

The message was clear: dissent will not be tolerated.

The Soviets underestimated the resolve of the freedom-loving Azeri people, and their actions galvanized the population. The people would continue to push for freedom and democracy, and the Parliament formally declared it on August 30, 1991.

Since then, Azerbaijan has been a crucial ally of the U.S. in the region, even providing troops to serve with U.S. forces in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Azerbaijan plays a key role in Europe's energy security by shipping natural gas to Europe.

I urge my colleagues to recognize the 29th Anniversary of Black January and the sacrifices of the Azeri people.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND MILITARY SERVICE OF WORLD WAR II VETERAN JOHN ROY SHANNON, JR.

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 25, 2019

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and military service of World War II Veteran John Roy Shannon, Jr. Mr. Shannon has always placed God and family first in his life, offering friendship and brotherly love to all those who crossed his path.

Mr. Shannon was born on November 4, 1918, in Quitman, Mississippi. His father, a World War I Veteran, met and married the former Ruby Olivia Harper. They resided in Quitman, Mississippi, eventually moving to Birmingham, Alabama. Mr. Shannon had three siblings; Joyce Mitchell, Mary Ann McWaters, and Harper Shannon.

In 1938, Mr. Shannon married, Minnie Catheren Cook, a fellow church member and a Jefferson County High School classmate. Mr. Shannon worked for Pan Am Oil Company which later became part of American Oil Company. From July 1943 until November 1945, Mr. Shannon answered the call to serve our great nation in the U.S. Army. Stationed at the Iceland Base Command, Mr. Shannon rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant receiving the Good Conduct Medal, European African Middle eastern Campaign medal, and the World War II Victory Medal in recognition of his distinguished military service.

Upon Mr. Shannon's return from military service, the family grew to include four sons; Harold, Ralph, Roy, and Sam Shannon. Roy Shannon, his third-born son, recently said his father was proud to serve our nation during World War II. "Dad said America called and he answered," Roy Shannon said. "He inspired three of us boys to follow in his footsteps. Harold, Ralph, and I are all U.S. Military Veterans."

Throughout his life and to this day, Mr. Shannon set an example for his children to follow. Mr. Shannon, a lifelong Christian, was an active member of Huffman Baptist Church in Birmingham, an Adult Sunday School Class teacher for over 20 years and was chosen to be a lifetime deacon of the church. "My father practiced what he believed," Roy Shannon said. "He believed in God and country and he instilled that in us."

Sam Shannon, Mr. Shannon's youngest son, said that he was lucky to have a father who was so devoted to God and family. "At the time, we did not realize how fortunate we were," Sam said. "He made it his main mission to be a good father and husband. He made sure we were fed, clothed, and housed and above all—loved."

Harold Shannon said his father is proud to be a veteran. "Being away from our family was difficult for dad because while he was serving, he missed the birth of one of my brothers," Harold said. "Even so, our father was very, very proud to be a veteran. To this day, he always wears his World War II cap." Additionally, Harold said that Mr. Shannon was always a loving and caring father. "He worked day and night to take care of us. I cannot recall him ever raising his voice. He has the patience of Job. He is still an example for all of us to follow. We're so proud of him."

Mr. Shannon was married to Catheren Cook for 72 years until her death in 2010. After her passing, he became a resident of the Wesley Gardens Retirement Community in Montgomery, Alabama. Roy Shannon said his father is in great health which has the whole family counting their blessings daily.

Mr. Shannon is an American patriot who served our great nation and continues to set an example for others to follow. We wish him many more years of good health.

RECOGNIZING MS. MEREDITH NESS AS THE 2018–2019 WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 25, 2019

Mr. GAETZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Meredith Ness as the 2018–2019 Walton County Teacher of the Year. For seven years, Ms. Ness has served the Walton County School District with dedication, passion, and an unwavering commitment to serving others.

In Northwest Florida, we are fortunate to have some of the best teachers in the Nation. It is recognized that teaching is an extremely difficult, yet extremely rewarding, profession. Ms. Ness has performed her teaching duties exceptionally, while also being a pillar of her community.

Ms. Ness is revered by her Principal and colleagues for her incredible willingness to always lend a helping hand to those in need. She engages her students thoughtfully, and gives them a chance to take their thinking and knowledge to a deeper level.

Her sponsorship and involvement with the First Lego League, an after-school STEM robotics program for students, shows that her support and outreach for her students extends far beyond the walls of her fourth-grade class.

Ms. Ness has displayed dedicated teamwork in her implementation of this extra-curricular opportunity. I commend her for her steadfast willingness to serve those that matter most—her students.

For all her contributions to the community, I am proud that Ms. Ness is a constituent of Florida's First Congressional District.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Ms. Ness for her accomplishments.

Her longstanding commitment to excellence, continued achievement, professionalism, and innovation all reflect well on her. She is an exceptional educator, and her students are lucky to have her in the classroom.

Meredith Ness has truly made her community a better place. I thank her for her service, and wish her all the best.

HONORING THE CAREER AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MS. JOANNE GAUS

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 25, 2019

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Joanne Gaus and recognize her tremendous impact as a teacher at St. Richard Catholic Elementary School in Chicago. Ms. Gaus' dedication to her students is nothing short of remarkable. At the age of 71, she claims she is "not quite done yet" despite her reputation for being the first to arrive and the last to leave for over 50 years. Her commitment to her profession and distinguished tenure stand as an example to all educators striving to prepare our country's youth for the future.

Ms. Gaus started her career by teaching second and third grade at a time when teaching jobs were hard to come by. Her former students are quick to praise her, noting that she instilled confidence and curiosity in them, traits that have lasted throughout their academic careers and lives. Respected by her colleagues as well, the St. Richard School staff find her enthusiasm and creative approach to teaching to be contagious. She is also beloved by parents, since they know their children will be well taken care of and respected under her tutelage.

Examples of Ms. Gaus' efforts range from decorating her classroom for the seasons, redesigning the classroom to encourage peer interaction, and incorporating new technologies into her curriculum. She always goes the extra mile in all of her interactions with students, while teaching them both academics and how to be responsible. She is constantly planning new ways to get her students excited, with class pets, creative desk set-ups, and projects.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Joanne Gaus. This outstanding Catholic educator has devoted her life to bettering the lives of her students, and she continues to spark their appreciation of their faith at a young age. I congratulate her on her distinguished accomplishments, thank her for her service, and wish her well in her future endeavors, whether she is teaching in the classroom or teaching lessons of life.

HONORING MS. PATRICIA GARDNER

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 25, 2019

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Patricia Gardner and commend

her on her career and contributions to our community.

Ms. Gardner worked as a nonprofit executive manager for over two decades before she joined Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits ("SVCN") as CEO in 2001. Under her leadership, SVCN followed its mission to foster and magnify the influence and contribution of nonprofit agencies and business in Santa Clara County. SVCN works to help our community by assisting individuals and families who are disenfranchised and who struggle to meet basic needs. SVCN also helps guide our local nonprofits through difficult financial times and to build up their capacity to become better service providers. As SVCN increasingly became an important voice with the nonprofit sector, local foundations, and local and state governments, it expanded from a small group of fewer than 50 agencies and a budget of under \$100,000 to representing over 200 agencies and a budget of over a million dollars.

In addition to her role with SVCN, Ms. Gardner was actively involved in a variety of local concerns to our community. Among other things, she served on a number of key policy committees, including the Blue Ribbon Committee on Housing and Homelessness, the City of San Jose and County Senior Nutrition Task Forces, the Juvenile Justice Systems Collaborative, the City of San Jose General Fund Structural Deficit Committee, and the Measure A-Hospital Bond Oversight Committee.

Ms. Gardner received recognition for her service in our community. Senator, then-Assemblyman, Jim Beall, selected her as Woman of the Year, and the local nonprofit, United Way, named her Community Builder of the Year in 2011. The following year, Community Solutions awarded the Community Builder Award to SVCN for Ms. Gardner's advocacy to preserve funding for essential services. In 2018, Ms. Gardner received the Siempre Award from Grail Family Service and the

Alumni of the Year award from the San Jose State University's College of Social Sciences—Political Science. The San Jose Business Journal added Ms. Gardner to its Women of Influence list, and she is generally known across our state as one of the leaders in nonprofit advocacy.

I have known Ms. Patricia Gardner for over forty years. She is efficient, capable, organized and a leader. But most of all, she is a caring human being whose passion for justice and compassion have led her to a life of service to others. I feel privileged to know her as a friend and fortunate to live in a community that is healthier and more fair because of her service.

I wish to congratulate Ms. Gardner on her career. Today we honor her for her leadership and advocacy in our community. I wish her the best of luck in exploring her next chapter as she transitions to her next pursuit.