

RECOGNIZING JOHN "JOHNNY" L. MORRIS

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 6, 2024

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I rise today to recognize an individual that has made significant contributions to our Nation's fish and wildlife conservation efforts, as well as America's longstanding outdoor traditions. This individual is also the recipient of an award named after members of this body that have made lasting and significant contributions to our Nation's outdoor heritage.

John "Johnny" L. Morris was born in Springfield, Missouri, to John A. and Genny Morris in 1948. Johnny's parents both loved to hunt and fish and soon shared their passions with their son. Johnny's love of fishing grew through high school and college but it wasn't until he attended the first national B.A.S.S. (Bass Anglers Sportsman Society) tournament that he truly realized his passion for fishing after meeting fishermen from all over the country.

In 1972, Johnny Morris started selling tackle out of his dad's Brown Derby Liquor Store, which became very popular for anglers visiting the area's waterways. In 1978, Morris created BASS TRACKER, the industry's first fully outfitted, ready-to-fish boat, motor, and trailer package, revolutionizing the entire outdoor industry and making it affordable for families to get out on the water and make memories that will last a lifetime.

Today, Mr. Morris operates more than 170 Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's destinations across North America, and his commitment to his conservation roots remains stronger than ever as his company, for more than the past decade, has averaged giving back more than 10% of their earnings to conservation.

Johnny would go on to then create the Johnny Morris Conservation Foundation, one of the most significant conservation foundations in North America. The not-for-profit foundation embodies Morris and his lifelong dedication to giving back to ensure the outdoors and all it has to offer is available for future generations. In conservation circles, Johnny Morris is often referred to as today's Modern-Day Theodore Roosevelt, as result of his leadership, personal commitment, and dedication to conservation efforts. A conservationist at heart, Johnny Morris recognized the need for citizens to become more involved in the careful management and use of our natural resources.

Today, the foundation operates some of the Nation's most significant conservation attractions, including Dogwood Canyon Nature Park, a 10,000-acre-park that offers a variety of outdoor recreation. Its Conservation and Education Center is used to teach the importance of protecting and conserving our great outdoors. Most notably, the foundation also operates the most immersive conservation attraction in the world, Johnny Morris' Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium, where visitors are taken on a conservation journey through a 350,000 square-foot complex of 35,000 live fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds where they learn about wildlife habitat management and the significant contributions of America's sportsmen and

women. This attraction is also the official home of National Hunting and Fishing Day, which was launched by Congress in 1971 as a way to recognize and celebrate hunters and anglers for their leadership in wildlife and conservation.

In recognition of Mr. Morris' service to conservation, he has been chosen as this year's recipient of the Dingell-Young Sportsmen's Legacy Award, a fitting tribute to an individual whose life has epitomized dedication to America's outdoor heritage.

Named in recognition of the Dingell family—Congressmen John D. Dingell, Sr. and John D. Dingell, Jr. and the late Congressman Don Young, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation created the Dingell-Young Sportsmen's Legacy Award to recognize the extraordinary individual and collaborative leadership of the Dingell family and Congressman Young and their long-standing dedication to the advancement of conservation policy and our outdoor hunting and angling traditions. Like them, Morris' contributions to our outdoor traditions relied upon a unique commitment to a shared passion for hunting, fishing, and conservation.

Recognized as one of the country's leaders working to ensure natural habitats, wildlife, and the outdoors remain healthy and abundant for future generations, the Dingell-Young Sportsmen's Legacy Award is a fitting tribute for Morris.

In closing, I want to thank Mr. Morris for his many contributions to America's outdoor heritage and congratulate him for the well-deserved recognition as the recipient of the Dingell-Young Sportsmen's Legacy Award, the top award offered by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. In the words of Mr. Morris, Mr. Speaker, "Take a kid fishing, you'll be happy you did."

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE IN CENTRAL FLORIDA

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 6, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and privilege to recognize and celebrate the centennial anniversary of the City of Belle Isle in Central Florida. Once a Native American oasis, Belle Isle was founded by Central Floridians in 1924 to resist Orange County's attempts to drain Lake Conway and its chain of lakes, which span approximately 1,800 acres.

Belle Isle's first citizens and interim Mayor C.H. Hoffner unanimously voted on the city's name, which resembles the French phrase for "beautiful island." Today, it reflects the city's peaceful, lakefront living that provides an escape from the nearby metros.

In 1928, Belle Isle was annexed back into Orange County, and records of the City of Belle Isle ceased to exist. However, residents once again rallied against another attempt by the County to use the lakes for drainage in 1954, and the local government was reinstated. The State of Florida later recognized the City of Belle Isle's charter in 1972.

The city's government ran continuously until the early 2000s when a council-manager form of government was adopted to better serve

Belle Isle residents. Since that time, the city has flourished. Annexations, the establishment of a Belle Isle Police Department, and an agreement to open Cornerstone Charter Academy mark Belle Isle's largest achievements in recent years.

In celebration of Belle Isle's centennial, the city will be hosting a Tree Recognition Ceremony to honor two of its beautiful trees. One tree will be recognized as a centennial tree, symbolizing 100 years of Belle Isle history. A second plaque will acknowledge a newly planted tree that will stand for the next 100 years. We wish good fortune to the City of Belle Isle and its residents and hope for another 100 years of history.

CELEBRATING THE SERVICE OF COLONEL CONSTANCE C. JOHNSON-CAGE

HON. SHARICE DAVIDS

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 6, 2024

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the service of Colonel Constance C. Johnson-Cage, the Individual Mobilization Augmentee to the Director of Personnel in the Office of the Air Force Reserve. Colonel Johnson-Cage, a Kansas City resident, is retiring from the United States Air Force after more than 38 years of service.

Colonel Johnson-Cage's career has been marked by a distinguished commitment to our nation's defense and security.

This commitment began in 1985, when Colonel Johnson-Cage enlisted in the United States Air Force as an air cargo specialist. Since then, Colonel Johnson-Cage has held an impressive portfolio of leadership positions, including serving at the Secretary of the Air Force level and Headquarters Air Force level, and as a commander in the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve.

In her current position, Colonel Johnson-Cage assists in the oversight of Total Force policy development and guidance, prepares input for legislative initiatives and congressional testimony, and facilitates the integration of personnel policies across the Department of Defense. She also assists with the management and oversight of resources impacting a budget of nearly \$450 million for accessions, recruiting, retention, education, training, force structure, compensation, and benefits impacting 360,000 reservists and their dependents worldwide.

Her contributions have been recognized with an array of honors. Most notably, Colonel Johnson-Cage received a Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Joint Service Commendation Medal, and an Air and Space Longevity Service Award with two oak leaf clusters.

The Kansas City area is proud to have Colonel Johnson-Cage as a part of our community. As Colonel Johnson-Cage enters into her next chapter, I have no doubt she will continue to spread the spirit of dedication and service to country. I thank Colonel Johnson-Cage for her lifetime of public service and wish her a happy and fulfilling retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF ELBERT KNOX**HON. NATHANIEL MORAN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 6, 2024

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Elbert Henry "Toughegg" Knox, a courageous American who gave his life in service to our country during World War II. Elbert Knox first served as an Army cook from 1919 to 1920. In September 1941, at the age of 40, he answered the call again, leaving his home to work as a civilian contract worker on Wake Island in the Pacific Ocean. There, Knox and other civilians built essential facilities for the military, helping to defend the island during a fierce Japanese attack on December 8, 1941.

Despite their valiant efforts, Wake Island fell to Japanese forces after a 15-day battle, and Knox became a prisoner of war. Transferred to Japan in September 1942, he faced brutal conditions—enduring abuse, starvation, solitary confinement, and exposure. Knox's resilience was unwavering, but tragically, he died in captivity. After the war, his remains were laid to rest in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. In 1981, Knox and his fellow civilian contractors on Wake Island were granted veteran status.

Today, I am proud to report that Mr. Knox has been posthumously awarded the Prisoner of War (POW) Medal and the Purple Heart. These medals will be presented to his family, who have waited decades to see his heroism formally recognized. His story is a powerful reminder of the price of liberty and the strength of the American spirit.

I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Mr. Elbert Knox and extending our deepest gratitude to his family. May his legacy continue to inspire us all to serve our Nation with honor and dedication, and may we never forget his sacrifice.

CELEBRATING THE DESIGNATION
OF OLD FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA,
AND FELITTO, ITALY, AS SISTER
CITIES**HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 6, 2024

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize a remarkable and historic milestone that unites two communities across the Atlantic Ocean. It is with great pride and joy that I announce the official designation of Old Forge, Pennsylvania, and Felitto, Italy, as sister cities. This designation not only honors our shared heritage but also strengthens the bond of friendship and cultural exchange between our two communities.

Old Forge, situated in the heart of northeastern Pennsylvania, has long been a beacon of Italian-American culture. Known affectionately as the Pizza Capital of the World, Old Forge boasts a rich history that is deeply intertwined with the Italian immigrant experience.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, waves of immigrants from Felitto, a picturesque town in the Campania region of southern Italy, made

their way to Old Forge, then known as Mudtown. Their arrival marked the beginning of a new chapter in the community's history, bringing with them their traditions, values, and, of course, their beloved culinary heritage.

Felitto, located in the province of Salerno, is renowned for its artisanal fusilli pasta and its vibrant annual celebration, the Fusillo Festival. This festival is a testament to Felitto's commitment to family, community, and the joy of food. The town's dedication to preserving its cultural traditions and fostering a strong sense of community is mirrored in the spirit of Old Forge.

The Felittese Association of Old Forge, now in its 35th year, hosts the city's annual Felittese Italian Festival on the second weekend in September in commemoration of Our Lady of Constantinople, who has been venerated in the town of Felitto since 1790. Much like Felitto's Fusillo Festival, this annual celebration stands as a proud homage to Old Forge's Italian roots by celebrating the rich tapestry of Italian culture through homecooked food and music with family, friends, and neighbors. It is a cherished tradition that underscores the deep connections that bind our two communities.

The sister city designation between Old Forge and Felitto represents more than just a symbolic gesture; it is a recognition of the shared heritage and enduring ties that unite us. It honors the legacy of the Italian immigrants who contributed so profoundly to Old Forge, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. and acknowledges the vibrant culture that continues to thrive today.

This partnership will strengthen economic ties and enhance the mutual understanding between our communities. It is a celebration of our shared history and a commitment to continuing the traditions that have enriched our lives and nations.

As we commemorate this new chapter in the relationship between Old Forge and Felitto, let us honor the contributions of the Italian immigrants who helped shape our communities. Their legacy lives on in the vibrant celebrations, the delectable cuisine, and the strong sense of community that define both Old Forge and Felitto.

As the Member of the U.S. House representing northeastern Pennsylvania, I extend my heartfelt congratulations on this historic achievement. May this sister city relationship continue to flourish, bringing us closer together.

HONORING PAT SMITH

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 6, 2024

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the incredible life and the amazing contributions of my friend Pat Smith, who passed away peacefully on August 17th. Tomorrow, September 7th there will be a "Celebration of Life" to honor and pay tribute to the remarkable Pat Smith.

Pat Smith's extraordinary work for patients, caregivers, and Lyme-literate doctors around the country has been transformational. An incredibly well-informed and tenacious leader,

Pat fought effectively and relentlessly for greater diagnosis, treatments, and outcomes for Lyme patients.

Because of Pat Smith, legislation to better meet the needs of Lyme patients is now the law of the land.

I first met Pat in 1992 and from that moment on, my understanding, advocacy, and legislative work for Lyme patients—and frankly the work of this Chamber—was substantially and positively influenced. She was an outstanding collaborator. She did meticulous research and was painstakingly honest, reliable, and hard-working—often to the chagrin of the Lyme deniers.

A widely respected straight shooter, Pat did not mince words as she and I worked together—along with other Lyme victims and family caregivers—calling on all public, medical, and insurance industry officials to be forthright and dedicated in fighting Lyme and saving lives.

More than 30 years ago, Pat Smith came to one of my town hall meetings in Wall, New Jersey, and shared with me the plight of those suffering from chronic Lyme, including her two daughters.

Shortly after, Pat and I sat down with the top leaders at the Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health, who were polite but highly dismissive of our concerns surrounding the recommended treatment for Lyme.

Pat was brilliant in that meeting. She told them how CDC's "recommendation" for prescribing up to a mere 1 month's worth of antibiotics was being used by health insurance companies as the ceiling for what was covered. Even if the patient had Lyme for 5 years, only 1 month of doxycycline was covered.

The feds said it wasn't their intention to limit health insurance coverage, but they didn't fix the problem either.

If you knew Pat, you knew that answer would not suffice.

Already the founder and president of the Lyme Disease Association (LDA), Pat embarked on a personal and compassionate mission across the Nation to educate and help, spread awareness of this terrible disease, how to prevent it, and how to properly diagnose and treat it. She built synergistic coalitions around the country that worked relentlessly in support of Lyme research and to advance diagnosis and treatment for patients.

Beyond the working coalitions, Pat organized 22 national, scientific conferences and shared her wealth of knowledge at hundreds of government, business, and school events.

She provided both oral and written expert testimony in support of national and State laws and physicians' right to fully treat Lyme in numerous States, including our own.

When Pat brought her renowned expertise, passion, and admirable no-nonsense demeanor to Washington, people listened.

At my request, Pat testified before Congress and provided critical insights for substantive reform and Federal Lyme programs. And she skillfully made her case each year during the congressional appropriations process, ensuring that Lyme disease programs—and patients—finally got their due, or close to it.

Pat also served two terms as a public member of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Tick-Borne Disease Working Group, a working group created by legislation she and I worked on together and helped shepherd into law.