

Europeans associated the day with love because it coincided with the mating season for some birds in Europe.

My favorite English poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, first wrote about St. Valentine's Day as a celebration of love in 1375.

In 1415, the Duke of Orleans wrote the first valentine to his wife while in prison in the Tower of London.

Today, at least 30 countries celebrate Valentine's Day, and an estimated 145 million Valentine's Day cards will be sent out.

If you have been busy, I encourage all my colleagues to pick up some chocolates and flowers before you head home tonight.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE INVASION OF UKRAINE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the world is in a conflict we did not choose between dictators with rule of gun invading democracies with rule of law.

The anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine by war criminal Putin is near. Over 400,000 deaths and 10,000 were murdered in the 2014 Putin invasion.

It has been over 100 days since the murderous invasion of Israel by Iran puppet Hamas, slaughtering 1,200 Israelis with 200 hostages, including Americans.

Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo exposed: "China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela represent a new axis of evil regimes that is pushing a dangerous model for the world." We must work together to stop mass murder.

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years as the global war on terror moves from the Afghanistan safe haven to America.

We do not need new border laws. We need to enforce existing laws. Biden shamefully opens borders for dictators as more 9/11 attacks across America are imminent, as warned by the FBI.

APPEASEMENT DOES NOT WORK

(Mr. LANDSMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the very serious national security and global stability crisis that we face—preventing a global war in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East.

There is now a bipartisan bill that should be brought to a vote to prevent what we all know could happen because it has happened before.

It was 1938 when Hitler took Austria. A policy of appeasement was pursued. A year later, Hitler invaded Poland. Appeasement didn't work.

In fact, appeasement cost American taxpayers the equivalent of \$4 trillion, over 400,000 soldiers killed, and 6 million Jews murdered.

We may not get this bipartisan national security and global stability bill because of the dangerous ideology of appeasement.

Unless folks are compromised, it is appeasement. Encouraging Putin to do whatever he wants—which are the actual words of the former President, and something that many in this Chamber believe—is shocking.

We cannot appease Putin as others did with Hitler. We must push Putin back and get him out of Eastern Europe now. We have to pass this bill, and when the Speaker brings it to the floor, we will.

COMMEMORATING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate Career and Technical Education Month.

In the construction industry, I spent over 40 years talking to young people in Georgia's 12th District about the benefits of working in a skilled trade.

As we all know, a 4-year degree is not the right fit for everyone, and often-times, our skilled and technical jobs are among the most in demand and highest paying in the workforce.

With 9 million unfilled jobs throughout our Nation, it is imperative that we bridge the gap between the business and education communities, ensuring our students are equipped with the skills necessary to compete in this modern economy.

The number one issue I hear about from businessowners is the need for a quality workforce, and career and technical programs offer young people an effective path to filling in-demand jobs.

This Career and Technical Education Month, we affirm that the American Dream is attainable, and it is different for everyone.

I am thankful for the educators and community leaders who remain committed to the success of America's future workforce.

WATER IS LIFE

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, America's Great Lakes constitute the largest body of fresh water on Earth. Water is life.

I rise to highlight the importance of legislation to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative introduced last week.

As co-chair of the congressional Great Lakes Task Force and a senior member of the House Appropriations

Committee, funding the GLRI is among my highest priorities.

The district I represent traces much of the southern rim of Lake Erie's westernmost watershed, the largest in the entire Great Lakes.

Our citizens know how important protecting our Great Lakes is for today and the tomorrows to come. The GLRI provides instrumental funding to meet enormous unmet environmental needs for our region and the millions of people who depend on the Great Lakes for their drinking water, livelihoods, and leisure.

In 2020, the Great Lakes contributed \$3.1 trillion to our economy, 25.8 million jobs, and \$1.3 trillion in wages.

Analysis shows that every GLRI dollar spent produces \$3.35 in economic activity, which demonstrates a clear return on investment.

Supporting GLRI benefits the quality of these precious lakes, the adjoining communities, and the people who depend on them for the sustenance of life.

Supporting the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is just common sense.

HONORING DR. SWATI KULKARNI

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Dr. Swati Kulkarni for her time serving as the consul general of India.

Dr. Kulkarni, who initially aspired to pursue a career in medicine, made a pivotal shift to Foreign Service. Her journey included work in diverse locations like Oman, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

Understanding the responsibility of representing a country with a flourishing economic profile and a population constituting one-fifth of the world, she realized the importance of looking beyond her own community.

Throughout her time as consul general, Dr. Kulkarni conducted a series of more than 150 meetings with elected officials across the southern United States.

This extensive outreach included interactions with 7 governors, over 20 mayors, and more than 20 congressional leaders.

Her efforts were aimed at building alliances and fostering connections that extended beyond regional and cultural boundaries.

As a testament to her dedication, Swati Kulkarni was honored with flowers and a plaque commemorating her impactful contributions, marking a momentous occasion in her diplomatic journey.

Thank you for your important diplomatic work, Dr. Kulkarni.

HELP FOR THE SURVIVORS OF THE LAHAINA FIRE

(Ms. TOKUDA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Speaker, last week on Thursday I flew to Maui to be with our Lahaina ohana as we mark the 6-month anniversary of the fires.

On Sunday, our hearts were full and our eyes were misty as we watched our Lunas do the coin toss at the Super Bowl.

Just yesterday, Maui police confirmed the identity of the 101st victim, Mr. Paul Kasprzycki. He was 76 years old.

It is a stark reminder of the pain and loss that our people feel and the roller coaster of emotions our community experiences every single day.

According to a preliminary study of Maui's fire survivors released last week, 55 percent of people surveyed are exhibiting signs of depression.

Survivors also report higher than average rates of low self-esteem and suicidal ideation. Our people are hurting.

The reality is we can clear debris, we can rebuild our schools and reopen roads, but healing the pain and the trauma you can't see but people feel, that is much harder, which is why we need to hold wellness fairs and meet people where they are.

We need to make sure that the work of our Federal public health officers are supported so they can be there for survivors and frontline workers.

There is a mental health crisis ravaging our people now. All of us need to be there for them, and we must do everything we can to provide all of our survivors and disaster responders with the mental health care and support they need now. Mahalo.

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A SCATHING REPORT

(Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, Special Counsel Robert Hur released a scathing report as part of a Department of Justice investigation into President Biden's mishandling of classified documents.

Despite evidence of President Biden's willful retention and disclosure of classified documents to his biographer, Special Counsel Hur's report recommended that no criminal charges be brought forward against President Biden.

This was in part because the special counsel determined that President Biden's memory had such "significant limitations" that it would not be possible to convince a jury that President Biden held a "mental state of willfulness" that a serious felony requires.

It is time for the White House to release the full recordings of President Biden's interview with the special counsel and for the American people to hear what was said in these meetings where the President was determined to be too incompetent to stand trial.

REAL LEGISLATION IS BEING BLOCKED

(Ms. SCANLON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, we just learned that Congress is being sent home early yet again this week because the Speaker doesn't have the votes to pass the bills he scheduled for this week. This keeps happening because Members of House leadership are unwilling to do the hard work of negotiating legislation that is supported by the majority of Congress, much less the majority of the Senate or the American people.

It is bad enough that they are wasting time and taxpayer dollars to have Congress spinning its wheels with failed bills and stupid stunts, like impeaching Cabinet members for policy disputes, but the Speaker is blocking real legislation to solve real problems, like passing the overdue budget or immigration reform or passing common-sense gun safety bills.

Early yesterday morning, the Senate passed a comprehensive national security package with a vote of 70-29, including strong bipartisan support.

If Speaker Johnson would put that bill on the House floor, it would pass with strong bipartisan support here, too.

The bill provides urgently needed humanitarian relief, as well as support for Ukraine, our allies, and our national security.

Instead of taking the day off, the Speaker needs to put that bill on the floor.

SUPPORT GREAT LAKES

(Mr. JOYCE of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage the support for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2024.

Having grown up on the shores of Lake Erie, I know that the Great Lakes are an irreplaceable resource and an invaluable economic driver for not only Ohio but for our entire country.

They provide clean drinking water for 48 million Americans, support more than 1.5 million jobs, and generate over \$62 billion every year for our economy.

That is why I am proud to be leading the reauthorization of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative alongside my colleagues in the bipartisan Great Lakes Task Force.

The GLRI provides funding to Federal agencies, the Great Lakes States, local communities, and businesses to restore the Great Lakes ecosystem and the economic health of the Great Lakes region.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation moving forward.

LIFE AND LEGACY OF CECILIA GENTILI

(Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reflect on the life and legacy of beloved Queens community leader, Cecilia Gentili.

Cecilia was a beacon of hope for so many communities in my district. She was only 26 when she fled Argentina to seek asylum in the United States. She arrived in New York City in 2003 and lived her truth as a trans woman. She was finally granted asylum in 2012, as well, and she devoted much of her life to uplifting our trans and undocumented community in Queens.

Most recently, Cecilia shined in her artistic pursuits as an author, playwright, and actress. Cecilia was a leader in the fight for HIV/AIDS healthcare and founded a free healthcare clinic in New York City.

At the State level, she championed the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act, GENDA, which was signed into law in 2019. Today, Cecilia would have also wanted to continue to uplift her advocacy against dangerous proposals like KOSA that would allow States to cut off access to lifesaving online resources for isolated trans youth, like healthcare information.

Our community will continue to remember Cecilia as an unwavering leader in the fight for equality.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am speaking out today about an issue that has been going on in the northern part of my district in northern California. They are touting it, of course, as one of the biggest dam removal projects in American history, but it also is turning out to be one of the biggest environmental disasters in American history.

You can see right here the plume. This is the Klamath River, and this is one of the tributaries that feeds into it. This dark muck that is coming down is a result of what they have done to tear down dams or cut loose the material at the bottom of them under the drain.

This is a tributary coming in with winter water on that. It is kind of greenish and such. So you see, it is two different diverging bodies of water that is turning into muck, and it is an unbelievable mess there. It is killing wildlife, killing fish.

The Klamath River project used to make 70,000 households' worth of clean electricity. Good-paying jobs are very important to Siskiyou County. Now, the project, indeed, is an assault on the people who live there in the basin that are opposed to this, but outsiders are coming in to tear this out.