

people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. Bill has embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

Bill's journey has been one full of challenges: Bill has tuberous sclerosis, a disease that causes tumors to form all over the body, reduced his one working kidney to functioning at 15 percent, causes seizures due to the tumors on his brain, high blood pressure from the ones growing in his kidneys, and on top of that chemotherapy treatment has caused him to be immunosuppressed. Yet, despite these hardships, Bill is the embodiment of joy, compassion, optimism, and resilience. Since the age of six, Bill has competed in the Special Olympics and worked tirelessly to raise awareness about the impact of the games while serving as a beacon of inspiration for those facing similar challenges. Remarkably Bill gives away his hard-earned medals to other athletes, advocates, and community members to inspire them, motivate them, and bring joy to them when they need it most. Bill's efforts earned him the prestigious Sheetz Family Award of Excellence for his resilience and dedication—an honor bestowed upon the Special Olympics athlete whose determination and efforts demonstrate the power of the human spirit to overcome obstacles and inspire greatness.

Bill is a testament to the impact of positivity and a reminder that even in the face of immense challenges, we have the power to rise, inspire, and make a difference. Today, we honor Bill Ridler not just for his remarkable deeds but for who he is—a true hero in every sense of the word.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to Bill Ridler for his extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional individual, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May his example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

RECOGNIZING THE RIVER HILLS AND LAKE WYLIE LIONS CLUB

HON. RALPH NORMAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the River Hills and Lake Wylie Lions Club for its continued record of service to the 5th District of South Carolina, and to congratulate the club for their celebration of their 50th anniversary.

The River Hills and Lake Wylie Lions Club was chartered in 1975 and since its inception, has been a force in the Lake Wylie and Clover communities as the largest and most effective Lions Club in the state of South Carolina. The club's 142 members have raised over \$200,000 annually. Each year, the entire amount raised goes directly to support over 20 charities and services.

The Lions Club has created several of their own projects and organizations that focus on

supporting and serving South Carolina. The River Hills, Lake Wylie Community Foundation was established by the Lions to receive funds and distribute the proceeds to charities in tandem with the organization's goals and with the needs of the community. The foundation's motto is "For Good. For Others. For Ever" and that sentiment can be felt in the impact of this program throughout South Carolina.

The Lions Club also created a partnership with Clover Schools that led to the establishment of Roaring Readers, which provides books for elementary school classrooms, and donates annual scholarships for Clover High School seniors. In addition, the club supports the youth throughout York County and Clover through Kidsight, an eyesight program that screens over 13,000 annually and helps pay for new glasses, eye surgeries, and hearing aids as needed.

The motto of the Lions Club is "we serve." The River Hills and Lake Wylie chapter carries out this mission daily and their impact can be seen and felt throughout our great state. Each of the people that make up this great organization lead with honor, joy, and compassion. They are the people who help make our Nation the greatest in the world. The Lions Club members willingly give up their time, tithe, and talent and live out the South Carolina motto, "While I Breathe, I Hope." Please join me in expressing my heartfelt gratitude for all of their great work and celebrating 50 years of exemplary service.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF IRENE DEVAN PELOIAN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of Irene DeVan Peloian, a remarkable individual whose journey from Belleville, New Jersey, to Fresno, California, was filled with love, family, and a deep commitment to serving others. Irene, born on June 27, 1927, in Belleville, New Jersey, was an astonishing individual whose life touched many hearts. Her legacy, marked by grace, resilience, and unwavering devotion to her loved ones, will forever be cherished.

Irene's early years were shaped by her parents, George and Armen DeVan. Her father, an Armenian-Turkish immigrant, and her mother, a survivor of the Armenian genocide, instilled in her a strong sense of heritage and determination. She carried this with her throughout her life's adventures. Completing her high school education in 1945, Irene's fondest memories included attending dances featuring Frank Sinatra. These dances, enjoyed with her best friend and cousin, Alyce, added a touch of magic to her youth.

Driven by dreams of a career in film, Irene pursued her passion by enrolling at the New York American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Manhattan. Her aspirations led her on a unique path. After two years, she relocated with her family to Fresno, California, where she embarked on a career in retail, notably working at Cahns Women's Clothing store on Fulton Street. Additionally, Irene ventured into the world of runway modeling. In 1952, Irene

married Simon (Sam) Marootian, and together they raised their family on a vineyard ranch in Fowler, California. Irene's warmth and culinary talents made her a beloved hostess, and the couple enjoyed their evenings playing card games with close friends. The close-knit community of Fowler held a special place in her heart, and she often reflected on those years as the best of her life. Irene had a desire to travel, with Hawaii and Las Vegas being among her favorite destinations; she had quite an impressive reputation as a blackjack player.

Passionate about politics, Irene dedicated 30 years of her life to various Democratic Party campaigns. She organized numerous political events at her home, where she would cook Armenian delicacies for visiting governors and senators, showcasing her remarkable hospitality. Beyond her political involvement, her heart belonged to the San Francisco Giants, and she had a deep love for rescue dogs and stray cats. Irene held a special affinity for children and young people, often adopting "sons," "daughters," and "grandchildren" into her extended family. Above all, Irene was a devoted wife, mother, daughter, sister, cousin, "aunty," and friend. Following the loss of her first husband, Sam, Irene found love and companionship with Edward Peloian, whom she married in 1988. Their enduring love and partnership lasted almost 30 years until Ed's passing in 2016. They shared a passion for the arts, providing support to the Fresno Philharmonic and Fresno Art Museum.

Irene DeVan Peloian's legacy lives on, leaving behind cherished memories in the hearts of her loved ones. She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Marcus and Anchalee Marootian; daughter, Robyn Marootian; sister-in-law, Scotty DeVan, of Washington; nieces Jaymie DeVan of Los Angeles and Jordan DeVan of Washington; and three nephews, Mike Shahbazian, Steven Shahbazian, and Robert Shahbazian. She is also survived by her godson, Dr. Jordan Howard, of Atlanta, and her best friend, Diane Mosesian, of Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, I extend an invitation to my esteemed colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of Irene. Her remarkable time, filled with resilience, love, and devotion, leaves an indelible mark on our hearts and in the tapestry of our community. Irene's enduring spirit will forever hold a cherished place in our memories and the lives she touched.

RECOGNIZING PA-1'S HOMETOWN HERO: ELIZABETH TODDERUD

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary individual from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration that I recognize Elizabeth Todderud, one of our district's distinguished Hometown Heroes.

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the

people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. Elizabeth has embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

Over the past two decades, Elizabeth has poured her heart and soul into handcrafting over 300 blankets for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Budget for Baby Program and Camp Lejeune. Rita Fountain, the Relief Society Director, emphasized the profound impact of Elizabeth's contributions to the Navy and marine Corps families at Camp Lejeune preparing to welcome new babies, often many miles away from their loved ones. Elizabeth's

blankets provide these families warmth, comfort, and a sense of community while serving as a token of appreciation for their service and sacrifice. This year, Elizabeth was recognized with the prestigious 10,000-hour pin and a custom-etched glass wedge by the Marine Corps League Patriot Detachment 1230 on behalf of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. Elizabeth's compassion and generosity are a shining example of how one person can make a profound difference in the lives of others. Through her blankets, she has woven a tapestry of hope, solace, and belonging for our military families far from home.

Mr. Speaker, it is through the work of people like Elizabeth that our communities thrive, and our Nation grows stronger. Her actions re-

mind us that progress is not forged in grand gestures, but in the cumulative power of selfless acts. She embodies the timeless American values of resilience, generosity, and compassion, showing us that the future is built by those who care deeply, act decisively, and give without hesitation.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to Elizabeth Todderud for her extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional individual, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May her example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.