

for her friends and family. Throughout her life, Judge Leo developed a love for Hawaii, which she considered a second home. She travelled frequently to visit the island of Oahu, where she married her husband, Douglas Leo.

Judge Leo is survived by her husband, step-daughters, and beloved grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Judge Nancy Leo spent her life honorably serving the community in her judicial capacity for over 27 years. It is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honor her memory.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF SERGEANT MAJOR ANTHONY SWANN

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Retired U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Major Anthony Swann for his leadership and countless contributions over the 14 years that he served as the Peer Services Director at the Virginia Department of Veterans Services.

Sgt. Maj. Swann's career began with 27 years of dedicated military service. Throughout his time in the U.S. Marine Corps, he demonstrated his commitment to duty while gaining valuable leadership skills and the respect of his peers. Following his time in the Marines, Sgt. Maj. Swann transitioned to the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. At DVS, he worked to develop peer support services and has continued to serve his fellow Veterans and their families as Peer Services Director. His vision and leadership in addressing the diverse needs of our Commonwealth's Veterans—particularly as it relates to mental health, housing, and reintegration into civilian life—have served as a blueprint that will continue to provide guidance for years to come.

I want to especially thank Sgt. Maj. Swann for his advocacy and work on behalf of Veterans contending with post-traumatic stress disorder. His dedication to service is matched only by his compassion for those he serves—making him a trusted leader and advocate for Virginia's Veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in honoring Sgt. Maj. Anthony Swann. His commitment to public service and dedication to our country has been immeasurable. I would like to congratulate him on an exceptional career and wish him the best on his well-earned retirement.

HONORING ALEX SAMUEL CLOUD

HON. LAUREN BOEBERT

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Ms. BOEBERT. Mr. Speaker, last month, Colorado lost Alex Samuel Cloud, a member of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe who passed on August 13, 2024, at the age of 58 survived by two daughters, Somer and Jada Cloud. Alex departed this earthly life too early, yet he left a legacy of service to his Tribe and his community.

He was born to Elliot Cloud and Phoebe Kent on March 29, 1966, and grew to be a respected mentor to the youth and a dedicated leader to all. He provided a strong pillar of spiritual support for his family and was known never to turn anyone down when asked for prayers. He learned this from his beloved grandfather Bonny Kent, who was a roper and cattleman, served on the Southern Ute Tribal Council, and was a role model and father figure for Alex. With his grandfather's example, Alex developed dedication to preserving his Ute identity and culture, and he excelled in his knowledge of tribal history and governance.

Alex was known as an avid softball and basketball player. His passion for sports was evident in his 15 years of service in leadership roles, including that of coach, for the Southern Ute Tribe's Recreation Department. There, he exemplified the importance of hard work and encouraged countless young people to excel in academics and athletics.

As was his destiny, Alex's leadership for the youth developed into a leadership position for all his people upon election to Tribal Council. Alex served nine years on the Southern Ute Tribal Council, including three years as Vice Chairman, representing a Tribe known as a leader among Indian Country. Alex Cloud lived with passion and passed with honor. His legacy serves as an inspiration to all, a testament to the power of love, service, and a deep connection to one's heritage. His family and community miss him greatly but are now blessed by his prayers from heaven—*Punikyavaat sama'ara* (see you sometime, translated by Dr. Stacey Oberly) Alex egap.

RECOGNIZING EARNEST WAYNE BARRON WITH A CONGRES- SIONAL VETERAN COMMENDA- TION

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to present Earnest Wayne Barron, of Huntsville, Texas, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation. His servant life reflects the hard work and dedication that exemplify the best of our East Texas values.

Earnest Barron entered active duty at Corpus Christi, Texas, in April of 1966 at twenty years of age. Earnest served with honor during the Vietnam War, setting the stage for a life of hard work and service to his family, country, and veteran brothers. Earnest served for four years overseas in the Vietnam War, first as a combat medic in country and then on board the USS *Repose*, which was used as an offshore hospital to treat those with the worst injuries, including soldiers and civilians. He was a dependable, trustworthy, and resourceful Corpsman, all hallmarks of what the Navy needed for this duty. With a compassionate heart, Earnest learned to be a skilled first responder in a combat environment. He saw the worst of the worst but kept his wits while serving to assist some of the best medical professionals in getting our soldiers well.

Earnest completed Basic Military Requirements to be a Hospital Corpsman, trained for Petty Officer 2nd and 3rd Class, was professionally recommended for Hospital Corpsman

3rd Class, completed the Military Leadership Class for E-4/5 status, ECC for Hospital Corpsman, and Navy Hospital 'A' School. Petty Officer Barron was rewarded many times and recognized by earning the National Defense Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with one Bronze Star, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

After serving in Vietnam, Earnest married Donna, and in his professional career, he has worked for Armco Steel, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the University of Texas Medical Branch, and for Carnes Funeral Home through his business, First Call Mortuary Transport, which transported bodies across Texas and the rest of the Nation, upholding the last wishes and requests of families of the deceased with great care.

In retirement, Earnest is a member of VFW Post 5871, serves as a trustee at his church, and still serves as a valued volunteer at the H.E.A.R.T.S. Veterans Museum. There, he still maintains the title of 'most favored' tour guide, doing his best to go above and beyond in helping visitors understand what it was truly like to serve. The children especially love his tours as he dresses them up in helmets, vests, and unique wooden 'weapon' replicas he had made for a more authentic experience. Earnest is also the museum photographer and videographer and has spent many years capturing the stories of veterans that visit the museum. As Earnest gives precious time at the museum, he and Donna make time to give back to their community with needs outside of the museum through their church and community. Earnest has been known to go above and beyond for his neighbors in need, delivering groceries and necessities when he finds out they have none.

It is with this level of care for his fellow man that I proudly commend Earnest Wayne Barron of Huntsville, Texas, to his friends, family, and colleagues, and salute his service to the Navy and Walker County by awarding him the 2024 Congressional Veteran Commendation.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF MR. JOE STIRES

HON. GABE VASQUEZ

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Mr. VASQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Joe Stires and to celebrate his legacy of service.

Joe Stires began his lifetime of service to our community when he joined the United States Air Force, immediately after finishing high school. He served our community honorably in the Air Force for nearly a decade. It was during this time that he met his life partner, Matilde.

After leaving the military, Joe took on challenge after challenge. After working as an insurance agent in Chaparral, Stires eventually opened his own grocery store. This store became a huge success, leading him to open many more stores. Throughout his career, Joe never lost his heart for service and giving back to his community. In his spare time, he became a licensed EMT and eventually a paramedic. He used these certifications to serve as a firefighter for the Chaparral Volunteer Fire Department for nearly 25 years. His exposure to loud sirens during this period led to

significant hearing loss, but Joe was willing to sacrifice his own health for those around him.

Joe was a well-known pillar of his community and was there to lend a hand to anyone who was in need. He would help people that did not have food and people who could not pay their bills. Joe never hesitated to support his community with time, money or labor. His loved ones say that he viewed his community as an extension of his family, fondly sharing stories about the time he helped deliver a baby at his grocery store. Joe wanted nothing more than to share love and family, and if we all cared about our communities the way that he did, the world would be a much brighter place.

On this day, I would like to celebrate Joe Stires as a veteran, a volunteer firefighter and as a pillar in our community who dedicated himself to a life of giving. His service has made his community and New Mexico a better place.

On behalf of the great people of New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District, I thank Joe Stires, for all he has done for us.

HONORING SUPERVISOR CINDY CHAVEZ

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez, who has dedicated her career to serving the residents of District 2 in Santa Clara County.

Supervisor Cindy Chavez represents approximately 500,000 individuals in one of the most densely populated areas of our country. Sworn into office in August 2013 after a special election, Supervisor Chavez has been reelected twice. She has been committed and effective in her leadership.

Supervisor Cindy Chavez was a leader in the establishment of the Children's Health Initiative and helped champion efforts that resulted in the County of Santa Clara to become the first county in the nation to assure health care for every child living in the County.

Supervisor Cindy Chavez has made significant strides in ensuring that Santa Clara County remains an affordable, safe, and engaging community for all. Her leadership on the CalTrain Board of Directors has been pivotal in advancing the electrification of CalTrain and planning for a highspeed rail. A commissioner on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and a board member of the Valley Transportation Authority, she actively addresses regional transportation needs.

In 2016, she led Measure A, a landmark \$950 million housing bond that has funded nearly 5,000 units of affordable housing, prioritizing vulnerable communities in Santa Clara County. Additionally, Chavez is a statewide leader, championing programs for survivors of sexual assault and human trafficking, securing a 400 percent increase in funding for essential services for survivors.

She has tirelessly worked to expand public services and create community partnerships, including the establishment of the Vietnamese American Service Center, the first of its kind in the Nation.

In closing, Supervisor Cindy Chavez exemplifies public service through her dedication to improving lives in Santa Clara County. Her innovative policies and advocacy have set a standard for community leadership, making her a vital asset to our community, addressing pressing social issues. It has been a privilege to work alongside her, and I am proud to call her my friend.

HONORING VERNON "LEON" DAVIS

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of Vernon "Leon" Davis.

Leon Davis was a firefighter for over 30 years in Blackshear, Georgia. Mr. Davis worked his way up to Assistant Fire Chief of Blackshear while serving part time over his expansive 30-year career.

Sadly, Davis passed in the line of duty while helping his Blackshear community during Hurricane Helene.

This Hurricane has hit Georgia and the Southeast region of United States hard. Without the tremendous efforts and service of people like Mr. Davis, our communities would not be able to recover.

Mr. Davis was known to be an exceptional man by his friends, family, and all the people he worked with throughout his career. He has deeply touched the Blackshear community and will be greatly missed by many.

Our community is forever indebted to Mr. Davis's service, and I send my deepest condolences to his family and friends.

RECOGNIZING JASON SODANO

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and celebrate Jason Sodano, who has been honored with the prestigious 2024 William M. Usdane Award that recognizes outstanding achievement and exceptional character by an employee with a disability.

SourceAmerica confers this award as part of its AbilityOne Program, which leverages federal procurement to create job opportunities for Americans with disabilities through the nonprofit organizations that employ them.

Jason overcame his developmental disability and earned both his high school diploma and an associate's degree in office technology.

His perseverance helped him land a job with New Leaf, a participating nonprofit in the AbilityOne Program that operates at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington.

For the past 13 years, Jason has worked on the naval base as a janitor.

Jason's supervisors, colleagues and family praise his commitment to excellence and his positive attitude that seems to brighten the workplace and inspire those around him.

Along the way, Jason has earned awards for perfect attendance and exceeding quality

standards by ensuring cleanliness for up to 1,700 military personnel at NAS Whidbey Island.

Jason exemplifies the American spirit in overcoming adversity. His journey from struggling with standardized tests to becoming a valued employee at New Leaf is a testament to his resilience and determination.

He has shown that regardless of the challenges one faces, it is possible to achieve great success through hard work and a positive attitude.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in extending heartfelt congratulations to Jason Sodano for his well-deserved recognition with the 2024 William M. Usdane Award.

Jason's dedication and achievements are an inspiration to us all. May he continue to excel and make profound impacts in his workplace and beyond.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF EL GALLO BAKERY

HON. JIMMY GOMEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate El Gallo Bakery on their 75th anniversary of doing business in California's 34th Congressional District.

El Gallo Bakery is an outstanding small business in East Los Angeles that exemplifies the entrepreneurial spirit of small businesses. Founded by Magdalena Martinez de Huerta on February 2, 1949, 5 years after immigrating to East Los Angeles from Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.

El Gallo Bakery was passed down to Mr. Jesus Huerta, the son of Magdalena Martinez de Huerta. Mr. Huerta became the owner at 18 years old in 1984 and has transformed El Gallo Bakery into a staple of the East Los Angeles community.

Mr. Huerta has also provided numerous contributions to the East Los Angeles community through his exceptional civic and business leadership and has brought the vibrant flavors of Mexico to East Los Angeles, enriching the cultural tapestry and creating a legacy of delicious memories and culinary excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and celebrating El Gallo Bakery on its 75th anniversary. Congratulations again on reaching this impressive milestone. I wish them continued success and here's to the next 75 years.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ROBERT FRENCH, JR.

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 2024

Mr. Aderholt. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the incredible life and legacy of an 8th-generation Alabamian who exemplifies the notion of a life lived in service to his community and his country.

Mr. Robert B. French, Jr., known as Bob to those who are fortunate enough to know him, hails from a family of American patriots who