

Maryland State Police: Trooper First Class Logan Speak

Town of Herndon Police Department: Private First Class Neil Simpson

Prince William County Police Department: Officer Godson Vondee

Loudoun County Sheriffs Office: Deputy First Class Samuel Zinkgraf

Arlington County Police Department: Corporal Kellsey Costello-Mays

Alexandria Police Department: Officer Whitney Watts-Cerrato

Metropolitan Police Department: Officer Hakim Bouaichi

Virginia State Police: Trooper Collin Kashmer

United States Park Police: Officer Christian Callahan

Fairfax County Police Department: Private First Class Justin Yorkdale

Montgomery County Police Department: Sergeant Patrick Keep

Prince George's County Police Department: Corporal Brendan Hughes

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority: Corporal Joshua Morris and Corporal Ian Pharoah

United States Capitol Police: Officer Seth Carl

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the recipients of the Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence and in recognizing WRAP for its 42 years of public service. Their efforts combined with the support of partner organizations and law enforcement agencies have saved lives and are deserving of our highest praise and gratitude. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding this group of remarkable citizens.

RECOGNIZING THE ENGAGEMENT OF BRIAN JOHNSON AND CAROLINE REYNOLDS

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to congratulate Brian Johnson and Caroline Reynolds on the occasion of their engagement. It is with great pleasure and excitement that I share the wonderful news.

Brian, a steadfast friend and dedicated professional, has been a true partner in our work with Veterans Guardian, helping countless veterans across the Nation achieve their well-deserved disability rating increases.

Fate brought Brian and his incredible fiancé, Caroline Reynolds, together at the U.S. Open during an event hosted by our mutual friend and colleague, Congressman RICHARD HUDSON. Their story reached a beautiful milestone over the Thanksgiving holiday on November 26, when Brian proposed to Caroline in her charming hometown of Nacogdoches, Texas. The engagement was a heartwarming celebration, surrounded by family, friends, and joyous festivities.

Love and marriage represent the joining of two hearts and lives, built on a foundation of trust, respect, and shared dreams. Brian and Caroline embody the promise to stand together through life's joys and challenges, growing stronger as individuals and as partners. Their love story is a testament to the beauty of finding someone who not only inspires you but also walks beside you every step of the way.

Mr. Speaker, let us all join in congratulating Brian and Caroline on this exciting new chapter in their lives. I wish them boundless happiness, love, and success as they embark on their journey together.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LAURENS "LARRY" RUBEN

HON. SUZAN K. DELBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life and legacy of Laurens "Larry" Ruben, a beloved professor, whose influence not only shaped my life but also the lives of countless students, colleagues, family, and friends. A source of light and a friend to all, we recognize the extraordinary impact Larry had on the many lives he touched.

Larry Ruben graduated from the University of Michigan with Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Biology. After moving to New York with his wife and longtime lab partner, Judith, he earned his Ph.D. from Columbia University and completed post-doctoral work at Princeton University before joining Reed College in 1955. At Reed, Larry was instrumental in developing the Biology Department's research-rich curriculum, improving student research opportunities, and emphasizing the importance of outside funding to support the program. In his research lab, which remained open until he was 86 years old, I had the privilege to conduct research during my time at Reed. Larry contributed significant insights into immunology and cancer biology.

Larry was not only an outstanding researcher but also an inspiring teacher and mentor. Known for his kindness and generosity, he was deeply committed to his students and their success. As my thesis advisor, he inspired my early career in immunology. Beyond his work in biology, Larry helped establish the Arts Division at Reed College and often sang with a Reed-based rock and roll band. He was also known for his exceptional dance moves, which left a lasting impression on everyone fortunate enough to witness them.

Larry Ruben was a friend, a mentor, and a man whose immense kindness and contributions will never be forgotten. We extend our deepest condolences to Larry's family, friends, students, and colleagues. Larry's impact will live on in all those he touched.

HONORING THE LEADERSHIP OF DON RAINS

HON. WILEY NICKEL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor Don Rains, a dedicated public servant and lifelong resident of Princeton, North Carolina, who has made significant contributions to his community through more than two decades of service as Mayor.

For 22 years, Don Rains led Princeton with vision, determination, and an unwavering com-

mitment to the town's future. Under his leadership, the town saw critical infrastructure improvements, including advancements in water, sewer, and stormwater management, all of which helped prepare Princeton for future growth.

His leadership in key projects like the Princeton Community Center and the work surrounding the future Interstate 42 will have a lasting impact on the town and its residents for years to come.

In addition to his work as Mayor, Don Rains has served his community through his involvement in Princeton United Methodist Church, the Princeton Lions Club, and St. Patrick's Masonic Lodge. His leadership extended beyond the town, serving as Chair of the Triangle J Council of Governments and the US 70/1-42 Commission, where he advocated for regional and statewide development.

Don and his family believe deeply in giving back, and through their efforts, they have bolstered initiatives to enhance the quality of life for all Princeton residents, including support for the Princeton Public Library and the new Community Center.

Please join me in recognizing Don Rains for his exemplary leadership, dedication, and service to Princeton, North Carolina. His contributions will continue to shape the community he loves for generations to come.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF COLONEL ROBERT R. "BART" BARTRAN, III

HON. MICHAEL GUEST

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Colonel Robert R. "Bart" Bartran, III. COL Bartran is a fellow Mississippian who has dedicated his life to serving our country and the great state of Mississippi.

COL Bartran was appointed as the Director of the Counterdrug Program for the Mississippi National Guard (MNG) in August of 2021, where he also served as the Commandant of the Regional Counterdrug Training Academy (RCTA) on Naval Air Station Meridian. He relinquished the responsibilities as Commandant of the RCTA in December of 2023 but continues to serve as the Counterdrug Coordinator (CDC) for the MNG to this date. In these roles, COL Bartran has led with distinction the critical counterdrug training program for the National Guard and Federal, state, and local law enforcement across Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Tennessee.

COL Bartran graduated from West Jones High School in 1988 and attended Jones County Junior College, graduating with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Southern Mississippi. He then completed his Master's Degree at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. COL Bartran valued continuing education and graduated from the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officer Training Academy in Jackson, Mississippi.

Prior to being selected for the Active Guard and Reserve Program, COL Bartran was a police officer with the City of Ridgeland Police Department and the City of Laurel Police Department. His civilian law enforcement career

that spanned nearly a decade culminated with service as the Senior Narcotics Agent for the Jones County Sheriff's Department in Laurel, Mississippi.

COL Bartran entered the service on September 17, 1988, as a Private assigned to Service Battery, 3rd/83rd Field Artillery in the United States Army Reserves in Laurel, Mississippi. In August of 1991 he transferred to the 2/112th Armored Brigade in the Texas National Guard with duty in Fort Worth, Texas. In 1993, COL Bartran transferred back to the Great State of Mississippi and became a member of the National Guard. Assigned to the 184th Transportation Brigade, shortly followed by movement into the 112 Military Police Battalion, COL Bartran pursued his dream of becoming a Military Police Officer. On January 26, 1995, he graduated from Federal Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia, and was commissioned into the Mississippi Army National Guard as a Second Lieutenant in the Military Police Corps.

In February of 1995, COL Bartran attended Military Police Officer Basic Course and was assigned to the 113th Military Police Company. For the next 8 years, COL Bartran would serve in multiple Military Police Officer positions to include Platoon Leader, Detachment Commander, and Company Commander of the 114th Military Police Company where he would deploy twice back-to-back in that capacity. The culminating event as a Military Police Officer for COL Bartran was in August of 2018 when he was selected as the Battalion Commander for the 112th Military Police Battalion in Canton, Mississippi, and served honorably in that position until February of 2021.

Upon his return from the second deployment, COL Bartran would take on a series of Staff Positions serving as a Maintenance Officer, Personnel Officer, Training Officer, Operations Officer, Plans Officer, Executive Officer, and then a Deputy Commander before being appointed as the Deputy Inspector General for the Mississippi National Guard. The majority of the aforementioned positions were performed in a full-time status after being hired into the Active Guard and Reserve System in April of 2004. COL Bartran has served at every echelon in the state from the platoon level all the way up to the State Headquarters Primary/Special Staff and a Brigade Command Equivalent.

COL Bartran's Awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with 1 Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Achievement Medal with 2 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal with 1 Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, National Defense Service Medal with 1 Bronze Star, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with 2 Bronze Stars, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal with Numeral 2, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Silver Hourglass Device and M Device and Numeral 5, Non Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon with Numeral 4, Army Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon with Numeral 2, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medal, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medal (International Security and Assistance Forces), Joint Meri-

torious Unit Award with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Superior Unit Award, Mississippi Magnolia Cross, Mississippi Magnolia Medal with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, Mississippi Commendation Medal, Mississippi War Medal with 1 Bronze Star, Mississippi Emergency Service Medal with 3 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, Mississippi Counterdrug Service Medal, Mississippi Service School Medal, Mississippi Longevity Medal with 1 Silver Oak Leaf Cluster, German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge, Inspector General's Badge, and the coveted Air Assault Badge. Additionally, to COL Bartran's credit are five deployments over the course of his 35-year career, taking him overseas to Germany, Cuba, and multiple tours in Afghanistan.

I am thankful for Colonel Bartran's exceptional service to our country and the state of Mississippi, and I wish him all the best in his retirement.

CONGRATULATING THE TIA MARIA FOUNDATION'S 1ST ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP GALA

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to offer my heartfelt congratulations to The Tia Maria Foundation on the momentous occasion of its First Annual Scholarship Gala. Tonight is a special moment—not only because it marks a significant milestone for the foundation but because it celebrates the presentation of its inaugural scholarship to a well-deserving student. This organization has been built on the outstanding legacy Maria M. Luis left behind after a remarkable life that began in Terceira, Portugal, over 100 years ago. Maria endured countless hardships that began at the beginning of her life when she lost her mother during childbirth, causing her to step into the role of caregiver to her eight younger brothers and sisters. She valiantly took on this job and ensured that her siblings received the care and love that every child deserves. Maria didn't get a chance to pursue higher education due to her responsibilities tending to her family and other obstacles from her health, but this did not stop her from chasing a better life for herself and family. She migrated to the United States in 1970 and ensured that her children and grandchildren could have an excellent education. Now, The Tia Maria Foundation, under the leadership of Chairman Gavin Szilvasi, is continuing Maria's mission by empowering the youth of Elizabeth, New Jersey. By awarding scholarships, this foundation is making a tangible difference in the lives of students, ensuring they have the resources they need to pursue the higher education that Maria so greatly valued. Your foundation is not just awarding scholarships, but it is also about making a way for students to reach their highest academic potential and achieve their greatest dreams. This mission is something we can all be proud of, and I want to take a moment to thank them for the difference they are making in so many lives. Congratulations on a great year. I understand that the journey to this point has not been easy, and I commend their resilience and dedication. I hope they have a great time tonight and take tonight

to celebrate the real difference their work in the community has had. God Bless The Tia Maria Foundation and God Bless our United States of America.

HONORING RAMSEY COUNTY COMMISSIONER VICTORIA REINHARDT

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the distinguished career of Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt on her retirement after 28 years of public service on the Ramsey County Board. Since her election in 1996, residents of District 7 in Maplewood, North Saint Paul and White Bear Lake have been well-served by her leadership. Currently, she also leads the board for the third time as Chair.

During her 28 years of distinguished leadership, Commissioner Reinhardt has made lasting impacts in areas including transportation, housing, public safety, fiscal responsibility, environmental stewardship, and more. In 1999, she testified before a congressional committee on how local units of government can work together more effectively. In 2000, she was presented with the Bruce F. Vento Distinguished Service Award by the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless. In 2012 she was named County Commissioner of the year by the Association of Minnesota Counties. Under her leadership as longtime chair of the budget committee, Ramsey County has earned the top bond rating for 21 consecutive years.

Commissioner Reinhardt's long-standing advocacy for environmental sustainability that originally led her to run for a seat on the county board against a 22-year incumbent. Previously, she was a founding board member and chairperson of the Recycling Association of Minnesota and chairperson of the White Bear Lake Recycling Advisory Committee. She is currently a member of the Association of Minnesota Counties' Environment and Natural Resources Committee, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Local Government Advisory Committee, Vice Chair of the Environment, Energy and Land Use Committee for the National Association of Counties, and Vice-Chair of the Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy Board. She is recognized across the country as a leader in environmental stewardship and a champion for sustainable practices throughout Minnesota's east metro communities.

Commissioner Reinhardt holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Masters of Business Administration from Metropolitan State University in Saint Paul. She received a Doctorate in Public Administration from Hamline University, where her dissertation informed her county work by focusing on calculating the cost savings of juvenile crime prevention.

It has been an honor to have Commissioner Reinhardt serve as my commissioner. I have deep respect for Victoria's work and dedication to public service and am grateful to call her a friend. As she retires, I wish her well, along with her husband JP and her entire family.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in this well-deserved tribute to Commissioner Victoria