

to me by strangers more than about Russ. He could always see the best in people and brought the best out in them, especially in other musicians. Every musician I've ever seen him on a stage with was in awe of him. It was The Russell Batiste University and class was always in session. I didn't fully realize it until later on in my life, but he was a flat-out genius. It's only because as a kid I just saw him as family. Also, you don't assume that you'll ever be up close to that kind of genius, let alone within your own family."

Musicians across the world are eternally grateful for the vision, guidance, and leadership of Russell Batiste. He will forever be remembered for all his contributions to advancing music in New Orleans.

RECOGNIZING PAT O'BANNON

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Supervisor Pat O'Bannon. A dedicated leader, Pat's career has taken her from high school English teacher to journalist to Certified Planning Commissioner, and these public service perspectives enabled her to serve on the Henrico County Board of Supervisors for 28 trailblazing years.

Pat's composed and congenial leadership style, coupled with her attentive listening, have defined her as an outstanding public servant who genuinely cares about the community's needs. Since 1995, she has been a steadfast advocate for the people of Henrico, weathering elections and securing re-election six times, while making history as the first female member of the Henrico County Board of Supervisors.

Her commitment to public safety and support for those who protect and serve showcases her unwavering dedication. Initiatives like Tuckahoe Town Hall Meetings, which have been newly live streamed since 2020, highlight her innovative approach to transparency and engaging residents in vital discussions in every way possible. Pat's single-minded focus on every community concern, from reducing citizens' tax burdens, to significant public waste and water infrastructure improvements, to multi-phase investments in the county's beloved Tuckahoe Creek Park, reflects her dedication to enhancing the county's amenities and making it such a wonderful place to live. Furthermore, her work with VACo's Telecommunications and Technology Committee showcased her proactive approach to addressing the impact of technology on rural neighborhoods like those in Henrico County, an issue close to my heart.

In 2023, the Tuckahoe Creek Boardwalk was fittingly named "O'Bannon Way," forever commemorating her work for the community in preserving the beautiful Tuckahoe Creek Park. Pat's tireless service has left an indelible mark on Henrico County.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Supervisor Pat O'Bannon for her 28 years of dedicated service and commitment to her dedication to her constituents and for keeping the spirit of community alive in her county and in my District. I wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement.

JESSICA MENENDEZ

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jessica Menendez for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Jessica has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Jessica, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Jessica's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Jessica Menendez on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

CELEBRATING THE THIRTIETH PASTORAL ANNIVERSARY OF BISHOP DARRYL SYLVESTER BRISTER

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate three decades of faithful, phenomenal leadership from an outstanding New Orleans Minister, Bishop Darryl Sylvester Brister.

Bishop Darryl Sylvester Brister is the Second Presiding Bishop in the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship International and was born in New Orleans, Louisiana on September 26, 1966. He received his license to preach in 1989 and was ordained on May 1, 1992, under the administration of Bishop Paul S. Morton, Sr.

On January 26, 1996, at the age of 29; he was consecrated to the highest position in the church, the office of a Bishop. He is the Apostle/Overseer of Beacon Light International Ministries and Senior Pastor and Teacher of Beacon Light International Baptist Cathedral New Orleans since 1993, where the membership exceeded 7,000 active members before Hurricane Katrina.

During Hurricane Katrina, church buildings in New Orleans were destroyed and most of the members of the Beacon Light Family were dispersed across the United States. Bishop Brister served tirelessly after the storm and worked to rebuild the Cathedral, which reopened coincidentally on August 29, 2014, exactly nine years after Hurricane Katrina. Beacon Light International Baptist Cathedral New Orleans is once again a thriving ministry in the city of New Orleans that continues rebuilding one day at a time.

Bishop Brister has ministered the Word of God in several countries and continents, such as Japan, Holland, Panama, Korea, Iceland, Africa, Trinidad, Tortola, and Europe. Bishop Brister attended Louisiana State University and later joined and received an honorable discharge from the United States Army. He received a Bachelor of Theology Degree from

McKinley Theological Seminary, a Master of Arts in Biblical Studies, a Doctor of Ministry, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Religious Studies from Friends International Christian University.

Understanding that ministry extends beyond the confines of the church building, Bishop Brister is a man on a mission to reach lost souls. As President & CEO of DSB International Ministries, a non-profit organization, Bishop Brister, reaches those incarcerated by providing them with spiritual reading materials and daily devotionals. The Darryl S. Brister Scholarship Fund supports graduating seniors entering college and assists high school students with the purchase of school uniforms.

Bishop Brister has received numerous awards, and his leadership ability has been recognized throughout the world. In April 2010, he was inducted into the Morehouse College Martin Luther King, Jr. Board of Preachers. He was featured in the 1995 November edition of Ebony Magazine as one of the Top 50 Leaders of Tomorrow, the January 2000 issue of Upscale Magazine's Millennium Tribute to America's Most Outstanding Pastors, the September/October 2002 & 2005 issue of Gospel Today as one of The World's Most Loved Pastors, and the 2004 New Orleans City Business Success Guide. Most recently, Bishop Brister has been featured in the Who's Who of Houston, TX, and was featured on the cover of an edition of Epitome Magazine in 2013.

Bishop Brister has authored nine books that have ministered to thousands entitled, Exposing the Enemy, The Monster Within, Recovering from Ruptured Relationships, Don't Fight the Process, Talk To Me Afterwards, Look To the Hills, Living the Dream, Doing Right In A Wrong World and most recently Against All Odds: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities.

In March of 1999, Bishop Brister and the Beacon Light Mass Choir released their first CD entitled, It's All About Him. He serves as President and Founder of the Darryl S. Brister Bible College and Theological Seminary, which was established in August 1999, and is the Founder of the Beacon Light Christian Academy, which was established in August 2002. He is the Apostle/Overseer of the Beacon Light Baptist Church of Houma, LA, Beacon Light Baptist Church of Hammond, LA, Beacon Light Baptist Church of Baton Rouge, LA, Beacon Light of Haiti at New Orleans, and Beacon Light Community Church of Panama City, FL. Bishop Brister birthed Beacon Light International Cathedral of Houston, TX after Hurricane Katrina, which is currently in an inactive status.

Bishop Darryl S. Brister is married to Dionne Flot Brister and is the father of five children. He is a man of vision whose life embraces destiny and purpose. He is committed to serving God, dedicated to following wherever God may lead, and excited as God continues to do new things within his life and ministry.

The Greater New Orleans Community is blessed to have him as a spiritual leader to so many. I am proud to say I can call him a dear friend and prayer warrior throughout my entire political career, respecting the guidance and support he gives to me. I am forever grateful for his friendship, love, and guidance, and will forever carry his direction as I serve the Constituents of LA02. I congratulate him on thirty years of spiritual leadership and may he see many more years serving individuals across the country.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MR. JAMES PURCELL**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of a constituent and dedicated public servant from my district, James “Jim” Purcell. Mr Purcell passed away on November 28, 2023, at the age of 70.

Born in Philadelphia, PA, Jim graduated in 1971 from Archbishop Wood High School in Warminster, PA. After, he completed his electrician apprenticeship in 1975 and obtained a degree in energy efficiency. He would later go on to become an electrician for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local No. 98 for over 40 years.

Jim, a revered member of the Perkasie community, will forever be recognized for his exemplary commitment and public service to his community. Jim joined the water authority when he was 25 years old, and he had 41 years of service, including 23 years on the authority and 15 years on council where he served as Vice President of the Perkasie Borough Council for many years. During this period, Jim was instrumental in the development of Perkasie’s public power policies and was recognized as providing outstanding public service throughout his life.

Jim will always be remembered as a loving Husband, Father and Grandfather and we are all incredibly grateful for the positive impact he has had on our community. Let us continue his legacy of public service each and every day.

CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COM-
MENDATION FOR CHIEF WAR-
RANT OFFICER HERBERT RICH**HON. PAT FALLON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Mr. FALLON. Mr Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chief Warrant Officer 3 Herbert James “Jim” Rich of Sulphur Springs, Texas, and award him a Congressional Veteran Commendation. CW3 Rich honorably served in the United States Army during the Gulf War.

From a young age, CW3 Rich sought to serve and represent our great nation on the global stage. He began his Army career as a truck driver and finance clerk before successfully completing flight training as a helicopter pilot. Initially, he served as a utility helicopter pilot and operations officer during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm to help stop Iraqi aggression against Kuwait.

CW3 Rich later served as a commander of a helicopter company for the National Training Center before becoming a medical evacuation pilot in Alaska. In 1994, he also participated in Joint Indo-Pacific military exercises in Thailand. Without a doubt, his actions helped save many lives. For his meritorious service, CW3 Rich was awarded the Air Medal, Senior Aviation Badge, and several other awards.

After returning to civilian life, CW3 Rich has continued to make an impact in our community and dedicated himself to public service.

He currently volunteers as a fireman and assistant chief in his community. CW3 is also a member of the East Texas Marine Corps League Detachment 1357, in which he works to uplift and support fellow veterans while raising awareness for veterans’ issues. I commend CW3 Rich for his selfless service and devotion to assisting those in need.

I am honored to represent CW3 Rich in Texas’ 4th Congressional district. It is a pleasure to award him the Congressional Veteran Commendation for his service to our Nation and to the people of North Texas.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF
UNITED STATES NAVY COM-
MANDER LEONARD MERRIMAN
III**HON. TROY A. CARTER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an outstanding New Orleans Serviceman, United States Navy Commander Leonard Merriman III. Commander Merriman was born on September 27, 1953, in New Orleans, LA, and was the only child of Mr. Leonard Merriman, Jr. and Mrs. Alberta Slocum Merriman.

Leonard attended Mary D. Coghill Elementary School and went on to attend the prestigious St. Augustine High School (“St. Aug.”) in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he excelled and became a member of the football and track & field teams. Leonard quickly gained a reputation at school for his various competitive endeavors as a tough, “never-give-up”, and fearless guy. This was never more on display than when Leonard would speed off to school at St. Aug on his motorcycle at 16 years old. Leonard would go on to graduate from St. Aug as a member of the class of 1971 and later that same year, he joined the United States Navy.

The Navy gave Leonard the adventure he craved and the structure that he needed. For Leonard, the Navy allowed him the opportunity to attend the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland as a “Mid-Shipman.” While at the Academy, Leonard also played football and became a world-class boxer in his weight class. He then attended the University of North Carolina Central where he earned his undergraduate degree.

Leonard also always had a dream of flying. While still in high school Leonard learned to fly planes by becoming friends with a Black Pilot who worked at Lakefront Airport near Pontchartrain Park. Armed with this knowledge when Leonard joined the Navy, he was presented with a golden opportunity, the choice to attend Navy Flight School at NAS Pensacola.

With that choice in hand, Leonard decided to attend flight school and became a Naval Aviator. He was then assigned for duty aboard the USS *Coral Sea* aircraft carrier. While in the Navy Leonard piloted the A-7 Corsair and the F-18 Hornet aircraft. During his service, he would achieve the rank of Commander and serve as the Commanding Officer of the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Mobile Maintenance Facility 0582. In his civilian career, Leonard decided to continue to fly for commercial airlines as a pilot for TWA, MESA,

U.S. Airways, and American, just to name a few.

Leonard was involved in many activities and organizations. Some of these included, being a member of Progress Lodge No 16, Prince Hall Affiliate, the National Black Pilot Association, Son of a Saint, The St. Augustine High School Alumni Association, The Silverback Society, the National Rifle Association (NRA), and Director of the Future Airline Pilots of New Orleans.

On October 19, 2023, Leonard went to be with his Heavenly Father. He was pre-deceased in death by his parents Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Merriman, Jr. He leaves behind three children: his eldest son, Leonard “Lenny” Merriman IV, and his wife Jeanine Young Merriman, daughter Lucretia Merriman, and his youngest son Leonard “Leo” Merriman IV. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Charlotte Merriman, and Myles Leonard Merriman, who were the absolute apples of his eye, and a host of other relatives and friends too countless to mention.

His legacy will live on through the bonds of friendship he made over the years and all those whose lives he touched. He will be remembered as a man who would defend you, was never too busy to help others, would strike up a conversation with almost anyone, and a Naval circumnavigator twice over.

At a young age, his family moved to a new home in Pontchartrain Park, and the Merriman family joined Bethany United Methodist Church located in Pontchartrain Park, which remained his home church throughout the remainder of his life. A celebration of life is being held today at Bethany United Methodist Church.

I was honored to have Leonard serving in the Louisiana Second Congressional District Military Academy Nomination Committee. His commitment to the Service Academy program assured key nominations of candidates for appointment to four of the five U.S service academies: U.S. Military Academy (USMA), West Point, NY, the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA), Annapolis, MD, the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA), Colorado Springs, CO, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA), Kings Point, NY. The Greater New Orleans Community has suffered the loss of an incredible gem. I am proud to say I was able to connect with him during my tenure as Congressman. I truly respect the guidance and support he gave. I am forever grateful for his commitment to our youth, and guidance to our program. I will forever carry his direction as I serve the Constituents of LA-02. May he forever rest in peace.

KATHERINE NOLASCO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Katherine Nolasco for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Katherine has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Katherine, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will