

Through God's divine plan and purpose, Pastor Gregory Cooper, Sr., was sent to Antioch as pastor in April 1991. In September of that same year he was officially installed as Pastor of Antioch Baptist Church. Under his firm yet gentle leadership the congregation completed and was able to march into its new sanctuary that year. By the power of God and faithful and committed members, the third church was paid off in 1997. Antioch Baptist Church became Antioch Full Gospel Baptist Church in April of 2005.

Today the congregation stands strong, a thriving body of men, women, and children that have come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord. To God be the glory for the things He has done, and for using Bishop Gregory Cooper, Sr., to lead them into the promises, as God shows Himself strong and mighty in the lives of the believers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Antioch Full Gospel Baptist Church for eighty-five years of faithful service, and in wishing its pastor and congregation every blessing in the years to come.

**HONORING STEVE KWARCANY ON
BEING NAMED THE 2026 UPPER
PENINSULA VETERAN OF THE
YEAR**

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and recognize Retired Air Force Master Sergeant Steve Kwarcany on being named the 2026 Upper Peninsula Veteran of the Year. For more than a decade, Steve has been a steadfast leader within numerous Veteran organizations across the Upper Peninsula, dedicating countless hours to improving the lives of those who have served our Nation.

As a Life Member of VFW Hiawatha Post 2998, AMVETS Escanaba Post 123, DAV Delta County Chapter 24, and Bark River American Legion Post 438, Steve has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to serving his fellow Veterans. His leadership roles as Commander of the Delta County Veterans Council, Quartermaster of VFW Post 2998, Senior Vice Commander of DAV Chapter 24, and Chairman of the Delta County Department of Veterans Affairs Board reflect the confidence and respect he has earned from his fellow Veterans.

Steve played a vital role in the ballot referendum that established the Delta County Department of Veterans Affairs, helping ensure that local Veterans have greater access to the resources and services they deserve. His service as Director of the Delta County Veterans Council's Memorial Day, POW/MIA Recognition Day, and Veterans Day ceremonies, along with his work as Funeral Honor Guard Commander and member of the Upper Peninsula Honor Flight Welcome Home Honor Guard, demonstrates his enduring commitment to honoring those who have worn the uniform.

Steve's work has left an enduring mark on the Upper Peninsula. Whether coordinating the annual VFW Poppy Sale, serving as a mentor for young people while at the Bark River-Harris Leo Club, or volunteering with the

U.P. Off Road Races, Steve has consistently placed service above self. By exemplifying the highest standards of leadership, he has inspired countless others to embrace the values of citizenship, volunteerism, and patriotism.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Retired Air Force Master Sergeant Steve Kwarcany on being named the 2026 Upper Peninsula Veteran of the Year. On behalf of Michigan's 1st Congressional District, I congratulate Steve on this well-deserved recognition and thank him for his extraordinary service to our Nation, our Veterans, and the people of the Upper Peninsula.

**RECOGNIZING THE BRIGHT START
INITIATIVE**

HON. MARILYN STRICKLAND

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Bright Start Initiative and its founders, Michael and Marcus Kang. The Bright Start Initiative was founded by two brothers who saw firsthand that oral-health education and basic supplies were not reaching every family equally.

The Bright Start Initiative is a student-founded 501(c)(3) nonprofit bringing free dental supplies and multilingual oral-health education to underserved students across the United States. Student-led teams partner with schools and dental professionals to deliver supplies and lessons families can actually use, in the languages they already speak at home.

One in five children in the United States lives with untreated tooth decay, and it is the number one chronic illness among children. The Bright Start Initiative is prepared to support over 5,000 students, with lessons translated into over 18 languages, and have partnered with 100 schools in six states.

Michael and Marcus Kang are leaders in Washington State and in the country. I applaud Michael and Marcus's championship of their fellow students and look forward to all that they will accomplish in the future.

RECOGNIZING DONNA WALKER

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jefferson County Public Library Director Donna Walker on her retirement after 14 years of service. Donna's tenure is best characterized by her commitment to making library services more accessible to all patrons.

Under Donna's transformational leadership, underserved communities saw expanded library services, including greater access for Spanish-speaking residents as she championed the hiring of bilingual employees. Donna strongly supported library services in rural communities by working on plans to develop three new campuses in our remote neighborhoods.

Thanks to Donna's outstanding work, Jefferson County became home to our Nation's first

staffless library, which provides residents with access to books, office supplies, and other library resources.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Donna Walker on her retirement and thank her for her commitment to serving our community.

**HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN
HERO CASON WALLACE**

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Cason Wallace. Cason, a Dallas native and Richardson High School alumni, recently helped lead the Oklahoma Thunder to a NBA Championship. In the Game 7 victory, he contributed 10 points and 3 steals in 26 minutes played. His championship win is not just a personal victory, but a proud moment for the entire community that have watched him play in Richardson throughout the years.

From the beginning of his athletic career at Richardson High School to his collegiate success at the University of Kentucky, and now a world champion on the NBA stage, his roots in North Texas remain strong, continuing to inspire young athletes across our community.

I thank Cason for showing us what it means to lead with heart and hustle. Cason has given North Texas something unforgettable to celebrate, and we look forward to watching his NBA career continue.

**HONORING MOUNT CARMEL
BAPTIST CHURCH**

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a faithful congregation in my District, Mount Carmel Baptist Church of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, as it marks more than seventy-five years of worship, education, and service to the people of East Baton Rouge Parish.

Mount Carmel Baptist Church of Baton Rouge was founded in 1949, when a group of Christian men and women met on North 32nd Street to establish a new congregation. On September 21, 1949, the members adopted the name Mount Carmel Baptist Church No. 2, and Reverend Herbert Burden was elected as the church's first pastor. The congregation worked together to construct its first church building, where services began in December 1949 while construction continued. The church was formally incorporated in 1972 as Mount Carmel Baptist Church of Baton Rouge.

Throughout its history, Mount Carmel has emphasized spiritual growth, youth development, education, and service to the community. In 2001, the congregation relocated from North 37th Street to its current location on Prescott Road, bringing its ministries and commitment to community service to a new neighborhood. The church continues to build upon the legacy of its founders through worship,

Christian education, and service to the Baton Rouge community.

Mount Carmel Baptist Church is led today by Pastor Andra Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mount Carmel Baptist Church for more than seventy-five years of faithful service, and in wishing its pastor and congregation continued blessings in the years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I missed yesterday's vote due to a lower back injury. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 286; NAY on Roll Call No. 287; NAY on Roll Call No. 288; NAY on Roll Call No. 289; YEA on Roll Call No. 290; NAY on Roll Call No. 291; and YEA on Roll Call No. 292.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF MARK E. CALLAHAN

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following eulogy, which was introduced by Raymond D. Larson on behalf of his dear friend, Nolan W. Callahan. Nolan gave this eulogy for his father, Mark E. Callahan. The eulogy encapsulates an extraordinary life of an everyday American, husband, and father. Delivered on February 1, 2018, the eulogy commemorates a life defined by resilience, warmth, and an unwavering love for his fellow man. More than a tribute, it serves as a timeless guide on how to live life, urging us to laugh hard, look at the stars and feel small, and dedicate ourselves to making others brim with joy. It is one of millions of stories of the American Experience made possible by the will, determination, and perseverance of Mark E. Callahan.

First of all, thank you all for being here. Looking out today I see Mark's close friends and family all gathered to celebrate his life, and it's an honor to address you all, as you were the reason that Mark fought as hard as he did against his illness. I especially want to thank the clergy and staff here at Saint Patrick's and Saint Anthony's, as well as the staff at Newkirk & Whitney funeral home. You all helped give my father a beautiful ceremony and you've helped my family and I garner a sense of grace and closure. Thank you.

I believe it was in the middle of summer in 2013 when Mark suffered an accident that severely damaged his right eye. After countless procedures and surgeries, he ended up losing a majority of his vision, rendering him all but blind in one eye. It was later that year, in December, when he got the fateful phone call that brings us all together today, over four years later. Yet, a while after being diagnosed with his cancer, Gary McKeone, who was one of Mark's friends, organized a party for him with the help of Sully's Café of East Hartford and a few other

coworkers. The Gazette, a local newspaper, heard that the jolly good fellow was having drinks raised to his name, and naturally sent a reporter to cover the event. My father was a very popular man. Days pass, and soon enough I see the edition of the paper that had the article about Dad. And I'll never forget the headline. It was a quote from Mark, and it simply said, "I feel like the luckiest man in the world." The luckiest man in the world. This was after losing half his vision, while in the midst of staffing off a terminal disease, and he was the luckiest man in the world. I believe that almost everyone in the world, myself included, would have given up if they were dealt the hand Dad was, but not him. Instead he thrived. He didn't merely say that he felt like the luckiest man in the world, he truly believed it, and lived that way: every day a celebration and every moment a new memory waiting to be had.

While I was writing this I had a hard time deciding which stories to share with the congregation today that might illuminate the kind of man my father was. It wasn't difficult because there weren't enough stories to choose from, just the contrary. I sat for hours running through my mind, thinking of the things he did, as well as the lore I've heard from his family and friends of his colorful past. I thought maybe I could talk about his endless quest for knowledge, perhaps tell you all of the time he had a question about space and decided the best and only way to get to the bottom of things was to pick up the phone and call NASA. (They didn't help at all. They were only concerned with finding out how on earth he had gotten their number.) Or, maybe I could try to explain his spontaneous and fun loving nature, and tell you all about the time he gave Tiny Tim a ride to one of his shows in one of Uncle Kevin's flower shop delivery vans. That's a true story, but not one that would adequately describe the man he was. Instead, when I think about my father I think about two things; his unfaltering love for his fellow man, and his sense of humor.

Years ago when I was a boy, Dad used to take Molly, Rose and I to Terry pool on Saturday mornings to swim. This was a dream come true for us, an Olympic sized pool all to ourselves in the dead heat of summer. We would cool off while Dad took care of maintaining the pool, which would open up a few hours later to the public. Needless to say, every time we got the opportunity to go to work with him, we would always pounce on the opportunity. Now, one night he and I were coming back from the beach when he suddenly realized that he had left a pump on at the pool, and he told me that we needed to stop by Terry so he could turn it off. When we got there, I stayed in the car as he walked into his pump room, affectionately called "The Cave". When he came back out, he was preceded by two people, pool hoppers as he called them, soaking wet wrapped up in towels. Dad came out right behind them, shook their hands, locked the pool, and got back in the car.

He proceeded to tell me what had happened. Apparently, when he walked into The Cave, he could hear distinct voices and splashing coming from the water. He walked out to the deck, and saw two people: a father and a son. Upon their seeing him, they jumped out of the pool and began to climb the fence, assuming my dad would call the police or chase them out or something like that. I'm sure that's what most people would do in his situation, but not my father. Instead, he asked them to get down off the fence because he was afraid they might hurt themselves on the way over. He introduced himself and offered them towels, and asked why they were there. It turns out the man was trying to teach his son how to swim, and

couldn't afford the entry fee to the pool during regular hours. My dad, hearing this, made a deal with them; that he would let them into the pool during regular hours for free so long as they didn't try to hop the fence again. A laugh and a handshake later, a deal was struck and abided by. I don't know why, but that sentiment stuck with me forever. Help your fellow man. Regardless of the circumstances, if someone is in need of help, provide.

My father was also, without a doubt, the funniest man I've ever met. At any party or event, the seat next to him was always the best seat in the house. His sense of humor was discrete and dry, his laughter contagious, and his wit razor sharp while somehow also benevolent. He never laughed at anyone, only with them. If he decided he wanted you to laugh, within minutes you'd be gasping for air and drying your eyes. Him being a master of the craft of comedy, he could take any situation and turn it into the hardest you've laughed all week. It was a showing of his love, he genuinely only wanted people to have a good time, even if it meant putting a cheese doodle in each nostril and staring at you until you noticed. He was a man who enjoyed creating laughter more than he enjoyed laughing himself, a sentiment that was dramatically increased whenever he was surrounded by family.

Now, there aren't words that can describe how much he loved his family. His brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, children and wife were his entire world. These are the people he lived, and ultimately fought for. His time on earth was brief, but he provided a bounty for all who knew him. I think about everything he gave me, and at the end of his life I realized the greatest thing he ever gave me was this family, the people sitting in this very church. He gave me the world through all of you, and my sisters and my mother.

I sometimes wonder, when he walked into Michael's Bakery and proposed to the woman standing behind the counter, if he knew at the time that he was in fact asking the strongest woman in the world to marry him. Mom, the care and affection you provided for Dad not only in the past four years, but during the entirety of your marriage has changed my definition of love. Your complete selflessness and awe inspiring dedication to his well-being is nothing short of miraculous.

I'll leave you now asking you to live the way Mark did, let his life be an example of how to be happy. Laugh hard and often. Unconditionally love not only your family and friends but the strangers you meet on the way. Dedicate yourself to the mission of making others brim with joy. Read a book and share it. Look at the stars and feel small. Get a running head start and dive headfirst into the ocean. Rise with the Sun. Drive with the windows down. Eat pancakes before they get cold. Go to a wedding and dance all night. Hug your children. Work hard. Call NASA. Take a nap in a bath of sunlight. Hug a dog. Be honest. Fight for what you want. But most of all, live in the moment and smile for every second of it.

RECOGNIZING STEVE ART

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mr. Steve Art on his retirement from the City of Wheat Ridge and to thank him for 15 years of dedicated service to the community.