

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JENNIFER WEXTON

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Ms. WEXTON. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was not able to be present to vote on April 17, 2024. Had I been present, I would have voted: YES on Roll Call No. 135; NO on Roll Call No. 136; NO on Roll Call No. 137; NO on Roll Call No. 138; NO on Roll Call No. 139; and NO on Roll Call No. 140.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN KAVANAGH

HON. DEBBIE LESKO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, John Kavanagh serves as an Arizona State Senator for Legislative District 3, covering the Northeast Valley. He has served in the Arizona Legislature since 2007. Before coming to Arizona, John worked as a police officer for the Port Authority of New York and the New Jersey Police Department. I had the privilege of serving with Senator Kavanagh for a number of years when I was a state legislator, and we worked on several policies and reforms that have made a lasting impact for future generations of Arizonians.

John has earned much recognition for his conservative principles during his time in the legislature, including a Lifetime A+ rating from the National Rifle Association, a Lifetime A rating from the American Conservative Union, and a Lifetime A rating from the Center for Arizona Policy.

Arizona's Eighth Congressional District thanks him for his distinguished record of service to his district and our state.

RECOGNIZING THE BICENTENNIAL
OF WILLIAMS COUNTY, OHIO**HON. MARCY KAPTUR**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a very historic occasion for the people of Williams County, "nestled in the extreme Northwest corner of Ohio." The community will begin a weekend of celebration to commemorate the milestone.

Williams County was named for David Williams, a Revolutionary War hero involved in the capture of British officer Major John Andre. Originally encompassing a larger area of Northwest Ohio, Williams County was part of territory set aside for Native American people in the Treaty of Greenville. Part of the territory was also disputed between Ohio and Michigan, a dispute settled in 1836 which placed the county in Ohio.

The land was part of the "Great Black Swamp" and was the last in Ohio to be settled. Because it was swampland, the earliest settlers faced severe hardship with travel, farming, and insects. Towering native trees blocked sunlight, and conditions were harsh.

Yet these hardy Ohioans persevered, turning this corner of Northwest Ohio into an abundant fertile watershed.

The Williams County Courthouse, today on the National Registry of Historic places, was completed in 1891. It replaced an original log structure and one completed in 1845. The latter was considered the best such structure in Northwest Ohio at that time.

With rail and telegraph came opportunities for trade and development, leading to "vibrant economic growth of the 1800's and 1900's, through to the diversified local economy of today," according to the history. Today, Williams County is home to 2,399 businesses including 111 manufacturing companies offering solid employment and good wages for a diverse and skilled workforce. Famously, Williams County is home to Ohio Art—and Etch-A-Sketch—and Spangler Candy which originated and produces Dum Dum lollipops and other nostalgic treats.

Williams County, Ohio is made up of hardy farmers and pleasant towns including Alvordton, Blakeslee, Bryan, Edgerton, Edon, Holiday City, Kunkle, Lake Seneca, Melbern, Montpelier, Nettle Lake, Pioneer, Pulaski, and Williams Center: lovely communities all.

Well known to most Ohioans is the late Ohio State University football coach Woody Hayes. Coach Hayes said, "I speak at a lot of banquets in small towns, because small towns have so many great people." I couldn't agree with him more. I have been privileged to represent Williams County and can attest to the character and kindness of its people. As they take a peek at yesteryear during a weekend of ceremonial and enjoyable events, I know they also look to the future with hope and celebration. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us and we build the community forward together.

Onward.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF
VALERIE DENISE CAMPBELL**HON. MARC A. VEASEY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the extraordinary life of Valerie Denise Campbell—a pillar of the Lake Como community, who was better known as Denise to the people who loved her. Denise attended Como Elementary School and then went on to Arlington Heights High School to support the desegregation of schools in Fort Worth. She then went on after high school graduation to attend Texas Women's University in 1975, where she majored in music education. After college, she began her career at General Dynamics and later had a 32-year career serving North Texas children with Fort Worth ISD, teaching at Burton Hill Elementary.

Denise, a staunch woman of faith, was baptized by the late Pastor G.W. Burton. As a young girl, Denise began playing piano at the Zion Baptist Church in Church School and eventually on Sunday mornings. She also was a loving wife, mother, and family member to many. She was the wife of Wendell Campbell for 47 years, was the mother to three beautiful children, a grandmother, a family member, and was also a loving pet owner.

Denise was sometimes referred to as "The Music Librarian" because she was a gifted and talented musician. She loved music, and her life was dedicated to the Lord, family, and sacred music. For years, she played at the Zion Baptist Church under the pastoral leadership of the Reverends J.W. Briscoe and Maurice E. Barnes. Later, she went on to join her husband at the West Mount Moriah Baptist Church, where she was greeted with joy and accolades. Without taking a break, she began to play the piano and organ there.

I rise again to commemorate her memory and wish my deepest condolences to everyone whose lives she touched.

TRIBUTE TO SHAWNNA BOLICK

HON. DEBBIE LESKO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, Shawna Bolick serves as an Arizona State Senator for Legislative District 2, covering the North Valley. Throughout her time in public service, Shawna has been a strong champion for promoting school choice and protecting the most vulnerable among us.

Thanks, in large part, to her work, Arizona is one of the premier states in the nation for school choice and for safeguarding those who cannot defend themselves. She has served on Arizona's Early Childhood Education and Health Board, the Arizona State Board of Education's Academic Standards Development Committee, and the Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission. Shawna is a 'can-do' conservative fighter. She will always stand on her principles, but she looks every day for consensus and for opportunities to enact meaningful policy reforms and enhancements for her constituents.

Arizona's Eighth Congressional District is grateful for Shawna's commitment and passion for public service, and I am thankful for the example she has left for many to follow.

CONGRATULATING THE SIRMON
FAMILY OF BALDWIN COUNTY**HON. JERRY L. CARL**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Mr. CARL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Sirmon Family of Baldwin County on their family farm being awarded the 2024 Alabama Farm of Distinction. Sirmon Farms is owned by Joel and Patti Sirmon, and Joel's mother, Shirley, and brother, James also help run the 5-generation family-owned farm. At Sirmon Farms, they grow cotton, corn, peanuts, and sweet potatoes across 4500 acres in the Belforest Community. They will go on to represent Alabama during the Sunbelt Agriculture Expo in the Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest this fall. Congratulations to the Sirmon Family and their family farm. I am thankful for the impact they make on our state, and I am proud to be their representative.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MAYOR
DAVID HELMS

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mayor David Helms, who passed away on March 20th, at the age of 83.

Mayor Helms was born on October 11, 1940, in Glade Spring, Virginia. Upon his graduation from Glade Spring High School, he studied elementary education at Emory & Henry College. Later, he received his master's degree in education from Radford University.

His first education jobs included teaching stints at Meadowview Elementary School and Glade Spring Elementary School. Later, Mr. Helms served as Assistant Principal and Principal of Marion Primary School. He served in his role as Principal until his retirement from education in 2000.

From 1990–2000, Mr. Helms served on the Marion Town Council. He became Marion's Mayor in 2000. In public office, Mayor Helms pursued projects to revitalize downtown Marion and improve his community.

Mayor Helms was a fierce advocate in recognizing veterans for their contributions and sacrifices. He worked closely with the Marion VFW chapter and the East Tennessee Chapter of Rolling Thunder. Mayor Helms also played an instrumental role in promoting Marion's Memorial Day activities. Marion's Memorial Day parade is one of the most patriotic festivities in the Ninth District of Virginia. I have loved being in the parade with Mayor Helms. It receives widespread praise across the Commonwealth and the region every year.

Also, Mayor Helms was an active member of the Glade Spring Volunteer Fire Department. He admitted that firefighting and rescue services were in his blood.

Mayor Helms is survived by his wife Sue Winsett Helms; brother-in-law, Clyde Hoots; many cousins, nieces, nephews, and their families.

I had the pleasure of working with Mayor Helms over the years. His love for Marion and Smyth County was evident. As a public-school teacher, principal, and town council member, Mayor Helms exhibited some of the finest qualities of a public servant.

RECOGNIZING DR. BEN CHAN

HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a local Green Bay celebrity and Jeopardy champion, Dr. Ben Chan.

In the Spring of 2023, Ben captured the attention of Jeopardy viewers nationwide. He went on a nine-game winning streak and won more than \$250,000 on the trivia show. While he was competing, the fans were charmed by his positive attitude; oftentimes, he could be seen "raising-the-roof," and he always placed

an exclamation point after his name. He shared stories about his dogs, Ruthie and Chester, who he plans on spending a portion of his winnings on. Although Ben's winning streak ended over a controversial rule, he was invited back to compete in the Tournament of Champions. Ultimately, Ben has won over \$350,000 on Jeopardy.

While Ben has an extensive fan-base nationwide, some of his most loyal fans reside in his hometown of Green Bay. Ben is an assistant professor of philosophy at St. Norbert College in De Pere. The college community continues to embrace Ben and his success on Jeopardy. When he is not on campus, Ben can be found greeting fans in the community. Recently, he hosted public watch parties for his appearances on Tournament of Champions. Wisconsinites flocked to local restaurants and breweries to cheer him on. In addition to these events, Ben uses his platform to promote Northeast Wisconsin organizations. Appleton's Minor League Baseball Team, the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers, invited Ben to throw out the first pitch last summer. He even had the opportunity to shoot the famous Bratzooka cannon, which launches brats into the stands. When he competed in the Tournament of Champions, he highlighted one of Green Bay's main attractions, Bay Beach Amusement Park.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my sincerest congratulations to Dr. Ben Chan. He is a trivia genius who is making monumental impacts in the Green Bay community. I, along with many Wisconsinites, will miss seeing Ben compete on the show. I look forward to seeing what Ben accomplishes next.

RECOGNIZING THE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TEXAS LIONS CAMP

HON. CHIP ROY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Texas Lions Camp in Kerr County.

The Texas Lions Camp was incorporated as a 501(c)3 by the State of Texas on April 4, 1949. The polio epidemic was rampant during this time, and the Texas Lions were looking for ways to give children affected by polio a place where they could experience some normalcy in their lives. Congress passed two resolutions that authorized the sale of excess federal land surrounding the Kerrville Veterans Hospital. One of my predecessors, Congressman Ovie Clark Fisher, was instrumental in the passage of this legislation. Then-Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson was also an early supporter of Texas Lions Camp. Mr. Bill Mickelsen, a Lion from Kerrville, traveled tirelessly to Washington, DC to advocate for the "Texas Lions League for Crippled Children" camp in Texas. Mr. Mickelsen and his friend J.C. "Buddy" Murray created a detailed scale model of the Camp and eventually constructed the buildings.

However, one of the strings attached to the sale of five hundred and four acres was that

the Lions had to raise \$100,000 within six months to guarantee construction. In pursuit of these dollars, the Lions established their "life membership status." A Lion was Governor of Texas at the time, Allan Shivers. He broadcasted over the radio a call for donations to the Camp. Mr. Jack Wiech served as the first president of Texas Lions Camp in Kerrville. He went on a speaking tour across the State to drum up donations. As the six-month deadline loomed, the Lions were still \$20,000 short of their goal. Mr. Sealy McCreless of San Antonio wrote a check that pushed the Lions over their goal for the Camp fundraiser. The next step was to begin construction and raise \$150,000 to cover those costs. The Lions hit the road again for a second fundraising campaign.

Mr. Herb Petry, the Lions Clubs International president at the time, said the Camp for special needs children "is the best example of Lionism in action." Mr. Petry went on to say that "what is being done in Kerrville under the banner of Texas Lionism must be pleasing in the sight of Him Who first taught us to serve, to be our brother's keeper, and to put the Golden Rule into practice."

Mr. Mickelsen worked tirelessly for fifteen years to construct the Texas Lions Camp based on his original small-scale model. Famous Kerrville names, including Hal Peterson and Howard Butt of the HEB Grocery Company, donated resources to round out the construction and supplies for Camp.

Over the years, the Camp adapted to allow other special-needs children to participate. Children living with blindness, hearing and speaking disorders, and various crippled limbs all enjoyed Texas Lions Camp together. This defied the original prognostications of psychologists in the 1950s, who believed children with varying disabilities could not get along. However, they learned to help each other and combine their strengths to thrive. Several hundred adult blind were also trained at the Camp through a contract with the State of Texas for a couple decades into the 1980s.

Every summer, children with physical handicaps such as diabetes, down syndrome, polio, missing limbs, blindness, and other disabilities are accommodated every year at a weeklong camp session at no cost to their families. Over 82,000 children have attended Texas Lions Camp since it opened in 1949. The Camp motto is "All Can Do!" Campers experience a zip line, climbing wall, ropes course, fishing, boating, swimming, archery, arts and crafts, miniature golf, and much more. Therapeutic horseback riding was added in the 1980s and became a favorite pastime for campers. A more recent addition is the family camping experience, allowing the families of kids with special needs to experience Texas Lions Camp.

On a more personal note, my father, Don Roy, attended the Lions Camp in Kerrville when he was recovering from Polio in the 1950s, and still talks about the positive impact it had on him and the other children. I am grateful to the eight hundred Texas Lions Clubs International that work tirelessly to provide funds for children with special needs to attend Texas Lions Camp.