

I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the incredible life and legacy of Bernice Johnson Reagon.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ISLAND INSTITUTE FELLOWS PROGRAM

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 25th anniversary of a critical and innovative program in my state. For the past 25 years, the Island Institute Fellows Program has functioned to enrich the lives of both its participants, as well as the coastal and island communities of Maine by engaging volunteers, providing a hub of tools and resources, and fostering community leadership along the Maine coast.

As a proud resident of North Haven, an island off the coast of Maine, I know firsthand that our coastal and island communities share a distinct and treasured way of life. I've also seen that way of life face unique challenges, from a rapidly changing climate and rising seas to shrinking populations and a shifting global economy. The Island Institute Fellows Program seeks to meet these challenges by pairing recent college graduates with local governments and nonprofits in coastal communities where the fellows live and work for two years to help address community-identified needs. This partnership brings together the energy, resources, talent, and capacity that the fellows can provide with the spirit, resiliency and creativity of Maine's coastal communities, strengthening and enriching the lives of everyone involved.

To date, 148 Island Institute Fellows have brought new perspectives and ideas to support local needs such as broadband access, affordable housing, clean energy transitions, education initiatives, and community resiliency projects. When 75 percent of Maine's coastal communities have fewer than 3,500 residents, and 25 percent have fewer than 800 residents, the addition of one full-time fellow's work and dedication can make the difference in a community's ability to write a grant, facilitate community planning, preserve historical documents, launch a new initiative, or train volunteers and future leaders.

Over their two-year placements, the fellows truly become a part of the community, helping to plan potlucks, coach sports teams, volunteer with the town's Emergency Medical Services, and more. This program provides these recent graduates firsthand experience in a range of projects, providing them unique professional development and valuable skills for their future careers. A true testament to the program, at the end of their fellowships, half of alumni stay in Maine long-term, continuing their commitment to the community long after their placement ends and contributing to our state with their knowledge, experience, and relationships.

The Island Institute Fellows Program's 25 years of service, dedication, innovation, and community-building makes me very proud to represent the Institute, their fellows and alumni, and the state of Maine in Congress. I wish the program many more years of success and

wholeheartedly thank them for their impactful work on behalf of Maine's coastal and island communities.

RECOGNIZING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO ALEXIS GONZALEZ

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Alexis Gonzalez from the American Red Cross. Alexis has extended North Texas' helping hands far beyond our district. Currently deployed in Houston, TX to assist with disaster response efforts against Hurricane Beryl, she has exemplified an unwavering commitment to humanitarian work. Alexis is a Red Cross volunteer who serves as the North Texas Regional Communications Manager.

Her selfless service to those who are most in need has proven to be crucial as she helps uplift communities across our state. As a front-line responder, Alexis has worked tirelessly on the ground, taking it upon herself to alleviate suffering and minimize the effects of damage on residents. Her efforts have provided immediate relief, hope, and reassurance to countless individuals affected by the hurricane.

Through her philanthropic endeavors, Alexis has epitomized the bravery and selflessness of humanitarians who prioritize the needs of others in times of emergencies, ensuring the safety and well-being of vulnerable victims and supporting their recovery.

I want to thank Alexis for her incredible service. Her instrumental role in coordinating relief efforts is a beacon of hope and a testament to the strength and compassion of our community.

HONORING THE SOLANO COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Solano County Fair and thank the Solano County Fair Association for the extraordinary work it does for our community.

For the past 75 years, the Solano County Fair has allowed visitors to learn about the accomplishments of California industry and agriculture in our community. Plans to develop the Solano County Fair started in 1938, but the outbreak of World War II halted the planning. After the war, the Solano County Fair Association (SCFA) was established to organize an annual fair. In 1950, the Solano County Fair opened, with then Governor Earl Warren snipping the ribbon.

The Solano County Fair Association is a nonprofit organization established to hold and conduct the annual fair. The SCFA has a 15-member board of directors that are appointed by the Solano County Board of Supervisors, with each supervisor appointing three members to serve a four-year term as Director at the fair, ensuring that the diverse views of Solano County residents are heard.

The SCFA has been providing educational, cultural, artistic, commercial, and recreational programs to our Solano County for more than 75 years. The SCFA also shelters evacuees during natural disasters and other emergencies. Additionally, during the pandemic, SCFA set up pop-up booths at the Solano County Fair serving as free inoculation sites, providing vital access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

The SCFA plays a vital role in our community, bringing residents together during good times and acting as a pillar of support during tough times. The Solano County Fair also presents an important opportunity for non-profit and charity-based organizations to raise money for their respective causes. The SCFA has developed several innovative and entertaining education programs for the public, including the Fair Farm, the Livestock Walk and the Judging Commentator program.

Thanks to the leadership of the Solano County Fair Association, our community can continue to look forward to the annual Solano County Fair. Mr. Speaker, we again thank the SCFA for their diligent and inspiring work in our community and celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Solano County Fair.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONMOUTH CIVIC CHORUS

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Monmouth Civic Chorus on its 75th anniversary. The Monmouth Civic Chorus is a valuable and influential institution of the local arts community and an outstanding recreational resource for the greater Monmouth County area. Its work and this milestone are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Since its founding in 1949, the Monmouth Civic Chorus has upheld its mission to promote and support choral music and artists in Monmouth County. As a preeminent community chorus, it continues to offer exceptional and diverse performances locally and beyond, performing at Carnegie Hall, St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, and St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, among others. It is critically acclaimed and has been recognized for its excellence, receiving several awards including the Eastern Monmouth Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Spinnaker Award for Arts and Culture and the 2008 Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker Award. It was also a third-place winner of the 2018-19 American Prize Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for its performance of Fern Hill at Our Lady Star of the Sea Church in Long Branch, New Jersey.

The Monmouth Civic Chorus remains dedicated to fostering musical excellence and imparting the importance of musical appreciation to future generations. Its work enriches the lives of Monmouth County's residents and visitors and contributes to the thriving cultural landscape of the community.

Once again, I sincerely hope my colleagues will join me recognizing the contributions and achievements of the Monmouth Civic Chorus and honoring its 75th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE
CONTRIBUTIONS OF JACK RIDDLE

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a visionary leader who has dedicated his career to advocacy for the arts in Maine. Throughout his career, Jack Riddle has worked tirelessly to elevate opera in Maine, ensuring the artform is accessible and inclusive to all. He has made certain that Mainers, and visitors alike, have the opportunity to connect with this historic tradition of storytelling through music and song.

In 1994, Jack co-founded Opera Maine, the state's only professional opera company, with a dream of providing high-quality opera productions to the people of Maine. Though our state did not yet have an established opera community at that time, Jack believed in his vision of establishing a local company that would showcase nationally recognized singers and composers. As the former president of the Portland Symphony Orchestra, Jack possessed a strong background in arts leadership and marketing in New England. His skills and experience were essential to Opera Maine's founding.

As the company grew, Jack served as a trusted board member and the principal fundraiser, securing major gifts and guiding the board through a recession and a pandemic. Jack's unwavering passion and energy have been essential to the growth and success of the organization. And the calculated risks he has taken over the years for the advancement of the artform, remaining steadfast in his eternal optimism about the importance of opera, have been critical to growing the audiences.

For more than 35 years, Jack has worked to expand the opera community in Maine, ensuring that it is affordable and accessible to all. From including contemporary works in English, to providing no- to low-cost tickets for all Opera Maine productions and programs for anyone under age 25, active-duty and retired military and first responders, and their families, the company has brought new audiences and appreciators to opera. Opera Maine has also led free in-school programming across the state, teaching thousands of students about the fundamentals of opera.

Additionally, Jack has worked to strengthen Opera Maine's Studio Artist Program, which provides annual trainings and performance opportunities for emerging and professional artists seeking opera careers.

Jack Riddle's enthusiasm, vision, and commitment to Maine's vibrant arts community make me very proud to represent him and the State of Maine in Congress. I wish him continued success, and I thank him for his many years of influential work.

HONORING THE VIETNAM AND KOREAN WAR VETERANS OF ILLINOIS

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Vietnam and Korean War veterans who

traveled to Washington, D.C. on July 24, 2024, with Honor Flight Chicago, a program that provides WWII, Vietnam, and Korean War veterans the opportunity to visit their memorials on The National Mall in Washington, D.C. These memorials were built to honor their courage and service to their country.

The American Veteran is one of our greatest treasures. The Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen who traveled here on July 24 answered our nation's call to service during one of its greatest times of need. From the Pacific Asian Theatre to the Korean Theater, these brave Americans risked life and limb, gave service, and sacrificed much, all while embodying what it is to be a hero. We owe them more gratitude than can ever be expressed.

I welcome these brave veterans to Washington and to their memorials. I am proud to include in the RECORD the names of these men and women for all to see, hear, and recognize, and I call on my colleagues to rise and join me in expressing gratitude.

Anthony C. Adams, Preston C. Allen, Jimmy H. Ashbaugh, Dale W. Banot, James H. Black, Richard N. Boots, George E. Bryar, Thomas W. Burgholzer, Lloyd L. Busse, Julio Caez, Patrick T. Camden, Carlos D. Compian, William A. Cooper, Don E. Costello, Alex Czajka, Billy F. Davis, Anthony J. DeBella, Robert A. DeFalkenberg, James P. DeNardo, Andrew C. Elbert, Jr., Oscar L. Farlow, Patrick L. Flannigan, James E. Forbes, Dennis F. Fuhr, Raymond Garivay, William J. Geegan, William G. Geist, David G. Gilles, Thomas E. Goetz, Robert L. Grajek, Nicholas E. Grevan, William C. Haizlip, Fred P. Hall, William A. Hamm, Raymond J. Healy, Lennart H. Henriksson, Thomas W. Huggins, Anthony Iacuzzi, Robert A. Janecek, Rita M. Jaworski, William A. Jaworski, Walter Johnson, Jr., John A. Kay, Thomas J. Kelly, William C. Koc, Gerald E. Kowalewski, Charles W. Krezwick, Michael J. Lasowski, Thomas J. Licar, John E. Luczak, William P. Lyman, Gary L. Martincic, Robert L. Maus, Donald W. McCollough, Ronald R. McFalls, Kenneth J. McGuire, Raymond W. Meyer, Arthur R. Miller, Charles V. Miller, Thomas S. Miller, Curt L. Miller, Robin A. Miller, Robert S. Minetz, John R. Miniutti, Joseph Miraglia, Jr., Thomas Mitchell, Edgar G. Morrison, Lee L. Moses, Angel M. Nieves, Eugene E. Pace, Henry W. Peddle, Norman F. Peterson, Mark F. Pope, James O. Portis, Jean-Pierre Radovanovitch, Donald W. Ramsbottom, Tighe A. Reardon, Frank P. Reichenberger, William J. Renje, Sr., Victor A. Reynolds, William D. Ritze, Sr., George H. Robinson, Marvin E. Roehlke, Joseph W. Rose, Douglas A. Rudisuhle, David E. Salvino, Ralph J. Salvino III, Joseph A. Schrafel, Louis Schubrych, Dennis J. Shea, David R. Shebish, Norbert P. Shebish, Edward F. Skerrett, Stanley A. Silva, Jim Solsberry, William M. Stach, Arthur Stoudemire, Jr., Gregory R. Szafranski, Richard Thurman, Thomas A. Tinkler, James J. Treacy, James C. Truby, Gary W. Verseput, Michael Vold, Edward E. Walls, Karl F. Walter, John Wander, Cyril J. Watson, Richard L. Waxman, Louis J. Weathers, Gregory Will, Charles G. Williams, John H. Williams, Ronald L. Williams, and Jerome M. Zdancewicz.

HONORING THOMAS KELLER AND THE FRENCH LAUNDRY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Thomas Keller, chef and proprietor of The French Laundry, a three-star Michelin restaurant, celebrating its 30th anniversary. The French Laundry has epitomized fine dining in our community, and we thank Chef Keller for his commitment to culinary excellence, his leadership in the culinary community, and his extensive philanthropic work.

Chef Keller began his career as a dishwasher in his mother's restaurant in Palm Beach, California. After spending time in France as an apprentice chef and stints in New York and Los Angeles, in 1994, Chef Keller opened The French Laundry in Yountville, California.

The French Laundry serves world renowned French cuisine with an American twist, and food connoisseurs travel from across the world to eat at the beautifully constructed stone cottage that hosts the restaurant. Chef Keller's dedication to culinary excellence and innovation has earned The French Laundry numerous accolades, including three Michelin stars and a place on the coveted World's 50 Best Restaurants list Renowned for its service and crafted tasting menus, dining at The French Laundry is a once in a lifetime experience.

Chef Keller holds the honor of being the sole American chef to operate two 3-star Michelin star restaurants. Chef Keller has also led the United States to a gold and a silver medal at the Bocuse d'Or, the culinary world's Olympics. Outside California, Chef Keller owns or manages over 20 restaurants globally and has been named America's best chef by Time Magazine.

Chef Keller has authored six cookbooks, of which more than 1.6 million copies are in circulation. He founded a magazine and retail outpost called Finesse. He has taught three immensely successful MasterClass series, offering in-depth coverage of classic cooking techniques and essential culinary fundamentals tailored for home cooks.

For all his professional accomplishments, Chef Keller's philanthropic work is just as impressive. Raised by a Marine Corp Captain, Chef Keller has lent his generous support to the Yountville Veterans Home, providing meals and fundraising support to our community's veterans. He was recognized with The Connection Award by the Veterans Home Association. Through the Mentor Foundation, which he co-founded, Chef Keller has distributed \$2 million in grants for over 150 young chefs in 23 countries worldwide to pursue their culinary dreams. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chef Keller established the non-profit Keller Restaurant Relief Fund, extending aid to both current employees and alumni facing financial difficulties. To date, the fund has distributed over \$1.5 million in grants.

Perhaps the perfect dish can never be created, but Chef Keller will continue to give it his best shot. Mr. Speaker, we again thank Chef Keller for his devotion to culinary brilliance and celebrate the 30th anniversary of The French Laundry.