

HONORING GORDON C. BAXTER

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Gordon C. Baxter, a World War II Veteran and Career Fireman of Geneva, New York. Gordon passed away on March 17, 2022, at the age of 95, and it is only fitting that today we remember him for his enduring dedication to his country and community.

Gordon was a lifelong resident of Geneva, New York. He graduated from Geneva High School in 1944 and joined the Army on May 1, 1944. In August of 1945, Gordon was assigned to the Philippine Islands and returned to the United States in January of 1946. Gordon was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon, and World War II Victory Ribbon in recognition of his service to our country. He was Honorably Discharged in May of 1946 and went on to study at the Rochester Institute of Technology for two years.

Gordon's commitment to the community was an inspiration. He worked for the City of Geneva as a Career Fireman from which he retired after 25 years of dedicated service. Gordon was a proud member of the Hydrant Hose Company Number 1, where he held several offices over his tenure. He was also a member of the American Legion Post 396 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Above all, Gordon was a family man. I have always been inspired by the hard work and kindness of the Baxter family and I appreciate Gordon's service to our country and to our community. He will always be remembered, as his legacy will live on forever through his family and friends.

Given the above, I ask that this legislative body pause in its deliberations and join me to honor Gordon C. Baxter for his lifelong commitment to service.

CONGRATULATING WASHINGTON
HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR**HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, today I congratulate the Washington High School Choir for their prestigious selection to perform at the 100th anniversary celebration of the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial. As the only choir selected from Missouri, it is truly an honor to represent such hard-working and dedicated students. Under the direction of Ms. Jessie Patterson, the Washington students will be experiencing a once in a lifetime opportunity, and I could not be prouder to represent them. Missouri is lucky to be represented by the WHS Choir.

COMMEMORATING THE 200TH
ANNIVERSARY OF KEY WEST**HON. CARLOS A. GIMENEZ**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. GIMENEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Key West, Florida. The island's rich history and culture has made it an exquisite destination for millions around the world and in our great nation. Throughout the last 200 years, Key West has remained resilient and has always taken pride in its early entrepreneurship, labor force, and culture.

What is now Key West was originally incorporated as Thompson's Island. Early on, Key West was designated a Port of Entry. Within a few years, it transformed into an active city, attracting merchants, shipbuilders, politicians, and others from all over that were in pursuit of success. In the 1830s the wrecking industry expanded and became the main trade for the island.

During the mid-nineteenth century migration on the island also increased. Many Bahamians relocated to Key West and specialized in shipbuilding, fishing, sponging, and other maritime industries that were expanding at the time. Due to the expansion of these industries, Key West's success remained steadfast.

Today, the island is known for its biodiversity, historic sites, beaches, tourism, and rich culture. I commemorate the contributions many over the course of the last two centuries have made to propel and expand Key West. Exploration, entrepreneurship, and hard work have allowed the island to be what it is today—a unique treasure in our state.

It is an honor to join the South Florida and Conch community in celebrating this grand milestone. Key West has played a significant role in our nation's history and continues to exemplify the best of our great state today. Happy 200th anniversary Key West. Congratulations to all of those who have contributed to our island and have made it what it is today.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVER-
SARY OF HILTON GUAM RESORT
& SPA**HON. MICHAEL F.Q. SAN NICOLAS**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Hilton Guam Resort & Spa as they celebrate their 50th anniversary. I extend my sincere congratulations for their decades of outstanding service and commend them for their contributions as a leader in Guam's tourism industry.

Having opened its doors in February of 1972, Hilton Guam Resort & Spa was the first international 5-star hotel that arrived on our shores. As a pioneering force in the island's tourism history, the Guam Hilton meaningfully elevated the industry and catalyzed its emergence as one of this day's leading economic drivers. The growth they have accomplished over the years has directly improved the quality of life for the people of Guam, providing thousands of job opportunities, significantly re-

ducing resident household taxes, and facilitating greater connections with a diverse global population. The hotel group has further demonstrated their steadfast commitment to our community with stay offerings and employment prospects uniquely available to residents amid the challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Now a major tourist destination and melting pot of cultures, Guam proudly shares our Håfa Adai spirit and island hospitality with visitors from Japan, Korea, and other countries across the world. Madam Speaker, I express my deepest gratitude to the Hilton Guam Resort & Spa for their dedication to supporting the local public while fostering the island's relationships with international communities. Once again, I would like to congratulate them for over five decades of excellence in service, and may the future ahead be filled with continued success for both the Guam Hilton and our island as a whole.

IN HONOR OF HARINI KRISHNAN

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Harini Krishnan who is being honored as the 2020 Hillsborough Schools' Citizen of the Year. Every year, the Associated Parents' Group of Hillsborough selects an individual who has made sustained and significant contributions to the Hillsborough community, especially to education and to the well-being of children. I couldn't think of a more deserving recipient than my friend Harini Krishnan. I have known her for many years and seen first-hand her tireless advocacy for others. With a big smile on her face, she takes on problems she identifies and any task handed to her. If you want to get something done, ask Harini.

Somehow, she finds enough hours in the day to serve a long list of organizations. In addition to being a parent volunteer for the Hillsborough City School District, she was the Parent Group President at West School and Crocker School, served on the board of the Associated Parents' Group, was the Community Campaign Co-Chair for the Hillsborough Schools Foundation, co-chaired the Hillsborough Family Fun Day Carnival, and continues to be the Neighborhood Lead for the Hillsborough Neighborhood Network. Harini is a champion for public schools and has also taken a leadership role in the San Mateo High School parent community. She has served as the Co-President of the Foundation Board for five years, is the Mock Trial Parent Liaison, and is a member of Music, Drama and Dance Boosters.

A resident of Hillsborough for 20 years, Harini is a true global citizen and applies her spirit and empathy to anything she does. She is an acclaimed Indian classical vocalist and lecturer. At Crocker, she taught a class on Indian history, culture and arts and she hosted Hillsborough Schools Foundation Pay-to-Play parties at her home where she taught people how to cook traditional Indian food and adorn saris. Her goal is not only to make people knowledgeable about Indian culture, but to inspire them to be global citizens and lifelong

learners. She believes that the best way for our children to have empathy and to be people of good character is by walking in other people's shoes and by exploring the world beyond their backyards.

Harini also was instrumental in organizing the now annual trips for Crocker's 8th graders to Washington, D.C. It's a great opportunity for the students to learn about congressional history and to see democracy in action.

Additionally, Harini applies her love for the arts to her work as vice chair of the San Mateo County Arts Commission and on the 2020 California Arts Council State Local Partners Grant Panel. She is a champion for social justice and gender equality and serves on the boards of Equal Access International and FUND HER. In her never-ending pursuit of growing and learning, she is currently enrolled in a program in public leadership at Harvard Kennedy School. As you can surmise from this long list of public service and engagement, Harini is an exemplary community leader.

She is also a devoted wife and mother. She and her husband, Vika Jha, a startup entrepreneur, have raised two remarkable children, Janani and Abhaya, who are college students pursuing their own dreams. They are talented and extraordinarily gifted. I have been in awe of their accomplishments.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Harini Krishnan for her countless contributions to our community and for her determination to recruit more global citizens to make the world a better place.

HONORING 150 YEARS OF THE VALLEY VIEW, TEXAS POST OFFICE

HON. RONNY JACKSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. JACKSON. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to recognize the City of Valley View, Texas, as residents come together to celebrate the Valley View Post Office's 150th birthday on Saturday, March 26, 2022.

Located in Cooke County, the town was first settled by the Lee family in 1870. By 1872, L.W. Lee had plotted a beautiful new town on his land and named it Valley View, presumably for the view offered at the site of Spring Valley. With the grand opening of the Valley View Post Office that same year, the community would start with 18 families and prosper tremendously over the next 150 years.

The community's first school, hotel, steam gristmills, cotton gins, churches, and general stores tell an important part of Valley View's history, but I believe it is the fine people of Valley View who represent the best aspects of the town. This community has reached its 150th birthday through the generations of hard work and love for their community. Today, the United States Congress honors them.

I am honored to represent the residents of Valley View here in Congress. This community is rich in history and its people are rooted in our shared Texas values. I wish them a joyous celebration of the past 150 years. Here's to 150 more.

IN HONOR OF JACOB (JACK) BLANTON

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. BARR. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life of a patriotic American, Jacob (Jack) Blanton, on the occasion of his 102nd birthday. His life story exemplifies true American spirit, determination, and love for our country.

Mr. Blanton was born on March 25, 1920, in Brooklyn, New York. His father, Silas Blanton, a native Kentuckian, had been serving in the US coastal defense in New York before WWI where he met a young German immigrant working as a nanny. They married and eventually moved their family to Kentucky when the burgeoning coal mines in Eastern Kentucky began aggressively recruiting miners. Jack grew up during the depression and the tumultuous years of union conflict in Harlan County.

Mr. Blanton was in high school when WWII broke out. He volunteered for the Army Air Corp to become an airplane mechanic. He went to school at Long Beach, CA, for Douglas Aircraft A-20 planes. After his training he was sent to Asia, where he served in the 348th Night Fighters and also worked on Cargo Transport planes C54 and C47 that flew personnel and supplies over the Hump, the Himalayan Mountains. He was promoted to Tech Sergeant and became Crew Chief for the Douglas A-20.

Following the war, Mr. Blanton married his high school sweetheart, who had gone to Washington, D.C., after high school where she worked for the FBI. They went on to raise four children in Lynch, KY where Jack was a Boy Scout master, Sunday School teacher at the Lynch Methodist Church, little league baseball coach, and a member of the Masonic Lodge. He retired from United States Steel as a mine foreman in 1980. He and his wife then moved to London, KY, to be with his elderly mother. He lost the love of his life to a heart attack three days before 9/11.

Mr. Blanton continues to live independently in London where he still raises a garden and takes care of his home and property, even at 102 years old. He takes tremendous pride in having all four of his children pursue college, with two earning advanced degrees. He is a Christian and attended Liberty Baptist Church in London. He is also an unabashed patriot with an undeterred determination to vote in the next Presidential election.

It is my honor to recognize Mr. Blanton, celebrate his 102nd birthday and thank him for his service and sacrifice to our nation during World War II. As a part of The Greatest Generation, Mr. Blanton and his fellow soldiers fought to preserve the freedoms that we enjoy today, and we can never thank them enough. I am forever grateful for Americans like Jack Blanton.

TRIBUTE TO ELIAS PARONG SABLAN (1899-1968)

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, Elias Jacobo Parong Sablan was a visionary, linguist, and pioneering leader of the people of Saipan, guiding them out from under the 400-year rule of foreign powers to the beginnings of our self-government under the trusteeship of the United States after World War II.

Born on November 8, 1899, to Felix Delos Reyes Sablan and Luisa Malug Parong, Elias was the fourth child in a family of six. He learned our native languages at home: Chamorro from his father Felix and Carolinian from his mother Luisa.

Felix also taught his son to speak, read, and write the English language. In his own youth, Felix served as a cabin boy aboard the *Charles W. Morgan*, an American whaling ship out of New Bedford, Massachusetts. From his crewmates he learned English and about life in the United States of America. He also collected English textbooks on navigation, United States history, and other subjects, books he shared with his son Elias as the boy grew.

The year before Elias' birth, Germany purchased the Northern Mariana Islands from Spain, which had ruled the islands for some 377 years. Elias attended the German school on Saipan, and then was sent to the island of Yap, also under German control, to be educated in communications. By the time he was 15, Elias had learned the international Morse code and added Yapese and German to his linguistic skills.

Japan seized control of the Northern Mariana Islands from Germany at the outset of World War I and after the war was granted a mandate to govern by the League of Nations. This occupation provided Elias the opportunity to learn one more language, Japanese, while working at the Japanese sugar mill. He also married during this Japanese period, wedding Carmen Romolor Mangarero on January 23, 1921. Together they would have 13 children.

Elias' heritage, his upbringing, his education, and experience all prepared him well for the life-threatening events of World War II and what came after. In fact, Elias' knowledge of English would save his life and the lives of his family.

World War II came to the Mariana Islands on June 10, 1944, when the United States attacked the Japanese military forces on Saipan. After a brutal and destructive battle, killing tens of thousands of Japanese and American soldiers, as well as non-combatant civilians, the United States took control of the island on July 9, 1944.

Throughout the battle, Elias and his family hid in a cave in the hills, listening as bombs dropped on the island and watching as Japanese and American airplanes fought in the skies overhead. One day, spotting movement near the cave's entrance, U.S. battleships just outside the island's reef aimed their fire at the family's hiding place.

When the shelling subsided, those sheltered in the cave could hear voices outside speaking a foreign language. It was U.S. Marines talking in English and combing the area for