

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
SHANNON STARZYK

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Shannon Starzyk for her years of tireless service and unwavering dedication to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. As she retires from her role at the Contra Costa Family Justice Center, I would like to commend Shannon for her extraordinary contributions to justice, advocacy, and support for the most vulnerable in our community.

Throughout her career, Shannon has been a fierce advocate for those seeking safety and justice. Her leadership has been critical in providing comprehensive services that empower survivors and guide them toward healing. She has worked closely with law enforcement, social service providers, legal professionals, and community organizations to build a collaborative network dedicated to breaking the cycle of violence.

Shannon's compassion and determination have directly impacted countless lives. Whether through policy advocacy, crisis intervention, or program development, she has continually prioritized the needs of survivors, ensuring they have access to legal assistance, emergency shelter, counseling, and long-term support. Her dedication to intersectional and trauma-informed care has set a high standard for victim advocacy and community-driven solutions.

As Shannon embarks on this next chapter, we celebrate the incredible impact she has had in our community. I am confident that her influence will continue to shape the work of the Contra Costa Family Justice Center and the broader movement to end violence in our communities.

Please join me in extending our deepest gratitude to Shannon Starzyk for her years of devoted service.

HONORING PHILLIP WEST

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an extraordinary leader, Mr. Phillip West, whose impact on Mississippi and the Nation continues to inspire generations. As a trailblazer in public service and a champion of civil rights, Mr. West has exemplified the very best of leadership and commitment to his community.

Mr. West made history as the first African American mayor of Natchez, Mississippi, serving from 2004 to 2008. During his tenure, he worked tirelessly to foster unity, drive economic development, and promote progress in a city deeply rooted in history. His leadership was defined by a vision of inclusivity and equity, as he sought to bridge divides and create opportunities for all residents of Natchez.

Beyond his role as mayor, Mr. West's contributions to Mississippi extend across decades of public service. As a state legislator

and community advocate, he has been a steadfast champion of policies aimed at improving education, expanding healthcare access, and increasing economic opportunities for underserved populations. His unwavering dedication to uplifting historically marginalized communities has left a lasting mark on the state.

Mr. West's legacy is deeply intertwined with his dedication to preserving the rich history of African Americans in Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Phillip West for his dedication and tenacity to serving his community and desire to be an example for all.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF CAPTAIN ROBERTO CHITO
SAMANIEGO

HON. VERONICA ESCOBAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay homage to the life and legacy of U.S. Army Captain Roberto "Chito" Samaniego, the first KIA servicemember from El Paso in the Vietnam war.

Captain Samaniego was an El Paso native and Jefferson High School alumni, who served his country as a helicopter pilot in the Vietnam war. He was assigned to the 52nd Aviation Battalion, 119th Company.

On June 19, 1965, Captain Samaniego was a copilot on one of the two UH-1B Helicopters conducting supply transports from Kon Tum to Dak Sut, Vietnam. When entering Dak Sut Valley, both air crews were hit by enemy fire 300 feet above land and plummeted to ground exploding on impact with no surviving crew members. Mr. Speaker, 209 El Pasoan service members would later lose their lives in the Vietnam conflict.

I recognize and express my eternal gratitude for veterans like Captain Samaniego; for the courage, bravery, and sacrifice to fight for our country. I also commemorate the families of service members, who have fought and continued to fight, as their sacrifices are beyond measure.

On March 29, 2025, we will honor the lives of the Vietnam war heroes in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

HONORING SERGEANT DAVID
LOREDO'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an American hero—Sergeant David Loredó—who turns 100 this month. Born on March 20, 1925, in Sinton, Texas, on the Gulf Coast, David's life embodies the grit, sacrifice, and unwavering spirit of our nation.

Like so many of his generation, he knew hardship early, picking cotton as a child and learning resilience with every bushel. But fate had bigger plans. His hands, once worn by farm work and concrete, soon carried a rifle

and a radio. His feet, once dusted with Texas soil, marched through the jungles of the South Pacific.

On March 17, 1945, leading a reconnaissance mission in the Philippines, David was shot alongside his scout. His first thought? That he'd never see his mother again. But he had time—and prayer—on his side. Back home, his mother took advantage of churches staying open 24/7, putting in extra hours praying for his safe return. And return he did.

For his service, David received the Purple Heart, Silver Star, Bronze Arrowhead, Good Conduct Medal, and multiple campaign honors. After his discharge at Fort Bliss, he came home to Houston, found steady work, and—thanks to the GI Bill—discovered his true craft: watch repair. The same patience that saw him through war now helped him master time itself.

A century later, David's story reminds us that faith and determination can carry a man across oceans, through war, and into a life of purpose. Today, we honor not just his years, but the lessons he leaves us: service, resilience, and the precious gift of time well spent.

Happy 100th to Sergeant Loredó. The watch keeper keeps on ticking.

HARLEM HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL
FIELD NAMED AFTER LEG-
ENDARY COACH JIMMIE LEWIS

HON. RICK W. ALLEN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate legendary Coach Jimmie Lewis, whose name will now be displayed at the Harlem High School baseball field for years and years to come. Coach Lewis has been the dedicated leader of the Harlem High School baseball program for decades, securing eight state titles and over 900 impressive wins—the 3rd highest in Georgia High School Association history. This is no small feat, and I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this honor.

However, Jimmie Lewis is far more than a coach in this community and at Harlem High School. He is a family man, a role model, a teacher, and a molder of men who has devoted his life to ensuring young students learn the skills and lessons necessary to be successful not only on the baseball field, but in life.

I am honored to help Coach Lewis celebrate this occasion and the positive, lifelong impact he has had on so many lives. Congratulations to Coach Lewis. Go Bulldogs.

HONORING SER BOXLEY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Ser Boxley, an extraordinary historian, advocate, and guardian of African American heritage, whose unwavering dedication to preserving history has made a lasting impact on Mississippi and the Nation.

A native of Natchez, Mississippi, Mr. Boxley has spent decades championing the recognition and preservation of African American history, particularly focusing on the lives and stories of those whose voices have been silenced in our historical narrative. His advocacy for the preservation of Forks of the Road, one of the Nation's largest slave markets, has ensured that this significant site stands as a solemn reminder of our Nation's history and a source of education for future generations.

Through his passionate work, Mr. Boxley has shed light on the resilience and humanity of those who endured the atrocities of slavery, ensuring that their stories are not forgotten but honored and remembered. His efforts have helped foster understanding, dialogue, and healing within communities as we confront the realities of our shared past.

In addition to his preservation work, Mr. Boxley is a tireless educator and advocate. He has dedicated himself to raising awareness of African American history through lectures, public events, and community engagement. His commitment to truth and justice has inspired countless individuals to take an active role in ensuring that the lessons of history guide us toward a more equitable future.

As we commemorate Black History Month, it is only fitting to recognize Mr. Boxley's enduring contributions to the preservation of African American history. His work serves as a beacon of hope and a powerful reminder that understanding our past is essential to building a better future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Ser Boxley for his incredible dedication to preserving history, his unwavering commitment to justice, and his lasting contributions to the state of Mississippi and beyond.

HONORING A TRUE HOMETOWN HERO: DOUG TURNER

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Doug Turner, a remarkable constituent from our Bucks County community and this week's Hometown Hero.

At 87 years old, Doug Turner has spent his life in service—to his country as a United States Army Veteran, to our land as a 30-year United States Forest Service worker, and to our community as an artist, storyteller, and neighbor. Along with his late wife Susan—who served as Newtown Borough Council President—Doug dedicated himself to the town they called home, whether teaching students at Goodnoe Elementary about the importance of trees or helping organize Newtown's annual Arbor Day celebration.

In 2022, when Doug lost Susan, he found a way to keep their shared spirit of giving alive—by bringing people together. He started hosting an annual winter party, a simple gathering meant to combat the isolation of winter and rekindle the warmth of true neighborly connection. No guest list, no expectations. Just an open door and one request: "Bring only a smile."

This year, however, something remarkable happened. A simple act—an old-fashioned, handwritten, hand-delivered invitation—did not just bring together a neighborhood; it brought together the world. Doug's invitation scribbled on a paper snowflake with his signature humor, "From 4 p.m. to whenever the cops come," captured hearts from Alaska to Australia. Inspired by Doug, people everywhere started throwing their own neighborhood parties, making a conscious effort to reach out to those around them. What Doug started in his corner of Newtown rippled throughout the world, proving that one person can ignite a movement of kindness—one, in this case, that went viral.

So today, we celebrate Doug—not for a viral party, but for showing us that in a world often divided, there is still more that unites us than separates us. For reminding us that we are not just individuals living side by side but neighbors—meant to share in life's joys, lift each other in hardship, and find strength in one another.

I thank Doug for showing us that community is built through kindness, strengthened by connection, and made whole when we come together.

HONORING THE QUAKER SPRINGS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the brave volunteer firefighters and first responders that work with the Quaker Springs Volunteer Fire Department in the Town of Saratoga, New York.

Originally formed as an all-volunteer force in 1947, the Quaker Springs Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. was formally incorporated in May 1948. The Company served the Town of Saratoga as well as the broader community, traversing the rural countryside between Saratoga Lake and the Hudson River. The Company's founding Board of Fire Commissioners was composed of local residents Schuyler Peck (Chairman), E. Raymond Smith (Treasurer), James Burke, Charles Carden, Arthur Ellis, Charles Haas, and Maynard Kirkpatrick, who served as the Company's first fire chief. In 1950, the Company was officially renamed the Quaker Springs Volunteer Fire Department.

In the Department's early days, the Quaker Springs volunteers would rush out in F-493, a 1942 International Four-Wheel Drive fire truck equipped with a 400-gallon water tank and high-pressure pump. This truck was acquired from U.S. military surplus at Fort Dix, New Jersey, and became an integral piece of equipment for the Department, remaining in service for six decades.

Today, the Quaker Springs Volunteer Fire Department boasts nearly fifty volunteers among its ranks, answering approximately 120 emergency calls every year. The Department is equipped with a fully-automatic alert system to notify those on duty of public emergencies within its 50.2 square mile service area. The

Quaker Springs Volunteer Fire Department also maintains mutual aid agreements with neighboring Arvin Hart, David Nevins, and Schuyler Hose, fire departments in Saratoga County that stand ready to assist at a moment's notice.

While the Department has modernized over seventy-eight years, the essence of neighborly service and rural resilience has not diminished. As of 2025, the Quaker Springs Volunteer Fire Department counts among its membership descendants and relatives of the founding roster, including volunteers from the Bodnar, Burke, Peck, and Wood families, continuing a tradition of brave and selfless service.

On behalf of New York's 21st Congressional District, it is an honor to recognize the generations of brave men and women with the Quaker Springs Fire Department. These extraordinary individuals have sacrificed their time and wellbeing to protect our upstate communities and deserve our gratitude and remembrance.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF LOUISE "WEESIE" WHITMIRE POOLE

HON. WILLIAM R. TIMMONS IV

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 2025

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, today I honor the life and legacy of Louise "Weesie" Whitmire Poole, a devoted servant of her community, a champion of conservative values, and a steadfast advocate for South Carolina families.

Born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina, Weesie lived a life of faith, service, and unwavering dedication to the principles that make our Nation great. A true patriot, she was actively involved in causes that strengthened her community and upheld the conservative ideals of limited government, personal responsibility, and family values.

Weesie played a pivotal role in advancing these principles through her leadership in the Upstate Republican Women's Club, where she served as Chaplain. Through this work, she helped mobilize and inspire conservative women, reinforcing the importance of civic engagement, grassroots activism, and support for Republican candidates. Her presence in this organization was a guiding force, always leading with integrity and a deep love for her country.

Weesie's love for South Carolina and its institutions was evident in her service to Clemson University, where she was an active member of the Parent's Council and the Board of Visitors. Her engagement reflected her belief in the importance of higher education that upholds traditional American values and prepares young leaders for the future.

Her devotion to faith, family, and conservative ideals leaves an enduring legacy in South Carolina. She was a woman of grace and conviction who never wavered in her dedication to the causes she believed in. As we honor her memory, may we be inspired by her tireless efforts to serve others and uphold the values that define our great Nation.