inc., supports the educational objectives of the Daughters of Penelope by providing tens of thousands of dollars annually for scholarships, sponsoring educational seminars, and donating children's books to schools, shelters and churches through the "Penelope's Books" program. After ninety meaningful and productive years, it excites me to see what the Daughters of Penelope will accomplish and how they will help our country and our culture in the next ninety years.

HONORING ROGER E. HEDGEPEETH

### HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 6, 2019*

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I offer these remarks in honor of Roger E. Hedgepeth, one of the longest-serving mayors of Blacksburg, Virginia and a professor at Virginia Tech in that town, who died on November 12, 2019 at the age of 89.

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, on January 17, 1930, Roger E. Hedgepeth went to Maury High School and then graduated from Virginia Tech, where he received a degree in mechanical engineering. Following graduation, Mr. Hedgepeth served in the Armed Forces during the Korean War. Mr. Hedgepeth returned to Virginia Tech after serving his country and received a master's degree in mechanical engineering.

He married Jenny in 1956. They would remain happily married for 55 years until her death.

Mr. Hedgepeth used the education from his two degrees in mechanical engineering to teach students at Virginia Tech for 38 years.

As a resident of Blacksburg while teaching at Virginia Tech, he was active in his community and decided to make the leap to elected office. After two years of serving on the Blacksburg Town Council, Mr. Hedgepeth became mayor. Mr. Hedgepeth served in that position for 24 years, the second-longest tenure in Blacksburg's history.

As mayor, Mr. Hedgepeth was respected by his colleagues in government as well as his constituents. The relationship between Blacksburg and Virginia Tech during his tenure was so cordial that representatives from other college towns around the country would come to study their success.

Virginia Tech and the town of Blacksburg were fortunate to have this leader and educator in the community. Mr. Hedgepeth is survived by his children Natalie and Michael and grandchildren, Taylor and Austin of Bristol, Virginia, and Risher and Azat of Blacksburg. I offer my condolences to the Hedgepeth family on their loss.

RECOGNIZING THE 11TH ANNUAL FAMILY CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA

### HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 6, 2019*

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, on December 21, 2019, Brevard County families, businesses and local community organizations will gather to celebrate the 11th Annual Family Christmas Extravaganza. Having become one of the largest Christmas celebrations on the Space Coast, this year's event will be bigger and better than ever, promising a place for family and friends to partake in a wide variety of holiday festivities to get them in the Christmas spirit.

This year's event will take place at Fred Poppe Regional Park in Palm Bay from 11 am–4:30 pm and will be completely free of charge thanks to over 80 local businesses and organizations that came together to donate food, gift certificates and equipment. Because of their generous contributions, families will be able to enjoy cotton candy, hotdogs, snow cones, bouncy houses, ride horses and trains and even go rock climbing.

Hosting the event will be Eddie Anthony Izquierdo as "Eddie Frost" and Ahriel Brown as "Arctic Ahriel," who will engage families with Christmas singalongs, short skits, and giveaways. A variety of exclusive performances will follow by Grammy Award-winning bassist Trae Pierce and the T-Stones, Chagy the Clown and the acrobats of Cirque Adventure.

The House of Palm Bay, City of Palm Bay Parks and Recreation along with several community business partners such as Thrifty Specialty Produce, Chick-Fil-A, Gator Automotive and Edible Arrangements are just among the few names of many we have to thank for providing the venue and resources to make the celebration unforgettable.

Senior Pastor Ken Delgado of the House at Palm Bay said in anticipation of the event, "With today's news being filled with division, contention and expressions of hatred, it is exciting to see the City of Palm Bay, along with its businesses and citizens, create an event where love, joy and peace is expressed. The Family Christmas Extravaganza is the greatest expression that so many people yearn for and is what the angels proclaimed at the birth of Jesus saying, 'Peace and good will towards all men.'"

The City of Palm Bay issued a proclamation in support for this year's celebration, proclaiming December 21, 2019 Family Christmas Extravaganza Day.

The spirit of the holidays is all about giving and spending time with loved ones. This year's Extravaganza brings our community together to remind us of that.

I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting all those who are doing their part to spread the Christmas spirit this holiday season and those who have worked so hard to make the Annual Family Christmas Extravaganza possible.

DECEMBER VETERAN OF THE MONTH

### HON. KEVIN HERN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 6, 2019*

Mr. KEVIN HERN of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the American heroes who nobly defended our nation, and those who lost their lives in the name of that cause, during the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

With the 78th anniversary of the infamous attack on Pearl Harbor approaching, I cannot think of a better time to take pause and to remember those Americans who courageously jumped into action upon seeing enemy airplanes overhead. In what would remain the deadliest foreign attack on American soil for 60 years until the devastating events of September 11, 2001, 2,335 American servicemen were killed that day and an additional 1,143 were wounded. In an effort to cripple America's naval might, the Japanese destroyed or damaged 19 United States Navy ships, including eight battleships during the attack. In spite of their best efforts, the Japanese could not defeat American resolve and although our nation was wounded, as the world would later learn, the Japanese had simply awoken a sleeping giant.

As time marches on and we lose more and more members of America's Greatest Generation, I am proud to recognize Arles Cole. Quartermaster Cole was aboard the USS *West Virginia* on December 7, 1941, and heroically defended his ship and its crew at all costs. Quartermaster Cole is one of the few survivors of Pearl Harbor still with us and I am proud that he is my constituent in Oklahoma's First Congressional District. I am honored to recognize Quartermaster Arles Cole not only for his venerable service on December 7th and throughout World War II, but also for his continued commitment to his community.

Every American should take heed of the example set by those brave servicemembers who fought and those who died at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. In the face of overwhelming odds, they remained committed to their mission and to their country even if it meant sacrificing their life. I am proud to recognize them today and to remember and honor their service and sacrifice everyday as we enjoy the freedoms that they so gallantly defended.

IN HONOR OF GERTIE WILKERSON'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

### HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 6, 2019*

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Gertie Wilkerson and wish her a very happy 100th birthday.

Gertie was born on December 7, 1919, to Everett and Gracie Cline Carter. Throughout her life she has developed the reputation of living a life full of purpose, commitment and keenness in acknowledging blessings from God.

Gertie and her family moved to Annapolis in the 1920's where she began a 30 year career

at Cannon Mills, which at the time was the world's largest producer of sheets and towels. She married her husband Henry R.C. Wilkerson, a United States Army veteran who fought in World War II. They spent 59 years together and raised three children, who later blessed them with six grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

In her free time, Gertie has led a full life. She was a passionate bowler who played regularly until she was 98 years old. In addition to being a fervent bowler, she has been a faithful member of Central Baptist Church for the last 63 years. Gertie has earned the esteemed reputation of being a funny, dedicated and compassionate individual, who possesses the true principles and morals to which we all aspire. I know all of you will agree with me when I say, she is a blessing to all who know her and a treasured part of this community.

Madam Speaker, please join me today in wishing Mrs. Gertie Wilkerson a very happy 100th birthday.

IN HONOR OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH AND PARISH

**HON. KEVIN BRADY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 6, 2019*

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, today I rise in celebration of the 150th Anniversary of St. Joseph Catholic Church and Parish in New Waverly, Texas.

St. Joseph Catholic Church, now a celebrated place of worship, first began as a small gathering for planter families who formed the Waverly Emigration Society. In 1869, Father Orzechowski officially formed the Parish of St. Joseph. The parish met at various farms until 1877 when they opened the first church—a small box building only 20 by 30 feet. The land they built the church and school upon was acquired for the modest price of one dollar.

In 1892, as the parish expanded, a second building was constructed to make room for the growing congregation. This building, designed by Tom Lawandorski, was much larger and more ornate than the first. Mrs. Catherine Ripowski donated trees from her property to aid with construction.

The longest serving priest was the adored Father Bily, whose tenure lasted 19 years. Under his leadership, the church still in use today was built. The gothic style building was designed by architect L.S. Green and took three years to finish. At its opening, it was deemed the finest church in the South. In 1909, four years after the opening of the third church building, St. Joseph's school was built on the property for 160 students.

Since its opening, the church has been restored and repaired, but the welcoming community atmosphere and the parishioners' enthusiasm for worship has remained constant for the last 150 years.

As St. Joseph's Catholic Church celebrates a century and a half of worship, I thank them for creating a welcoming space dedicated to bringing people together to worship The Lord. Congratulations on 150 years, and may the next be just as prosperous.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT LAKES MARITIME ACADEMY

**HON. JACK BERGMAN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 6, 2019*

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the 50th Anniversary of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy. Through its commitment to excellence and dedication to its students, GLMA has become an indispensable part of Michigan's First District.

Founded in 1969, the Great Lakes Maritime Academy is one of only six maritime academies in the United States. The first cadets of the academy received an associate degree and a license allowing for service on the Great Lakes upon graduation. In the 1980s, GLMA partnered with Ferris State University to allow cadets to earn bachelor's degrees, opening opportunities for graduates to serve in the United States Navy and Coast Guard. In 2012, thanks to the dedicated efforts of President Nelson and other public leaders, Governor Snyder signed legislation allowing community colleges to award bachelor's degrees in disciplines including maritime technology. This change allowed GLMA to partner with Northwestern Michigan College and enabled cadets to earn a bachelor's degree at a fraction of the cost.

The work of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy is essential for providing the next generation of Merchant Marine officers with the education, training, and credentials needed to serve on the Great Lakes and the high seas. Piloting everything from cruise ships and ferries to tankers and cargo ships, graduates of GLMA play an essential role in supporting our economy, national security, and everyday lives. The impact of their work on the people of Michigan and the United States cannot be overstated.

Madam Speaker, Michigan's proud maritime history is continued every day by the students, graduates, faculty, and leaders of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy, and it is my honor to congratulate them for fifty years of excellence. Michiganders can take great pride in knowing the First District is home to such dedicated citizens. On behalf of my constituents, I wish GLMA all the best as it ventures into the future.

CONGRATULATING MARY RYMAN ON HER RETIREMENT AFTER 46 YEARS AS BRISTOL TOWN CLERK

**HON. JACKIE WALORSKI**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 6, 2019*

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mary Ryman on her retirement after 46 years as Bristol Town Clerk, making her the longest-serving town clerk in the State of Indiana.

For the people of Bristol, Indiana, walking into Town Hall means seeing a friendly face every day. For nearly half a century, Mary has been there to serve the community of Bristol, and she is always the right person to ask

when residents have a question or need assistance. Her unparalleled commitment to her community exemplifies what it truly means to be a Hoosier and a public servant.

Guided by the values of integrity and respect for all people, Mary has proven to be a pillar of the town and a model citizen. Her unmistakable passion for making Bristol a better place inspires all who know her, and it's no surprise that she plans to continue serving her community as a volunteer at Bristol's Community Food Pantry.

Mary's compassion and warmth go far beyond her duties at Town Hall. She constantly strives to give back to those in need and to strengthen her community. As a member of the Bristol United Methodist Church, she has taught Sunday School for many years and enjoyed singing in the choir. She is also often found helping stray animals by providing them food and comfort. And she is a devoted wife and loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of Indiana's 2nd District, I want to thank Mary for the many years she has dedicated to serving the hard-working Hoosiers of Bristol and building a brighter future for northern Indiana. With her retirement, she leaves behind a legacy full of accomplishments, but her impact on the community is sure to last far into the future.

TRIBUTE HONORING COMMISSIONER RAYMOND BUXTON, II

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 6, 2019*

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding leader Raymond Buxton, II, who is retiring after 40 years of service to the State of South Carolina. Mr. Buxton is a personal friend and his many contributions have not gone unnoticed.

Mr. Buxton received his Bachelor of Science degree from Savannah State University in Savannah, Georgia. He went on to serve his country as a dental technician in the United States Army with the 87th Medical Detachment in Nuremberg, Germany and at Moncrief Army Hospital in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He furthered his education by taking graduate courses at the University of South Carolina and graduating from the South Carolina Executive Institute.

In 1979, when I was South Carolina Human Affairs Commissioner, I hired Ray as a community relations consultant. While in this position, he consulted with community leaders around the state to build relationships among a diverse group of citizens to promote unity. He went on to work as an employment investigator, senior analyst for employment discrimination, division director of the private sector/employment, and executive assistant for internal affairs before being tapped to run the agency in July 2012.

As the agency director, Mr. Buxton has worked diligently to make positive changes within the agency. He was responsible for fully restoring the once underfunded budget for the agency and increased staff from 20 to 46 employees. Also, Mr. Buxton instituted a new initiative, the "Quality of Life" dialogue, within the Community Relations Department to promote better human relations among diverse