

The 11th Congressional District of Virginia, due to its proximity to Washington, D.C., is home to a significant number of federal employees and retirees and I am honored to represent these dedicated and honorable public servants in the U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating NARFE Springfield Chapter 893 on the occasion of its 60th Anniversary and in thanking the members for their unwavering support and dedication to federal employees, retirees, and their families.

**SALUTING THE SERVICE OF MASTER SERGEANT BOBBY EHRLIG,
U.S. ARMY, RETIRED**

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to present a Congressional Veteran Commendation to Master Sergeant Bobby Ehrig, U.S. Army, Retired, for his exemplary service. His commitment to investing his gifts, talents, and abilities to his Nation serves as a reminder of our most sacred values.

During MSG Ehrig's service in the U.S. Army, he was a master of many assignments and responsibilities, ranging from a Team Leader to being a Supervisory Customs Border Clearance Agent. While serving for over 15 years, he has been awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, five Army Commendation medals, among others. His most significant memory while serving was narrowly surviving a blast that severely injured him and 57 U.S. and Iraqi policemen under his charge.

His retirement from the military marked not the end of his career, but the beginning of a new adventure. His commitment to serve and help his fellow veterans remains undiminished as he has held numerous positions committed to ensuring veterans receive the treatment and services they've earned. At every opportunity, he makes his mark while working collaboratively with others for the benefit of our nation's heroes.

MSG Ehrig's testimony is a testament to a citizen who puts others before himself, who works toward solutions that benefit all, and who isn't afraid to roll up his sleeves to do the hard work to make lasting, impactful, and positive change. He brings to life Gandhi's words "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." I applaud his work and wish him success as he continues to be a champion for the veterans and families.

**HONORING THE VETERAN
GOLFERS ASSOCIATION REACHING 20,000 MEMBERS**

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Veteran Golfers Association on reaching a membership of 20,000 people.

The Veteran Golfers Association originated as an idea amongst wounded veterans at Wal-

ter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC. Several friends routinely got together to play golf courses around the area to encourage each other to improve their game and heal through camaraderie and competition.

After recovering from their injuries, these friends relocated around the country and missed the opportunity to compete against one another regularly. Realizing that other Veterans might be in this same situation, these friends got together in 2014 to create the Veteran Golfers Association, which is currently based out of Pinehurst, North Carolina. The VGA is the first golfing organization dedicated to promoting the game to all veterans and their family members and annually hosts more than 450 local tournaments across the country.

The VGA develops programs that allow members to compete, socialize, and remain physically active through the game of golf. Through league play, regional tournaments, and national qualifiers, the VGA helps reinforce values like integrity, respect, and perseverance through the game of golf.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in recognizing the Veteran Golfers Association on this momentous occasion and thanking them for all they do for our shared home of North Carolina.

TRIBUTE TO NORMAN LEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my dear friend, renowned television producer and screenwriter, Norman Lear, who passed away on December 5, 2023.

Norman Milton Lear was born on July 27, 1922 in New Haven, Connecticut. After attending Emerson College in Boston, he dropped out of college to enlist in the U.S. Army Air Force. During World War II, he served as a gunner and radio operator, and flew 52 combat missions over Europe, earning the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters.

Following his extraordinary military service, Mr. Lear worked in public relations before beginning a career as a freelance comedy writer, and eventually a television and film producer. Norman would go on to captivate over one hundred twenty million viewers weekly with his ground-breaking television show's of the 1970's and 1980's that dealt with consequential and critical issues such as race, social inequality, and sexuality. These iconic shows include All in the Family—which won many Emmy Awards—The Jeffersons, Good Times, and Maude.

As a kid, his show's were a staple in our household, the kind of shows families across the country would watch together, laugh, and debate. As an adult, I was proud to get to know Norman as a constituent and as a friend. When I last spoke with him, on his 101st birthday, he still wanted to know what he could do, even then, to address the challenges facing the nation he was so proud to serve.

Norman was always politically active, inspired by his uncle Jack and grandfather Shya's political involvement and view, "that a citizen can matter." In 1980, he wanted a

more direct effect on social change, so he put his television career on hold to focus on political activism. In 1981, Norman co-founded People for the American Way which sought to build a democratic society and defend constitutional values such as religious liberty, free expression and equal justice. In 1997, Norman and his wife, Lyn Davis Lear created the Lear Family Foundation, which supports a wide range of nonprofit organizations such as the Rainforest Alliance, American Civil Liberties Union, Ballet Hispánico and Planned Parenthood. In 2000, Mr. Lear provided an endowment for a public policy center that explored the intersection of commerce, entertainment, and society at the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism—the center was later dedicated as the Norman Lear Center. A few years later Norman founded a nonpartisan youth voter registration initiative called Declare Yourself. Additionally, in 2001, Norman and Lyn purchased one of the few surviving original copies of the Declaration of Independence and shared the nation's birth certificate with their fellow Americans by touring it in all 50 states during their Declaration of Independence Road Trip.

Norman received professional awards and acknowledgement for his humanitarian achievements, far too many to list all here. These include the National Medal for Arts from President Clinton, several Emmy Awards, two Peabody Awards, a Golden Globe Award, the Humanist Arts Award, Kennedy Center Honors, the Women in Film Lucy Award, and the National Hispanic Media Coalition's "Media Icon" Award. In addition, he was inducted into the Television Academy Hall of Fame and has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

My heart goes out to Lyn and the rest of Norman's beautiful family. His legacy is without equal, and I ask all Members to join me in celebration of his life. America has lost a giant.

SALUTING THE SERVICE OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT CROUCH, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to present a Congressional Veteran Commendation to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Crouch, U.S. Army, Retired, for his exemplary service. His commitment to investing his gifts, talents, and abilities to his Nation serves as a reminder of our most sacred ideals.

Serving in the Army from 1990 until 2011, LTC Crouch served in various locations and operations however, the most significant being during Operation Iraqi Freedom II in 2006 through 2008 and 2009 through 2011. He is a decorated veteran with awards including the Iraq Campaign Medal (4 Campaign Stars), Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, and others. His most significant memory during his military service is his gratitude for his family and friends when he was coming home after his first deployment from serving in a combat zone for 12 months.

After retiring after 20+ years of military service, LTC Crouch still had more to give to his

community and local veterans. Currently, he serves as the Vice President of the National Mounted Warfare Foundation which is building a world-class military museum in the heart of Texas to honor the history of the units and soldiers who have served at Fort Cavazos and to share their untold stories. His efforts don't stop there as LTC Crouch is a part of the National Eagle Scout Association, The Association of Quartermasters, The American Legion, and among other local groups.

I proudly join LTC Robert Crouch's family, friends, and colleagues in acknowledging his selfless service. His fearless support and devotion to others make him a deserving recipient of a Congressional Veteran Commendation.

HONORING GRAVES COUNTY
COURTHOUSE

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Graves County of the First District of Kentucky for the groundbreaking of their new courthouse.

The former Graves County courthouse was tragically destroyed by the tornado that hit western Kentucky on December 10, 2021. I commend them as they continue to rebuild while preserving a sense of history and tradition. Their perseverance and bravery are second to none.

Graves County has a rich history and unwavering commitment to its future development. With loyal, hardworking locals and a town full of character, Graves County is a prime example of the values that our state and country stand for. I am honored to represent them in Congress.

I join with the community of Graves County in celebrating the rebuilding of their cherished courthouse. May it continue to be the centerpiece of Mayfield, bringing new traditions and a sense of pride.

MRS. BETTY ALFORD

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored and humbled to recognize Mrs. Betty Alford on the auspicious occasion of her 100th Birthday on January 12, 2024.

Mrs. Alford grew up in Wormleysburg, Pennsylvania, growing up through some of the most triumphant and trying times of our Nation. In 1957, she married her husband, William, with whom she shared 43 wonderful years until his passing in 2001. Betty and William have three children—Brent, Brian, and Kathleen—two wonderful daughters-in-law, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Throughout her life, Betty has been known for her generosity and kindness. She volunteered at Health South physical therapy clinic, and the Helen Kraus Animal Foundation well into her 90s—and is the epitome of the phrase

"age is just a number." She's also worked at Nationwide Insurance, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and served countless students at the cafeteria of Hillside Elementary School.

Betty's selfless activity, huge heart, outstanding work ethic, and tireless service to others mark her as the shining example of community service and truly making a difference in the lives of others in myriad ways.

Mr. Speaker, I'm privileged to recognize Mrs. Betty Alford on the blessed occasion of her 100th Birthday. She is the standard by which we all should be judged, and on behalf of the 10th Congressional District, I wish her continued God's blessings.

PAYING REMEMBRANCE TO FCC
VICTORVILLE OFFICER NICHOLAS WHITEHALL

HON. JAY OBERNOLTE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commemorate the passing of Nicholas Whitehall, a lifelong resident of San Bernardino County and proud law enforcement officer, husband, father, and grandfather. A friend to all, Officer Whitehall was an honored member of his community and a loving member of his family. Heather and I are praying for the Whitehall family as they navigate this difficult loss.

An Inland Empire native, Officer Whitehall was born in Fontana, California on January 24, 1970, to John Henry Whitehall and Nita Joyce Latham. He attended Victor Valley College (VVC), where he earned an Associates Degree in Administration of Justice. Upon graduating from VVC, he began a long and successful career protecting our prisons, including seven years at the Desert View Prison. Critically, Officer Whitehall played a vital role in assisting in opening several institutions at FCC Victorville. He served FCC Victorville admirably for over 23 years, including work as a Lock Shop and Armory Specialist before his untimely passing.

Officer Whitehall was much more than a law enforcement officer: he was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He raised four children, James, Matthew, Katherine, and Ashley and was rewarded with fourteen grandchildren—a testament to his role as a loving father and devoted husband. He cared deeply for his family and did his utmost to ensure that his wife and children enjoyed a loving and secure home. Hardworking, kind people like Officer Whitehall are critical to the future of our community, state, and country.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Officer Whitehall and recognizing him and his family for their contributions to San Bernardino County.

SALUTING THE SERVICE OF SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MATTHEW KEY, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and appreciation that I present

Sergeant First Class Matthew Key, U.S. Army, Retired, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation. SFC Key continues to be an unwavering example of commitment to the well-being of others and the betterment of his community.

With twenty-one years of military service, SFC Key served his country in numerous operations including significant combat experience during the Gulf War. He received an astounding military education including Primary Leadership Development, NCO Advanced Course, and NCO Basic Course. Military leadership recognized his hard work and talents, bestowing several commendations ranging from the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and others.

After SFC Key retired from the military, he continued wanting to make positive impacts on his community. After doing stellar work as intern in my congressional office, SFC Key was promoted to permanent staff as a Constituent Liaison. District office staff have as challenging a job there is in public service. They often deal with constituents who are at their wits' end and have lost faith in the government that is supposed to serve them. SFC Key's combination of empathy and expertise has helped countless Central Texans navigate the often-challenging world of government agencies and services. His extraordinary efforts, commitment to excellence, and skillful work has enabled my office to serve Central Texans at the high level they deserve.

I proudly join SFC Key's friends, family, and colleagues in saluting his selfless service to the Army and Texas. He's been a trusted advisor, superb public servant, and vital part of Team Carter whose work has made a real and lasting difference in the lives of his fellow citizens.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MAY
LAFRANCE BENDER

HON. MICHAEL GUEST

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2023

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of May LaFrance Bender. May was born in Newton, Mississippi, in 1970. She attended high school in Hickory, Mississippi, and graduated in 1988. May worked several jobs around the community after graduation. In 1995, May married Zoaton Bender, and they have now been married for 29 years. Together they have two children: Zaheim and Zamarion.

The same year she married Zoaton, May began working at the Newton County Tax Collector's office, learning how the office worked, and serving the people of Newton County. In 2011, May decided to run for the office of Tax Collector and won, and she served Newton County for three consecutive terms. Each day in the office was a new day to learn something and strive to make Newton County a better place for everyone who came into the Tax Collector's office.

I am thankful for the 29 years of service May Bender has given to the citizens of Newton County and wish her all the best in her future pursuits.