

Ray Gigoux for his selfless dedication to our country and his lifelong commitment to serving communities across Montana. On December 23, 2023, Burt, as his friends called him, went home to his Lord and Savior after a courageous battle with cancer. However, this extraordinary Montanan left a legacy that continues to inspire all of us today.

Since graduating High School, Burt has lived a life dedicated to public service, which led him to bravely answer the call of duty to serve in the United States Marine Corps. Following his courageous service in the Marine Corps, Burt married Anita, who became his lifelong partner in all his endeavors. After marrying, they both moved to Billings, Montana, where they had their son, David. Since moving to Billings, Burt, and Anita dedicated their time to serving veterans across the Treasure State. Burt's dream was to have a national veteran's cemetery in Yellowstone County, a land he found fitting as a final resting place for our Nation's finest men and women.

After persuading the county commissioners to join in his efforts, legislation was introduced in the Montana Legislature to establish the Yellowstone County Veteran's Cemetery, and it was approved. Burt's determination was enough to give the veterans of Yellowstone County a rightful resting place deserving of their accomplishments. However, Burt kept pushing to make it a national cemetery. After nearly a decade of convincing the VA, with all the odds stacked against him, his efforts were rewarded on Memorial Day in 2014, when the U.S. Undersecretary of the VA dedicated the Yellowstone County Veteran's Cemetery to national status. Thanks to Burt, Yellowstone National Cemetery is now the resting place of our Nation's finest heroes in Montana.

In addition, Burt proudly assisted 750 WWII veterans in visiting their national monument here in Washington, D.C. Through these actions and more, Burton Ray Gigoux left a lasting legacy and serves as an example to us all. May God bless the Gigoux family as they mourn the passing of this true hero.

It is a privilege to recognize his accomplishments and his lifelong service to our country in the United States House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING STEVEN MARKFORD

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the service of one of my constituents, Firefighter/Paramedic Steven Matthew "Steve" Markford, of the Hernando County Fire Department. Firefighter/Paramedic Markford was selected for this honor by his peers because he has made many significant contributions to the Department during the past year. Furthermore, throughout his 12-year tenure with the Department, he has demonstrated superior abilities when responding to a wide variety of emergency incidents. Because of his steady leadership, impressive skill and relentless mentorship of new recruits, Firefighter/Paramedic Markford has advanced to his current rank of Driver-Engineer.

These are just a few examples of the hard work, dedication, eagerness to help, and serv-

ant leadership that Firefighter/Paramedic Markford exhibits every day when he goes to work. He is a shining example of what it means to be a Hernando County First Responder. His work ethic should be a benchmark for which other first responders should strive to attain. It is evident that Firefighter/Paramedic Markford has made a profoundly positive impact on our community and is qualified to be recognized as a First Responder of the Year for Florida's 12th Congressional District.

HONORING LIN LIN AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR ASIAN AMERICAN AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Lin Lin was born in Northeast China and came to the United States in 2002. She is a certified public accountant with more than 18 years of experience in financial leadership. The last 14 years of her career have been with Orlando Health. During Lin's remarkable professional career, she has managed large-scale projects in healthcare and developed consistent processes in finance, operations, budgets, and forecasts. She is currently the senior director of finance at Orlando Health St. Cloud Hospital in St. Cloud, Florida. Previously, she was a senior auditor at Vesel & Wiler, CPAs in Orlando, Florida.

After earning her Bachelor of Arts in International Tourism Management at the University of North London, London, United Kingdom, Lin earned a Master of Science in Accounting at the University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida, where she remains an active UCF Alumni member.

Lin is fluent in English and Chinese. She is an active mentor of other financial health care professionals and has managed many interns and promoted their development in finance.

Lin is a member of the Florida Institute of CPAs (FICPA) and the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA). She is also a member of the Asian American Chamber of Commerce for Orlando, Florida. Lin is a community volunteer with the Adult Literacy League, helping Central Floridians to become thriving members of the community. Lin also gives her time to volunteer at Give Kids the World Village in Kissimmee, Florida, providing a range of accommodation facilities to more than 75,000 children and families suffering from life-threatening illnesses.

RECOGNIZING OLIVIA MACIAS

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Olivia Macias for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Olivia has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perse-

verance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Olivia, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Olivia's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Oberon Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Olivia Macias on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VAL T. HOYLE

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I mistakenly voted Yea on Roll Call No. 202, passage of H. Res. 1210, the Resolution "Condemning the Biden border crisis and the tremendous burdens law enforcement officers face as a result."

I intended to vote Nay, as I've consistently done on similar politically-charged, non-binding resolutions that play politics instead of work to achieve a bipartisan solution to the border. I regret the error.

HONORING THE LIFE AND CAREER OF ZELL STEEVER

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of a great environmental champion from southeastern Connecticut whom we lost recently, Mr. E. Zell Steever, V. A fierce advocate for climate resilience and sustainability policy, Zell spent his career in ecology and biology, serving as Director of Water and Related Resources at the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, along with other roles in water resources protection and management at agencies such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Interior, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. His decade-spanning support for environmental conservation and dedication to robust civic participation has been instrumental in the great strides our State has taken to realize a sustainable, climate-resilient future.

Zell began life with his family in Noank, Connecticut, where he settled after graduating from the University of Connecticut. He attended graduate school at Connecticut College, studying the local coastal salt marsh ecosystem and building a repository of evidence of the importance of healthy wetlands to fisheries, one of southeastern Connecticut's mainstay professions. In his free time, Zell was frequently seen sailing up and down the Long Island Sound, designing and renovating homes, and building Aleutian kayaks.

Zell's impact has reached far beyond the limits of Eastern Connecticut, as he held multiple national level positions. He advised President Nixon as a staff member of the President's Council on Environmental Equality. In

1993 he was selected for the 1992 delegation to the UN Earth Summit where he led negotiations on five chapters of Agenda 21 on behalf of the United States. He continued his high-stakes environmental work and advocacy until his retirement in 2004. Luckily for Eastern Connecticut, Zell's retirement was only in name. He continued his tireless work in Groton town committees including the Town Council's Climate Change and Sustainable Community Task Force, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Committee, and the Utility Drinking Water Quality Management Plan.

Zell was tirelessly active in municipal efforts to prepare for climate change, serving the community with groups such as the Groton Energy Efficiency and Conservation Commission and the advisory board for the Groton Utility Drinking Water Quality Management. One of Zell's most ambitious local efforts focused on the expansion of the area's commuter rail service, Shoreline East. His vision included extending the existing rail line from New London to Westerly, Rhode Island, making a route from New London to Norwich, and creating new stations in Groton and Stonington. He worked tirelessly to bring together stakeholders from across the region, creating a coalition of advocates with environmentalism and equity at the heart of its mission. Zell was at the forefront of this burgeoning expansion effort, leveraging his decades of experience in government and conservation to successfully push for legislation that called for an Eastern Connecticut Rail and Transit Feasibility Study, which was finalized and published in later 2023. This study will be instrumental in the further development of widely available and accessible rail in southeastern Connecticut, for which we have Zell to thank.

I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring Zell Steever's service and spirit. His loss is felt deeply across the state and Nation. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, two sons, John and Scott, two stepsons, Jonathan and Gabriel, six grandchildren, and his brother Sanford. His resolute mission to protect the planet we call home and his devoted service to his communities will serve as a lasting legacy in the hearts and minds of Connecticut's future environmentalists and conservationists as they continue the work he dedicated his life to.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL WHITAKER

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the service of one of my constituents, Communications Officer Michael Whitaker, of the Citrus County Sheriff's Office. On Friday, Dec. 8, 2023, Officer Whitaker was working in the Communication Section as an Intake Operator when a constituent called 911 to advise that his 3-month-old daughter, Harmonie, was choking and could not breathe. After de-escalating the parent and helping him become calm enough to follow instructions, Officer Whitaker proceeded to provide life-saving instructions on how to clear the baby's

airway. The father followed all the instructions and was able to clear her airway. With Harmonie able to breathe fresh oxygen again, EMS arrived on scene and transported her to a nearby hospital for observation. Thanks to Officer Whitaker's swift actions, professionalism, and composure, Baby Harmonie is doing great today.

This is just one example of the hard work, dedication, eagerness to help, and servant leadership that Communications Officer Whitaker exhibits every day when he goes to work. Officer Whitaker is a shining example of what it means to be a Citrus County First Responder. His work ethic should be a benchmark for which other first responders should strive to attain. It is evident that Officer Whitaker has made a profoundly positive impact on our community and is qualified to be recognized as a First Responder of the Year for Florida's 12th Congressional District.

HONORING JESSICA KIM AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR ASIAN AMERICAN AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Jessica received her B.S. in psychology and business administration from the University of Florida. She met her husband, Hunter, at UF. She continued her studies and received her Juris Doctorate from Barry University School of Law.

She believed that education had the power to transform lives and dedicated her early professional career to making education accessible. As the chief operating officer for NeoCity Links, Jessica helps develop strategic initiatives to promote economic growth. She coordinates business development efforts by working with public, private, and nonprofit sectors. She has proven expertise in a wide range of areas and successfully developed new international partnerships for Osceola County.

Jessica focuses her time outside of work on empowering women leaders through mentorship. She serves as the president of the PCUSA National Korean Presbyterian Women and actively strives to create opportunities for engagement and enablement for women to reach the highest level of leadership and potential.

Jessica resides in Windermere, Florida, with her husband and loves snuggling with her five children, reading, cooking, and kickboxing.

RECOGNIZING JAZZY MODECKER

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jazzy Modecker for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Jazzy has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Jazzy, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Jazzy's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Oberon Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Jazzy Modecker on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING THE CRITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF SUPERINTENDENT PAM CONKLIN

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Superintendent Pam Conklin upon her retirement as Superintendent of the Travis Unified School District after more than 25 years of service in education. Ms. Conklin's steadfast dedication to enhancing the quality of education in Solano County and advocating for her students has left a lasting impact on the Solano County community.

Ms. Conklin began her educational career as a teacher with the Novato Unified School District. Throughout her twenty-year tenure with the District, Ms. Conklin demonstrated a genuine commitment to fostering an environment of community and respect in her classrooms. She ultimately became the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources for the District, where she spearheaded efforts to ensure all students, regardless of their background, can reach their full potential.

In 2015, her passion for education led her to serve as the Oakley Union Elementary School District Superintendent. During her tenure, her collaboration with the Contra Costa County community and her critical leadership helped ensure the continued success of the Oakley Union School District.

Upon her departure from the Oakley Union School District, Ms. Conklin began working at the Travis Unified School District as the Human Resources Administrator and in 2017, she began serving as Superintendent. Her critical efforts to advocate for the students, teachers, and families of Solano County and Travis Air Force Base were indispensable to our community.

As Superintendent, Ms. Conklin played a pivotal role in supporting Travis Air Force Base and helping nine schools in the District earn the designation of "Purple Star Schools," schools that are committed to and equipped to meet the unique needs of military-affiliated students and their families.

While her leadership as Superintendent will surely be missed, Ms. Conklin's decades of service to the students of Northern California and Travis Unified School District have left an indelible legacy. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Ms. Conklin and wish her the best in her future endeavors.