

RECOGNIZING THE VALIANT SERVICE OF CAPTAIN LARRY TAYLOR

HON. MARK E. GREEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the valiant service of Captain Larry Taylor and his induction into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame. Although no longer with us, having sadly passed away on Monday, January 29, 2024, Captain Taylor's legacy lives on through the lives he touched.

Captain Taylor faithfully followed the family tradition of military service. His family's service in both World War I and World War II exposed Captain Taylor to the sacrifices our brave service men and women must endure to protect the homeland. While attending the University of Tennessee, he joined the U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Program and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant upon his graduation in 1966. He qualified as an Army Aviator assigned to the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, where he completed over 2000 combat missions as a helicopter pilot.

One particularly dangerous mission illustrated the deep reservoir of bravery that was a hallmark of Captain Taylor's career. In 1968, while deployed in Vietnam, Captain Taylor came to the aid of a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol under immense enemy fire, evacuating them from far behind enemy lines in the dead of night. Captain Taylor was only ordered to lend fire support to the patrol; however, after expending his entire stock of 152 rockets and 16,000 minigun rounds, it was clear the patrol had no hope of escape. Captain Taylor, realizing immediate air evacuation was the patrol's only hope, disobeyed direct orders to fall back and instead landed in the dark jungle to extract the patrol himself. His Cobra attack helicopter flew the entire patrol—clinging to the rocket pods and helicopter skids—to safety.

From my own time as a flight surgeon supporting U.S. Army Rangers, I am intimately aware of the pressures placed upon helicopter support squadrons. However, Captain Taylor's act of bravery over 50 years ago remains a valiant icon to Army aviators. In September of 2023, Captain Taylor was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his act of heroism. Yet, when Captain Taylor was informed by the President of the United States that he was to receive the Medal of Honor, the Captain humbly replied, "I thought you had to do something to receive a Medal of Honor."

After completing his service, Captain Taylor returned to his home state of Tennessee where he ran a sheet metal company in Chattanooga. He was deeply involved as a veteran in his community and generously donated to organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America, Habitat for Humanity, and the Railroad Museum. He is survived by his wife of over 50 years, Toni, their two sons, Larry and Grady, and five grandchildren.

Captain Taylor's life is a testament to duty and excellence in action, and it is with the greatest honor and respect that I commend his induction as part of the newest class of the Army Aviation Hall of Fame and humbly remember his bravery.

RECOGNIZING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE WYOMING VALLEY CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the centennial anniversary of The Wyoming Valley Children's Association. For a century, this noble association has been an integral part of our community in Northeast Pennsylvania, providing children with a variety of developmental conditions an inclusive environment to discover and develop into curious learners and compassionate citizens.

Founded in 1924 by members of the Rotary Club of Wilkes-Barre and Community Chest, the Wyoming Valley Children's Association was formed to provide support for children with disabilities. Over the last 100 years, the association has grown to support the needs of children with a wide range of disabilities and developmental delays through fundraisers, specialized programs, events for the children and more.

Today, the Wyoming Valley Children's Association strives to eliminate the effects of developmental delays through therapeutic services and quality education, believing in every child's unique potential. The Together We Grow Preschool is among its most impactful programs as it provides a warm, nurturing atmosphere for children to begin to develop their abilities. The association also offers Early Intervention programs, homebased therapy and education services for children from birth through three years of age.

The association's kindergarten program, which began in 2019, creates an environment rich in learning and social opportunities and features unique, inclusive classrooms focused on individual growth and developmental success for each and every student.

The Wyoming Valley Children's Association has had nothing but a positive impact on our community. For 100 years, the Wyoming Valley Children's Association has been caring for and supporting the children living in the Wyoming Valley and beyond. Its commitment to service, leadership and community has been an inspiration to all. I am honored to recognize the Wyoming Valley Children's Association's many achievements and would like to congratulate its members on this important milestone.

HONORING DEBORAH ANN ASHLEY AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Deborah Ann Ashley was born in Kissimmee, Florida. She attended public schools in Osceola County and graduated from Osceola High School.

After graduation, she was employed by the Osceola County School District as a classroom teacher assistant and later worked in re-

tail at Zayre department store. Deborah is currently employed with the City of Kissimmee Police Department, rising from clerk technician to administrative assistant III.

Deborah served as president of the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church Unified Mission Ministry, is the director of the Mass Choir, and works with the youth department. She served as president of the Senior Women Ministry in Congress #2 and holds the honor of third vice president of the Senior Women Ministry in the First South Florida Missionary Baptist District Association.

Deborah loves singing and has a passion for service, mission outreach, feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked. She demonstrated her passion by implementing an Annual Free Market that provided necessities to those in need in the community.

Deborah's passion for service flowed over to her job at the Kissimmee Police Department. She participated in the Relay for Life Breast Cancer Walk, was the organizer of the Christmas Angel Tree Projects, and the coordinator of the United Way Bowl-a-Thon for the City of Kissimmee.

While employed with the police department, Deborah received recognitions for Secretary of the Year, Support Person of the Year, Administrative Secretary of the Year, and the Chief's Award. In Christian service, Deborah received a Certificate of Completion from the Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church Bible Academy and Recognition for Outstanding Service and Ministry Leadership Award.

Deborah Ashley is the proud mother of three children, grandmother of six, and great-grandmother of two.

Deborah will retire on March 29, 2024, after 32 years and three months of dedicated service with the City of Kissimmee Police Department.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LOU SEPERSKY

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Lou Sepersky, whose decades of dedicated public service and visionary contributions have left an indelible mark on New York City. I was privileged to have known Lou for over sixty years, and it was an honor to work with him as a colleague and call him my friend.

As the President of MetroEast, he played a pivotal role in reigniting the momentum for the long-delayed full-build Second Avenue subway. His relentless advocacy and leadership were instrumental in securing support and federal funding for this vital project. Lou's dream for the subway to extend from 125th Street, cutting across Manhattan to Hanover Square, was not just a transportation plan but a vision for connecting and transforming communities.

His deep commitment to public service shone through his extensive involvement with Manhattan's Community Board Six. Serving with distinction for over five decades, he became the longest-serving Community Board Member in the city.

Lou was a fervent advocate for public spaces. He played a key role in creating the

East Midtown Greenway and developing Sutton Place Park, ensuring they were inclusive and enjoyable for all. His contributions were critical in the remapping and expansion of Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza and the creation of Stuyvesant Cove Park.

Lou's dedication to his community and city extended into the political arena as well. He was a delegate at the Democratic National Convention in 1992, a Democratic candidate for the New York State Senate, and a Democratic District Leader in East Midtown, Manhattan.

As we reflect on Lou's remarkable life and legacy, let us remember his humor, his thoughtfulness, and his relentless pursuit of a better and more connected New York. He will be deeply missed, but his contributions will continue to benefit our city for generations to come.

CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD FOR BETHANN TELFORD

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. BethAnn Telford of Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, and present her with the Congressional Patriot Award. BethAnn is a true American fighter and fierce advocate for brain cancer survivors.

Since she was young, BethAnn has been involved in numerous sports and other athletic activities. She is most passionate about long-distance running and was inspired to participate in the 2004 Marine Corps Marathon in Washington D.C. Shortly after, she was diagnosed with brain cancer and underwent several surgeries that forced her to relearn how to walk and talk. Thankfully, BethAnn made a full recovery and refused to allow cancer to stop her from training and competing. Since then, she has completed numerous Ironman competitions and Boston Marathons, dedicating each mile she runs to a child she knows who has been affected by brain cancer.

Furthermore, BethAnn has dedicated herself to supporting brain cancer awareness initiatives. She founded Team BT, a nonprofit organization that has raised over a million dollars for brain cancer research. Through her efforts, our scientific community has moved one step closer to finding a cure for brain cancer. In 2017, BethAnn successfully completed the World Marathon Challenge, which requires competitors to finish 7 marathons on 7 continents in 7 days, becoming one of few people in the world to undergo this amazing feat. For her sportsmanship and participation in this Challenge, she was granted the Peakside Capital Sportsmanship Award. I am proud of the work BethAnn has done to uplift and inspire our community to overcome the most difficult challenges.

It is an honor to bestow BethAnn with the Patriot Award for her exceptional service to our Nation. She is a truly extraordinary woman, and I'm confident this will not be the end of her accomplishments.

HONORING ERIC WAGENAAR

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the storied career and continuing service of Watertown's newly appointed City Manager, U.S. Army Retired Colonel Eric Wagenaar.

Mr. Wagenaar is a native of Carthage, New York, and graduated from Canton's St. Lawrence University with a Sociology degree in 1983. Upon his graduation, Mr. Wagenaar joined the Army as an Infantry Officer working primarily in command, training, and operations positions. His time in command ended in 2002 in Baumholder, Germany. In 2009, after 26 years of patriotic service, Mr. Wagenaar retired at the rank of Colonel. Following his retirement, Mr. Wagenaar took on the role of Civilian Plans and Operations Officer for the 10th Mountain Division before being promoted to Fort Drum Garrison's Director of Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security in 2012. In 2015, Mr. Wagenaar was promoted once again to Deputy to the Garrison Commander and performed admirably in this role for 9 years before being named Watertown City Manager.

While serving in his role as Deputy to the Garrison Commander, Mr. Wagenaar's leadership was nothing short of exemplary. He was responsible for many duties on base that kept the day-to-day operations running smoothly and he performed each to the highest level. Whether helping to resolve installation problems, supporting training regimes, or guiding the direction of administrative programs, Mr. Wagenaar fulfilled his duties to the highest of standards.

Throughout his career, Mr. Wagenaar's high quality of work has earned him several honors and awards including the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with six oak leaf clusters, and the Meritorious Civilian Service Medal. Furthermore, his aptitude in the field has earned him the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Ranger Tab, the Expert Infantryman Badge, and U.S. Army and German Army Airborne Wings.

On behalf of New York's 21st Congressional District, I am honored to recognize U.S. Army Retired Colonel Eric Wagenaar for his decades of patriotic service. I look forward to witnessing his many future successes as Watertown's City Manager.

HONORING DR. ANITZA SAN MIGEL AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Anitza San Miguel's mission is to spark the resting potential within leaders. She guides them to flourish and project their distinctive brilliance, thereby revolutionizing their mindset to realize their ultimate aspirations. She is a loving wife and mother, a scientist, an innovative educator, an author, and a visionary leader.

Dr. San Miguel holds a bachelor's in biology, a master's in biotechnology, and a doctorate in higher education administration. She has served as a dean of Science at Valencia College, Osceola Campus, since moving to Orlando, Florida, in 2016. She is dedicated to the academic and professional success of individuals at all levels.

She has served as a science professor and dean at esteemed institutions in Virginia and Florida. She currently leads a team in Florida's Ninth District with distinction. Her expertise has been recognized at the National Institutes of Health and the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Dr. San Miguel's entrepreneurial spirit led her to create ASM Mentors and the empowering podcast "Sacúdete y Toma Acción" or "Shake It Off and Take Action." She is the author of "Navegador," a reflective journaling tool, as well as a collection of inspirational coffee table books, "Reignite," "Grow," and "Shine." She has shared her guidance in the "Today's Inspired Latina" and "Today's Inspired Leader" book anthologies. Her eloquence and wisdom make her a coveted speaker, mentor, and coach.

Dr. San Miguel's accomplishments are a testament to her optimism and tenacious spirit. Her dedication to shaping the academic and professional trajectories of emerging leaders encapsulates her passion and commitment to continual self-improvement and fostering limitless growth and excellence.

Dr. San Miguel's pursuit of knowledge and development is persistent. Beyond the public eye, she savors moments with her family, explores new horizons, and engages in the reflective practice of journaling.

CONGRATULATING TRINE UNIVERSITY'S MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. JIM BANKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Mr. BANKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Trine University's men's basketball team for winning the 2024 NCAA Division III National Championship.

Trine clinched their 69–61 victory over the top ranked Hampden-Sydney College in Fort Wayne, Indiana at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in front of a record crowd. 4,546 spectators witnessed the Thunder become national champions in their first ever NCAA Tournament appearance.

This season, Trine has reminded Hoosiers why we love the game of basketball. They have exhibited all the traits that make the game so compelling. Not only have they excited and entertained their audiences in Northeast Indiana and beyond, but their dedication, hard work, and will to win have inspired them.

I commend each player and coach for reaching the pinnacle of success in their division. I know they will continue to grow and achieve, both on and off the court, with the great support of their community behind them.