

feet to confront the unsuspecting enemy. Catching the Germans off guard as they slept in their dugouts, the 10th Mountain Division successfully seized the ridge. They defended their hard-won position for five grueling days, enduring heavy fighting that claimed the lives of 17 American soldiers and left 51 others wounded. In nearly five months, they faced off against 100,000 German troops, ultimately liberating the Po River Valley which led to freeing Italy. The courage and sacrifice demonstrated by the soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division is truly inspiring. Their bravery in overcoming extreme adversity remains a powerful example of valor and determination.

Under the leadership of 10th Mountain Division's former Commanding General Gregory K. Anderson and the current Commanding General Scott M. Nauman, the 10th Mountain Division is valiantly returning to their Alpine roots to ensure the U.S. Army is ready to fight in diverse, mountainous terrains, just as they did 80 years ago.

On behalf of New York's 21st district, we honor the 10th Mountain Division's heroic actions at the Battle of Riva Ridge and celebrate their enduring legacy of service and sacrifice on this 80th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING PA-1's HOMETOWN
HEROES: THE QUEEN BEES

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize extraordinary individuals from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—people who have 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 the Queen Bees Group:

Helen Irvine, Kelly Kemmerer, Robin Kemmerer, Missy Kitzmiller, Christina Swain.

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. The Queen Bees have embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

As co-founders of the Langhorne-Levittown-based non-profit, The Queen Bees, this remarkable all-female organization has not only served our community but transformed countless lives. They have dedicated their time and efforts to uplift those in the community facing adversity, channeling their collective strength towards a singular mission: creating positive change for those in need. Constituents like The Queen Bees strengthen the fabric of our district and prove that when driven by purpose, compassion, and a resolute sense of duty, individuals can leave a lasting and profound impact on an entire community.

In times of uncertainty, it is the work of organizations like The Queen Bees that reminds us of the strength of the human spirit. Their service, given without expectation of recogni-

tion, stands as a testament to the belief that one individual's dedication can ripple through the lives of many, sparking change, fostering resilience, and inspiring hope. Today, we honor The Queen Bees not just for their remarkable deeds, but for who they are—true heroes, in every sense of the word.

Mr. Speaker, it is through the work of organizations like The Queen Bees that our communities thrive, and our Nation grows stronger. Their actions remind us that progress is not forged in grand gestures, but in the cumulative power of selfless acts. They embody 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 The Queen Bees for their extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring these exceptional individuals, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May their example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

HONORING MASTER GUNNERY
SERGEANT ARTHUR "ARTIE"
ALLEN, III, UNITED STATES MA-
RINE CORPS

HON. MARK TAKANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Master Gunnery Sergeant Arthur "Artie" Allen, III for his unwavering service to our Nation and his exemplary commitment to veterans and the community. Throughout his distinguished 26-year career in the United States Marine Corps, Artie has demonstrated remarkable leadership, sacrifice, and dedication. Upon retiring from active duty, he has continued his legacy of service through an extraordinary range of volunteerism, outreach, and community involvement.

Artie's professional affiliations include roles such as Chairman and District 3 Appointee of the Riverside County Veterans' Advisory Committee, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Life Member & Trustee of Post 4089, Temecula Valley, and Life Member of the Marine Corps League, Southwest Riverside County Detachment 1057. His commitment to veterans and their families is exemplified through his involvement with the Veterans Experience Committee at VA Loma Linda Medical Center & Healthcare System and his service as a Docent for the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Museum Foundation.

In addition to his professional contributions, Artie has dedicated countless hours to volunteerism, serving as a key figure in numerous veterans' organizations and community outreach programs. From participating in "Buddy Poppy" drives, organizing events for the City of Menifee, and volunteering at Homeless Veterans Stand Downs, to his involvement with "Homes For Our Troops" and numerous Veterans Expos, Artie's tireless efforts have positively impacted the lives of veterans, active military, and their families.

Artie has also been recognized for his volunteerism with awards such as the President's

Volunteer Service Award at both the Bronze and Silver levels and the prestigious Riverside Area Veteran Honoree Program award. His leadership in the veteran community and his dedication to preserving the stories and legacies of service members is further illustrated through his work with "King High Remembers" and various speaking engagements.

After years of dedicated service, both in uniform and in his community, I am pleased to wish Master Gunnery Sergeant Arthur Allen, III a happy and well-deserved retirement. His lifelong commitment to our country and our veterans is an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing and celebrating the life, service, and contributions of Master Gunnery Sergeant Arthur "Artie" Allen, III. We thank him for his sacrifices, his leadership, and his ongoing legacy of service to our great Nation. Happy retirement, Artie.

CELEBRATING IRONTON
FOOTBALL'S STATE TITLE

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the incredible football season of the 2024 Ironton Tigers, capping it off with a 28–17 victory over Liberty Center in the Division 5 State Championship. This is Ironton High School's third state title and their first in thirty-five years.

Finishing the season with a fifteen and one record, the Tigers outscored their opponents by nearly six hundred points throughout the season as they dominated teams from Southern Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky.

Led by Senior quarterback, Brayden Schreck, and Senior wide receiver, Shaun Terry, the duo combined for twenty-three receiving touchdowns, more than half of Schreck's season total of thirty-seven. Terry finished the season with more than 1,500 yards, ranking him in the top twenty-five nationally for reception yards.

I am so proud of the Ironton Tigers' phenomenal season, and I am even more proud of how they distinguished themselves with a victory in the state final. The Ironton School District's motto is "To Teach, To Nurture, To Serve" and now they can add "To Win" to the list as well.

Congratulations to all of the Ironton community and especially to the coaches and athletes that made this victory possible.

HONORING MAYOR RONALD KOTT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ronald "Ron" Kott for his years of exceptional service and contributions to our City of Rio Vista as both a city council member and mayor.

Mayor Kott's career in public service began in 2014 when he was elected to the Rio Vista City Council. With decades of professional experience in the financial sector, Mayor Kott

brought a thoughtful, pragmatic, and compassionate approach to governance. During his tenure, he served as a strong advocate for Rio Vista, representing our city on numerous regional boards and agencies, including the Solano County Water Agency, Solano Transportation Authority, and Local Agency Formation Commission, where he also served as Chair. Appointed Vice Mayor in 2016 and Mayor in 2017, Mayor Kott provided steadfast leadership during some of the most challenging times in Rio Vista's recent history.

Under Mayor Kott's leadership, Rio Vista navigated significant trials, including the global COVID-19 pandemic. Amid the pandemic, Mayor Kott spearheaded the county's first pilot program to administer lifesaving vaccinations, ensuring the health and safety of his constituents. His collaboration with North Bay Health also paved the way for the future opening of a much-needed urgent care facility in the city. Additionally, through his strategic partnership with CalTrans, Mayor Kott secured millions of dollars in funding to improve Highway 12, a vital transportation artery for Rio Vista.

Beyond his official duties, Mayor Kott remains deeply engaged with the Rio Vista community. A long-time volunteer for the IRS-sponsored Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, he has provided free tax preparation services to low- and middle-income families.

Known for his quick wit, warm demeanor, and genuine care for others, Mayor Kott has left an indelible impact on his family, friends, and neighbors. A proud husband, father of three, and grandfather of six, Mayor Kott has always balanced his public service with his love for his family. Whether playing golf, gardening, sailing, or attending local music events, he embodies the vibrant and community-focused spirit of Rio Vista.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that we recognize Mayor Kott for his dedication, leadership, and enduring contributions to our City of Rio Vista. His tireless service and unwavering commitment to his constituents have left a lasting legacy. Today, we honor Mayor Kott and thank him for his efforts to make Rio Vista a better place for all.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOHN
SPRATT

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers go to the family of former Congressman John Spratt. Representing South Carolina's Fifth District for nearly 30 years, Congressman Spratt was already the Dean of the South Carolina Delegation in the House when I assumed office. I had the privilege of serving with him on the Armed Services Committee, where he was a respected leader and very knowledgeable on a wide range of national security issues.

Include in the RECORD the obituary of former Congressman John Spratt.

John Spratt, a longtime member of the U.S. Congress from South Carolina, died Saturday night, his daughter said.

"I am heartbroken to announce that my father passed away last night," Catherine

Spratt said on Facebook. He "passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family . . . due to complications from Parkinson's disease."

Spratt, 82, a Democrat who represented South Carolina's 5th District from 1983-2011, was mourned by President Joe Biden, former President Bill Clinton and Current U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, D-Santee, among others.

"Guided by his wit, wisdom, decency, and grace, John deeply understood the promise of America, and he fought tirelessly to bring people together to help us live up to that promise," Biden wrote in a condolence letter to the family, according to Catherine.

The 5th District includes all of Cherokee, Chester, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Union and York counties, in addition to parts of Newberry, Spartanburg and Sumter counties.

"Today, the South Carolina Democratic Party joins countless South Carolinians and Americans in mourning the loss of a true statesman, former Congressman John Spratt. His passing leaves a profound void in the hearts of those who knew him, worked alongside him, and benefited from his tireless advocacy for our state and nation," S.C. Democratic Party Chair Christale Spain said Sunday. "Congressman Spratt represented South Carolina's 5th Congressional District with unmatched dedication and grace for nearly three decades."

Born in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1942; Spratt grew up in York, South Carolina, and graduated from both York High School and Davidson College. He was awarded a Marshall Scholarship to Oxford, where he studied economics, and earned a Law degree from Yale.

Spratt also served in the U.S. Army from 1969-71, rising to the rank of captain, and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, his daughter said.

After being elected to Congress, Spratt was the second-highest ranking Democrat on the Armed Services Committee. He served as chairman of the House budget committee; among his accomplishments was the passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997.

Although Spratt was known for his intellect and thoughtful decisions, he was not averse to going to the ends of the earth—literally—to seek to understand complicated areas of the federal budget over which his committee assignments gave him jurisdiction.

In 1991, for example, Spratt spent 18 hours aboard a nuclear-powered submarine as it cruised beneath the North Pole.

"It was a very valuable experience," said, Spratt, chairman of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Panel at the time. "I certainly have a new appreciation for the very capable men and women who staff these subs and the incredibly difficult task they perform."

Camden Mayor Vincent Sheheen, a former state senator from Kershaw County, said on Monday, "I was a page in his office in the summer of 1991, and he was so kind and inclusive to a college student who didn't know anything. He was really a teacher of all things to all people, from a lowly college page to a corporate CEO, and he treated everyone the same."

Clinton said Spratt "was a skilled and deeply principled lawmaker," his daughter said. Clinton continued, saying Spratt "was masterful in his knowledge of policy and was willing to work with anyone to pass legislation that would make a difference in people's lives. He had a unique ability of knowing when to hold the line and when to compromise, and it earned him the respect of all in Washington. I'll always be grateful for the chance to work with him, especially on the Balanced Budget of 1997 which he co-authored and helped produce record surpluses.

John was a true public servant and a really good man."

Closer to home in South Carolina, Spratt worked to settle the Catawba Indian land claim that cleared the title to 225 square miles of land in York and Lancaster and paved the way for development in the area to thrive, the Rock Hill Herald previously reported. Spratt also was instrumental in securing more than \$120 million in building projects for Shaw Air Force Base.

"Serving in Congress with John Spratt was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life," Clyburn said on social media. "He was a friend and confidant, a colleague and counselor, and a mentor and partner. His love of country and respect for humanity were always on display. He was an inconspicuous genius and the most ordinary, extraordinary person I have ever known. I have been missing him for a long time and will always remember his wise counsel." Spratt was well respected by members of both sides of the aisle in Congress.

"Above all else, John Spratt was an incredibly smart and decent man. He dedicated his life to serving the people of South Carolina," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-Seneca, said Monday. "While we were on opposite sides of the aisle, I appreciated how John was always trying to find common ground for the greater good. In my view, his disposition and approach to the job represented the best of public service."

John was a good friend, and he will be missed. May he rest in peace."

Spratt is survived by wife, Jane Stacy Spratt; daughters Susan Elizabeth Spratt (David Tendler), Sarah Stacy Spratt (Brian Brennan), and Catherine Bratton Spratt, among other family members. No funeral arrangements have been announced.

Mandy Powers Norell, Trav Robertson and Jaime Harrison were among many involved in Palmetto State politics who shared memorials about Spratt. "Congressman John Spratt was my friend, mentor, and one of the greatest statesmen in Congress—and his passing breaks my heart. He was respected by Democrats and Republicans alike in our beloved home state of South Carolina as well as on Capitol Hill," Harrison said.

"Congressman Spratt was a miracle worker. As chairman of the House Budget Committee, he would find common ground to get things done for the people—often engaging in shuttle diplomacy to garner the support of a range of groups, from Blue Dogs to Progressives. I often teased that Mr. Spratt had probably forgotten more about the federal budget than the majority of members had ever known."

"Congressman Spratt was brilliant, kind, and beloved by many. I will miss him, but his work and his legacy will live on with all of us."

RECOGNIZING THE TRAIL-BLAZING,
PROLIFIC SWIMMING CAREER OF
NANCY HUNT WEIMAN

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the trail-blazing, prolific swimming career of Nancy Hunt Weiman.

Clearwater Beach, Florida, two weeks after the second devastating hurricane in a matter of days, hosted the 2024 Master's National Artistic (Synchronized) Swimming Championships. More than 300 Master's swimmers competed, the largest number of participants—all