

CELEBRATING HENRY PELAK'S
100TH BIRTHDAY**HON. HILLARY J. SCHOLTEN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate and honor my constituent, Mr. Henry Pelak, who turned 100 years old on July 24th of this year. Mr. Pelak has dedicated his life to our country, his family, and Michiganders.

Pelak was born in the summer of 1924 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. After high school, he proudly served our country in the United States Navy. Once he completed his training with amphibious naval vessels in Virginia and Florida, Pelak was assigned to be a motor machinist on a naval landing craft and deployed to Europe.

During World War II, Pelak was stationed in England to prepare for the Normandy Invasion. On June 6, 1944, he was on one of the first boats to hit Omaha Beach on D-Day in Nazi-occupied France. His bravery contributed to the successful deployment of troops during the first wave of the Allied Invasion, where he landed military and naval combat demolition units to clear the way for incoming infantry. After the invasion, Pelak was reassigned to a unit in Bremerhaven, Germany, and reenlisted for two more years.

I am so proud to honor Henry Pelak, not only for reaching this incredible milestone, but also for his unwavering service to our Nation. His life stands as a shining example of true courage, resilience, and patriotism.

As we celebrate Mr. Pelak's 100th birthday, I want to express my deepest gratitude for his tremendous service to West Michigan and the United States. May he have a happy, healthy, and fulfilling year ahead.

RECOGNIZING SHERIFF KEVIN
SPOUL**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to extend my personal congratulations and to honor and recognize a dedicated public servant and community leader, Sheriff Kevin Sproul, on the occasion of his retirement as Sheriff of Dougherty County, Georgia. The community will gather in Albany, Georgia on September 28, 2024, to celebrate his retirement after 42 years of service at the Dougherty County Sheriffs Office.

A resident of Dougherty County since he was 7 years of age, Sheriff Sproul graduated from Albany High School, received an associate's degree in Social Work from Darton College, and a bachelor's degree in Organizational Leadership from LaGrange College at Albany. He also earned the Master Level 5 Gang Expert Certificate in 2007 from the National Gang Crime Research Center in Chicago, Illinois.

Sheriff Sproul started his career at the Dougherty County Sheriff's Office on September 8, 1982. For over four decades, he has worked in virtually every one of its divi-

sions, including jail operations, protecting our roadways, and mentoring the community's young people. Sheriff Sproul understands that fighting crime and ensuring public safety starts with educating our students on character and instilling within them the values they need to be good citizen leaders. Over the course of his career in law enforcement, he has taught over 16,300 students in partnership with the Dougherty County School System.

In 2008, Mr. Sproul launched his campaign for Sheriff with the spirit of service and justice held close to his heart. He is now finishing his fourth term as Dougherty County's top law enforcement official, a position he has utilized to increase the efficiency of his agency, improve the quality of life for inmates, and make Dougherty County a safer place to live and conduct business.

As Sheriff, Sproul made a point to engage with and collaborate with leaders from across the state in order to improve public safety for all. He is a member of Georgia Gang Investigators Association (G.G.I.A.) and has served on the G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education and Training) National Training Team. He has also served on the Stop the Violence Board, Regional Police Academy Board in Tifton, GA, and the GBI Regional Drug Task Force Board, as well as the Albany Civil Rights Board and the SOWEGA Council on Aging Board.

Sheriff Sproul has contributed so much to his community and accomplished so much in his life, but none of it would have been possible without the Grace of God, and the love and support of his wife of 41 years, Vicki, their three children, and one granddaughter.

George Washington Carver once said "How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and the strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these." Sheriff Kevin Sproul has embodied the spirit of that quote throughout his career and his community is stronger and more secure thanks to his unwavering leadership.

On a personal note, I am blessed to call Sheriff Sproul my friend, and it has been a pleasure working with him during my time in elective office. Kevin never told me just what I wanted to hear; he always told me what he felt I needed to hear. I will always cherish the fidelity of his friendship and the timbre of his character.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's Second District, in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Sheriff Kevin Sproul upon the occasion of his retirement. We wish him and his family all the best as they begin the next chapter of their lives.

HONORING THE LANSING
ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS**HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, today it is my privilege to honor and celebrate the Lansing Association of Women's Clubs. As the association prepares to merge with the Eastside

Community Action Center, I want to reflect on its incredible impact and decades-long service to the Lansing community.

Since its founding in 1945, this historic organization, originally known as the Lansing Association of Colored Women's Clubs, has served as a pillar of social, cultural, and economic empowerment, particularly for Black women in Lansing.

Founded through the efforts of Dr. Rose T. Brunson, Mrs. Gertrude Lee, and Mrs. Ina B. Majors, the Lansing Association of Women's Clubs began with a vision to address the needs of local residents. Their determination led them to secure initial funding, which enabled the group to open their original clubhouse. The organization later moved to its present location in 1969, which has since been recognized as a historic site by the Michigan Historical Commission.

The association's legacy is intertwined with the very fabric of Lansing, and its impact can be felt across generations. From its early work establishing a nursery to its many decades of providing a clubhouse where Black organizations could meet and host activities, the Lansing Association of Women's Clubs has been instrumental in advancing opportunities for the Black community.

In response to recent fundraising efforts, the organization will merge this year with the Eastside Community Action Center. This merger will allow the association to continue its programming and contribute to broader initiatives that include youth activities, housing programs, and financial literacy education—initiatives that will carry forward the spirit of the Lansing Association of Women's Clubs.

This upcoming transition marks the end of an era for the Lansing Association of Women's Clubs, but it is also an opportunity to celebrate the organization for striving to form necessary partnerships in its efforts to continue fulfilling its purpose. The clubhouse, a place of significance for the Black community, will continue to serve as a space where important work will take place. Though the name of the organization may no longer stand alone, the values and commitment of the women who built it will continue to inspire new efforts to improve the lives of others.

As we reflect on the association's remarkable history, let us celebrate the generations of women who fostered peace, harmony, and higher standards of living for Lansing residents. It is with deep appreciation that I recognize the Lansing Association of Women's Clubs and its incredible legacy here in the official record of the United States House of Representatives. May its mission continue to guide and uplift the community for years to come.

RECOGNIZING STAFF SERGEANT
JOSEPH JESSE ROBERT, USAF,
RETIRED, WITH A CONGRES-
SIONAL VETERAN COMMENDA-
TION**HON. PETE SESSIONS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present retired USAF Staff Sergeant Joseph Jesse Robert, of Mart, Texas, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation. His lifelong

dedication to honoring the values of service and sacrifice exemplifies what it truly means to be a patriot.

Raised in West, Texas, Joseph Robert signed his delayed enlistment forms in December 1977, before graduating high school in the spring of 1978. He attended IT training at Chanute Air Force Base in Illinois and graduated from the Aerospace Ground Support Technician School before reporting to Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma. In 1979, Joseph underwent advanced training on the MVP 116A Generator and became the only service member to receive a letter of certification as an engineer from Consolidated Diesel Company of Connecticut.

In October 1979, Joseph was deployed to South Korea, where his service qualified him for the South Korean Defense Medal. He was also awarded Airman of the Quarter for his branch in 1980 and became the inaugural Tactical Air Command 552nd AWACS Airman Maintenance Professional of the Year. Joseph's tour ended in August 1982. He began working to repair ground support equipment in 1986 but was laid off in July 1991 after suffering an injury that ended his service career.

Joseph's civilian service began soon after. After working through his recovery, he became a volunteer First Responder for the Prairie Hill Volunteer Fire Department and Mart Emergency Medical Service, where he earned his EMT Basic certification. In 2009, Joseph faced another medical setback when he suffered a stroke, again affecting his ability to serve in active capacities. However, his desire to serve his community remained strong. In 2012, he became an MVPN volunteer with the Veterans One Stop in Waco, and from 2014 to 2017, he administered the Mexia Peer Support Center. He has held several leadership positions at the local VFW Post 4964 in Mexia, including Adjutant, Senior Vice, Quartermaster, and Commander, and he currently serves as the Service Officer for American Legion Post 288. Joseph also works with Veterans Partners of Texas, where he helps clothe, feed, and assist veterans daily.

Joseph's military and civilian service career has been long and impactful, earning him numerous awards, including the Army Service Ribbon, Marksman Qualification Badge (M-16), Maintenance Professional of the Year, Male MVPN Volunteer of the Year, Veteran Volunteer of the Year, and a certificate of appreciation as a Veteran of Foreign Wars. Joseph served his country in the Air Force and returned home to serve his community, continually seeking to offer his services in any capacity he can.

I am pleased to award retired USAF Staff Sergeant Joseph Jesse Robert with a Congressional Veteran Commendation from the 17th Congressional District of Texas.

RECOGNIZING THE SACRED HEART COMMUNITY SERVICES AGENCY

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of myself and Representatives ANNA ESHOO, RO KHANNA, and JIMMY PANETTA to recognize Sacred Heart Community Services

Agency for 60 years of working to create a community free from poverty by creating hope, opportunity, and action.

Sacred Heart Community Services Agency was founded in 1964 by Louise Benson, someone I knew as a faith-filled person who committed her time and energy to the wellbeing of the poor. Today Sacred Heart delivers essential safety net services to individuals and families in need. The organization has evolved into a respected and innovative provider of programs that assist families with achieving lifelong economic self-sufficiency and impressive grassroots organizing that addresses the root causes and consequences of poverty.

For 60 years, Sacred Heart has stood with integrity and served with compassion to empower individuals and families to reach better lives. We celebrate their many accomplishments and wish them continued success.

HONORING THE 2024 HERZOG FOUNDATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR FROM IOWA

HON. ZACHARY NUNN

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Mr. NUNN of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate an exceptional educator, Julie Pickard, on being named the 2024 Herzog Foundation's Teacher of the Year. Representing the great state of Iowa, Julie's dedication to the academic and spiritual growth of her students exemplifies the values of Christian education. Her work is a shining example of the impact one teacher can have on shaping future generations, not only through the curriculum but through faith and character.

Julie has spent her career ensuring that students receive a well-rounded education, rooted in both knowledge and integrity. Her passion for teaching, coupled with her unwavering commitment to serving her community, makes her truly deserving of this national recognition. This prestigious award speaks to the respect and admiration she has earned from her colleagues, students, and the wider educational community.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to commend Julie Pickard for her incredible accomplishments. On behalf of the people of Iowa, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and wish her continued success in shaping young minds and hearts for years to come.

RECOGNIZING SAM SORBO

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sam Sorbo, who was named a 2024 She Leads Woman of Distinction.

Sam Sorbo is an education freedom advocate. After an award-winning Hollywood film career as an actor, producer, and writer of "Just Let Go," "Let There be Light," and "Left Behind." Sam stepped back from her Hollywood career to homeschool her three small

children, when she realized there is more to education than the school system accomplishes or addresses.

Sam scripted and produced "School's Out with Sam Sorbo" for EpochTV and currently hosts "The Sam Sorbo Show" daily on Patriot.TV and as a podcast. Seeking to emancipate families from modern schooling, Sam wrote and produced "The Playbook for Home Learning," a 15-video training with a workbook for parents.

Fluent in five languages, Sam speaks internationally on how to "Educate . . . differently."

She has written several books including books on education, "They're YOUR Kids" and "Teach from Love." "Words for Warriors" addresses the dangerous shifts in our vernacular and "True Faith," was written in collaboration with her husband, Kevin Sorbo. Remarking on the lack of Biblical study in our government's schools, Sam notes, "How can anyone claim to educate while ignoring the most important book in the history of the world?"

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this outstanding woman of distinction.

HONORING BUILDING SAFETY MONTH

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark Building Safety Month 2024 and to recognize the more than 60,000 members of the International Code Council (ICC)—including the more than 8,300 in California—who have dedicated their livelihoods to ensuring public safety throughout the built environment.

Building Safety Month is sponsored each and every May by the International Code Council and its partners, with a shared goal of reminding the public about why buildings are safe, resilient, efficient, and livable.

The Code Council—celebrating its thirtieth anniversary this year—brings together local, state, and federal government stakeholders, as well as those from the private sector every three years to develop model codes and standards that protect the occupants of the buildings in which we live, work, and play. Those codes and standards are then adopted, implemented, and enforced year-round at varying levels of government across the nation. Building safety officials, the fire service, architects, engineers, builders, and other skilled tradespeople all use these codes and standards to ensure the safe construction and maintenance of buildings.

This is particularly important in California, a state that faces numerous natural hazards: atmospheric rivers, wildfires, riverine floods, mudslides, record snowfalls, extreme heat, and earthquakes. Often, depending on the time of year, the buildings in which we spend our time are at risk from multiple natural threats.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking International Code Council Board for their enduring commitment to safe construction, and in particular, ICC Board President Stuart Tom; ICC Chief Executive Officer Dominic Sims; the