

American combat pilots, on September 25, 2025. He was 100 years old.

Lt. Colonel Hardy was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1925, as the second oldest of seven children. He was the youngest Red Tail fighter pilot among the Tuskegee Airmen and one of the first African American aviators at the age of 19.

Commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, Hardy deployed in 1945 to Italy, joining the African American 99th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group. He flew 21 combat missions over Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe in P-51 Mustangs, helping escort heavy B-17 and B-24 bombers.

America's bomber crews grew to value and respect the "Red Tails," a nickname derived from the strikingly painted red tails of the Tuskegee fighter planes and often requested to be escorted by them.

Before then, African Americans could not serve as United States military pilots, and their service did not stop the segregation and racism they faced while they fought for our country. During this time, our military was racially segregated, and black Americans faced intense discrimination in the Jim Crow South where they trained. The Tuskegee Airmen faced resistance to their integration as pilots, and many were assigned to non-combat roles; Hardy experienced that himself.

Colonel Hardy faced segregation, like his fellow Tuskegee men, who were also restricted from attending social clubs and were under pressure to excel with outdated aircraft and biased personnel. Yet, he never let that stop him.

After World War II, Hardy was deployed to Japan in 1950 during the Korean War. He was assigned as a co-pilot for B-29 bombers, but his commander doubted the abilities of a Black pilot. He remembered the moment when then-Lt. Col. Fred W. Miller ordered him, "Hardy, get down out of the airplane," as he was preparing for his first mission. But eventually, that senior officer commended his talents. Hardy then served in the Vietnam War, flying an additional 70 combat missions.

Leaving a lasting legacy, he and his Tuskegee Airmen comrades were honored with the Congressional Gold Medal, alongside his decorations. Hardy was described as a "humble man" with a deep passion for aviation by the Tuskegee Airmen National Historical Museum. He attended air shows and speaking events, inspiring future generations to pursue careers in aviation.

We are forever grateful for Hardy's courage, sacrifice, and perseverance. The legacy of all the original Tuskegee Airmen will continue to live on for future generations.

May we continue to honor and celebrate the progress our American military has made from the service of people of all colors. America is a better country today because of the bravery and resilience of the Tuskegee Airmen. America's promise is that all citizens will be treated equally under the law and can equally attain life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness in the land of the opportunity. Lt. Col. Hardy helped make this reality. We must never forget.

RECOGNIZING MIDVIEW HIGH SCHOOL ON WINNING THE DIVISION III STATE SPIRIT CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Mr. Latta. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school cheerleading team in Ohio's 5th Congressional District. The young student athletes of the Midview High School cheerleading team have represented their school ably on their way to achieving the Division III State Spirit Title. In their effort to surpass all other teams in the Division III State Spirit Competition, the Midview Middies overcame the challenges posed by intense competition.

In pursuing the State Championship, the Middies defeated their competitors to win their first state spirit championship. The members of this very special team have shown that their sport requires an individual effort for a team result. Their hard work and dedication, both on and off the floor, in achieving this accomplishment, is truly outstanding.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to the Midview High School cheerleading team. On behalf of the people of the 5th District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

RECOGNIZING MARY ANN GRANT PETTY

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Mr. Bishop. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate a trailblazer, dedicated public servant, and lifelong resident of Southwest Georgia, Ms. Mary Ann Grant Petty, as she retires after over 53 years with the City of Albany's Administrative Services Department. A "Legacy Celebration" will be held on December 19, 2025, at the Albany Civic Center to honor her over five decades of service.

Ms. Petty was born in Dougherty County to the union of T.W. and Annie Mae Grant on September 1, 1953. The second of seven siblings, she graduated from Monroe High School in June 1971 and thereafter graduated from Albany Technical College with a degree in Business Administration.

On May 29, 1972, as a result of a Federal Civil Rights Court Injunction for the City of Albany to desegregate its downtown offices, Ms. Petty was hired as a Customer Service Records Clerk with the City of Albany's Water, Gas & Light Commission, and was the only black employee in the front office for many months, during which she endured countless acts of discrimination from management, co-workers, and city residents. Ms. Petty, however, remained steadfast and resilient in the face of adversity; she remained at her post, upheld the highest levels of professionalism, and was promoted to the position of Customer Service Supervisor, for the Water, Gas & Light Commission, in 1977, and then to the position of Administrative Services Director, in 1997.

While she may have been the first black woman to hold these roles, she blazed a new trail ahead for many others to follow in her footsteps.

Former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm once said that "service is the rent we pay for the space we occupy on this Earth." Ms. Mary Ann Grant Petty has paid her rent and paid it well. Over the years, she has worked tirelessly in the aftermath of tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, and other community disasters, to provide the city and its residents with continued service and support. She is a long-time member of First Monumental Faith Ministries Church and has served on various governmental committees, organizations, and forums, earning numerous awards, certificates, and vast forms of recognition.

Ms. Petty has accomplished so much during her life, but none of this would have been possible without the grace of God and the love and support of her late husband, Hillard Key Petty; two children, Hillary Keyanna Petty-Jackson, and Heather Keyronica Petty; and a host of extended family and beloved friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the over 765,000 people of Georgia's 2nd Congressional District, in honoring and commending Ms. Mary Ann Grant Petty for over 53 years of dedicated service to her city and her community. We send her and her loved ones best wishes as she retires and begins the next chapter in her life.

HONORING THE QUILTS OF VALOR RECIPIENTS

HON. NATHANIEL MORAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Mr. Moran. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor five veterans who were presented with Quilts of Valor: Marine Corps veteran Ben Gallagher, Air Force veteran Bill Presson, Texas National Guard veteran David Baker, Army veteran Dick Wood, and Air Force veteran Mike Mathea.

These five veterans from Arabella of Longview Senior Living received blankets made just for them by members of Longview's Country Patches Quilt Guild, in conjunction with the Quilts of Valor Foundation. This is a small way to honor their service and sacrifice. As they are wrapped in this quilt, I hope they feel wrapped in the arms of a grateful Nation.

I thank the Arabella Military Veterans for creating a space where veterans and their families can gather, support one another, and be recognized.

I also want to thank the Longview Country Patches Quilt Guild for the time, care, and love stitched into every one of these quilts. These are not simple blankets; they are symbols of appreciation from a thankful community to those who have answered the call to serve.

The Quilt says unequivocally, "Thank you for your service and sacrifice in serving our Nation." Their service is remembered by East Texas—a place that is stronger because of them.

RECOGNIZING THE PASSAGE OF
THE WOUNDED KNEE SACRED
SITE AND MEMORIAL ACT

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the unanimous passage of the Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

This legislation represents an important step toward preserving one of the most tragic and painful sites in our Nation's history, as we prepare to commemorate the 135th anniversary of the Wounded Knee Massacre on December 29, 1890. The land at Wounded Knee bears witness to the massacre of hundreds of Lakota men, women, and children on December 29, 1890. For generations, this ground has held deep spiritual and historical significance for the Lakota people, and it deserves to be protected and honored accordingly.

In 2023, I had the opportunity to visit the site of the Wounded Knee Massacre, where I met with descendants of survivors and saw firsthand the remnants of that tragic day, including the bloodstained floorboards of St. John's Church where the wounded were treated. That experience underscores the responsibility we share as a Nation to acknowledge our past wrongdoings and ensure that such a tragedy is never forgotten.

This bill was developed in close partnership with the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, whose leadership and guidance were essential in shaping legislation that respects tribal jurisdiction and the sacred nature of the land. I am grateful to President Frank Star Comes Out of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Chairman Ryman LeBeau of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe for their continued collaboration and advocacy to preserve the memory and legacy of their ancestors.

Mr. Speaker, on the 100th anniversary of the massacre, Congress issued a formal apology, expressing deep regret for the actions of the federal government and acknowledging the historical significance of this event. As descendants prepare to remember the lives lost on the 135th anniversary, the House and Senate have reaffirmed our commitment to reconciliation and remembrance by passing the Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act unanimously, and I was honored to lead this legislation that preserves the sacred ground and respects the legacy of the Lakota people.

HONORING MASTER SERGEANT
JEREMY D. SMITH

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Master Sergeant Jeremy D. Smith upon the occasion of his retirement from the United States Air Force after more than 33 years of service to our Nation.

Master Sergeant Smith entered the USAF in April 1992, completing Basic Training at

Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. He initially trained as a Munitions Systems Specialist and served in various roles and locations, including missile technician, munitions material handling crew member, and munitions inspector, in Hawaii, North Carolina, and Florida. From 1999 to 2002, he transitioned to the Air Force Reserve, continuing as a Munitions Systems Specialist. In 2002, he cross-trained into the C-130 Loadmaster career field with the 193d Special Operations Squadron (SOS), Pennsylvania Air National Guard, and qualified on the C-130E, EC-130E, C-130J, EC-130J, HC-130J, and MC-130J variants. He served as an EC-130J instructor and evaluator, and held positions in Current Operations, the Formal Training Unit, Squadron Training, and the Squadron Tactics office.

At the time of his retirement, Master Sergeant Smith serves as an MC-130J Special Missions Aviator/Tactician assigned to the 193d SOS in Middletown, Pennsylvania. As a Special Missions Aviator Tactician in the Squadron Tactics office, he advises squadron aviators on the tactical employment of the MC-130J and related mission sets, ensuring mission readiness. His duties include managing the Drop Zone Control and Malfunction offices and the Joint Airdrop Inspectors program that monitors all airdrop inspections and supplies for mission success.

Master Sergeant Smith has deployed in support of myriad missions, including Operations Southern Watch, Desert Strike/Desert Fox, Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, New Dawn, Unified Response, Unified Protector, Odyssey Dawn, Inherent Resolve, and Freedom's Sentinel.

Throughout his illustrious career, Master Sergeant Smith has earned a multitude of awards and decorations, including, but not limited to the: Air Force Air Medal (w/2 OLC); Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon (w/Gold Border and 2 OLC); Air Force Good Conduct Medal (w/7 Devices); Pennsylvania Keystone Freedom Medal (w/7 Devices); Pennsylvania 20-Year Service Medal (w/1 Device); Major General Thomas R. White, Jr. Medal; and the General Thomas J. Stewart Medal (w/3 Devices).

Mr. Speaker, I'm honored and privileged to recognize Master Sergeant Jeremy D. Smith upon his retirement after more than 33 years of service to our Nation in uniform. His tireless, selfless, and honorable dedication to his fellow Airmen, the United States Air Force, and the United States of America set the standard by which all should be judged.

RECOGNIZING THE PLAYING OF
THE MONTANA SUPER BOWL AS
DELIVERED TO WAKE UP MON-
TANA ON NONSTOP LOCAL

HON. TROY DOWNING

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Mr. DOWNING. Mr. Speaker, in November, Montanans gathered in Missoula for the 124th Brawl of the Wild, a legendary matchup between the University of Montana Grizzlies and the Montana State University Bobcats.

On Saturday, December 20, Montanans across the country will be tuning in for what many are calling the Montana Super Bowl.

This is Brawl 2.0, and this time, it means more. With a spot in the FCS National Championship on the line, the stakes could not be higher.

For the first time in Montana history, the Grizzlies and Bobcats will face off in the FCS semifinals at Montana State University in Bozeman, placing our state in the national spotlight.

Montana's competitive spirit always shines on game day, and this weekend will be no exception. From living rooms to watch parties to packed stadium seats, Montanans will be united by pride, passion, and rivalry.

I thank Bradley Warren, "Touchdown" Tommy Mellott, and Marcus Welnel for covering the Montana Super Bowl. I'm looking forward to an electric game and wish both teams the best of luck.

CELEBRATING PRESTAR PACK-
AGING OF CHRISTIANSBURG,
VIRGINIA

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Prestar Packaging of Christiansburg, Virginia, on achieving the top honor in the 2025 Virginia Manufacturing Cup. This accomplishment has earned their product, the Pop-Up Gift Card Box, the honorary title of "The Coolest Thing in Virginia." The Virginia Manufacturers Association celebrates the passion and innovation that drive Virginia's manufacturing sector forward. Part of the foundation of a strong manufacturing sector depends on creative ideas that businesses like Prestar Packaging bring to the market.

Such creative ideas can lead to critical partnerships. Interest in Prestar Packaging products includes the likes of popular brands such as Under Armour, Coca-Cola, and even the United States Congress.

I was impressed to hear that Prestar Packaging has operated for three decades. It takes strong leadership, principled discipline and fantastic genius to sustain such a successful business.

Moreover, family-owned businesses like Prestar Packaging contribute to the manufacturing backbone of local economies, create job opportunities and highlight the power of American manufacturing.

Thanks in part to the great success of Prestar Packaging, Montgomery County continues to deliver in the manufacturing space.

I join Southwest Virginia communities in wishing a most sincere congratulations to Prestar Packaging.

May they use this success to fuel them in their future activities and endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE MEMBERS OF
THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES, EMS PROFESSION

HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the members of the emergency