

the Korean war, even doing an assignment in Florida. That is where, Mr. Speaker, he met the love of his life, Alberta Jordan. They were blessed with four children, Brenda, Bill, Durwin, and Danny, building a family legacy that spans generations and continues to grow.

After the Navy, Joe drove a Greyhound bus but sought to become a police officer in Fernandina Beach. The story goes, he approached the chief with: "Chief, how do I become a police officer?" The chief asked him: "Can you start today?" and he did.

□ 1215

After several years in law enforcement, Joe went on to spend 27 years at Container Corporation, starting at the scale shack and retiring as a timber accountant.

Joe's greatest legacy, Mr. Speaker, and his greatest impact is on the kids in Nassau County, Florida. He coached Little League, led championship teams, and helped establish youth football, which continues to this day, giving thousands of kids the chance to play and cheer, including me and so many other Bean boys.

Joe also served 62 years as a Shriner and delighted so many by driving in parades with his three-wheeled motorcycle and dune buggy raising money for sick children.

Mr. Speaker, Joe Leeper didn't seek recognition. He simply showed up year after year for his country, his family, and his community.

On behalf of Florida's Fourth Congressional District, I and my wife, Abby, extend our deepest condolences to the entire Leeper family and Joe Leeper fans across northeast Florida. Joe's legacy lives on in every kid who plays and cheers in programs he pioneered through decades of faithful service. May he rest in peace.

#### REMEMBERING ARDEN TEWKSBURY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a friend and dairy advocate, Arden Tewksbury, who peacefully passed away on January 30 at the age of 93.

Arden graduated from Meshoppen High School in 1950. He was an avid baseball and basketball player, despite losing his arm above the elbow in an accident at a young age. He served as a Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association basketball official as well as a member of the PIAA Board of Directors.

Additionally, Arden was the longest serving volunteer school board member of the Elk Lake School District with 64 years of service.

Arden operated a dairy farm in northeastern Pennsylvania and retired in 2003. He was a well-known advocate for dairy farms across the Common-

wealth and worked with many farmers for more than five decades.

Arden served on committees of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and the Pennsylvania Farmers Union. He also served on the board of the Eastern Milk Producers Cooperative as well as being their president for 5 years.

Arden was a lifetime member and former grange master of South Auburn Grange 1188. The Pennsylvania State Grange honored him in 1987 as the Pennsylvania State Granger of the Year.

In 1991, Arden founded the Progressive Agriculture Organization, where he advocated for fair milk prices for small, family-owned dairy farmers. Arden was well-known around Pennsylvania's capital in Harrisburg and in our Nation's Capital.

While I was yet to serve in this Chamber, Arden worked closely with former Senator Arlen Specter, Pennsylvania's longest serving Senator, to introduce S. 1722, the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2007. This bill would have required the Secretary of Agriculture to determine the price of all milk used for manufactured purposes, classified as Class II milk, by using the national average cost of production.

More recently, he helped to get whole milk back in schools. The passage of the bipartisan Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2025 was a great win, and I am glad Arden was able to see this legislation signed into law.

Mr. Speaker, Arden was loved by many people across the Commonwealth and will be dearly missed. He is a role model for so many. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family during this time.

#### HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM "SKATE" PARKS

(Mr. HARIDOPOLOS of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Colonel William "Skate" Parks, an exceptional officer in the United States Air Force, who was awarded the Silver Star Medal, one of our Nation's highest honors for valor.

In early 2025, Lieutenant Colonel Parks served as mission commander for a 21-aircraft strike package in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. He led four F-16 Fighting Falcons on a suppression of enemy air defenses mission, deliberately placing himself in range of a heavily defended air defense zone.

For more than 15 minutes, with enemy missiles exploding mere feet from his aircraft and fuel below minimum levels, Lieutenant Colonel Parks flew defensive maneuvers, coordinated emergency refueling, and prevented the likely loss of multiple aircraft.

His courage and leadership contributed to a larger operation that defended our allies and advanced United States' security interests.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Lieutenant Colonel William Parks for his extraordinary valor and dedicated service to our Nation as a member of the United States Air Force.

#### SECURING FUNDING FOR SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION ON THE SPACE COAST

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a meaningful investment in conservation on Florida's Space Coast.

We recently secured \$1.75 million in Federal funding for the Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center at Port Canaveral and in Melbourne, building upon the amazing legacy of the Bowen family and so many other families that have been generous to the zoo and our community.

This funding will expand rescue and rehabilitation efforts for injured sea turtles and strengthen research and response capabilities along our Space Coast.

Sea turtles face threats from boat strikes, fishing gear, and environmental hazards. The Healing Center provides critical medical care and returns these animals to the wild whenever possible.

I had the incredible opportunity to sit down with some of these folks who care for our sea turtles just last week. This investment reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship and local priorities.

I am proud this funding was secured to support marine life and the community that depends on healthy waterways for all.

#### HONORING BRETT BOLTON AND TEAM USA AT WINTER PARALYMPICS

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, we all saw the exciting victory by the United States men's national ice hockey team securing a Gold Medal for the United States for the first time since the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics. Before that, the 1960 American team had won the Gold out in California. It was the first time we won it overseas, but there are still more Olympics to come.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding athlete from our district, Brett Bolton, as he prepares to compete in the upcoming Winter Paralympics.

Hailing from Rockledge, Florida, Brett is a member of Team USA's Sled Hockey Team, which is pursuing its fifth Gold Medal. His dedication to the sport and his commitment to excellence represents the very best in American competition.

Representing our country on the world stage is an extraordinary honor, and our community is proud to see one of our own chasing that historic achievement of a Gold Medal, potentially the fifth in a row.

Hockey holds a special place in communities across our Nation as it builds upon resilience, teamwork, and character as also recognized by our women's team that also won in overtime earning the Gold Medal over the Canadians.

Brett's journey reminds us that the sport can unite us and inspire the next generation to push beyond its limits. As Team USA takes the ice in March in the Paralympics, we will be cheering on loudly for Brett Bolton and his teammates as part of Team USA.

Go USA!

RECOGNIZING A MANATEE RESCUE IN  
MELBOURNE BEACH

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated effort of first responders and wildlife experts who rescued a trapped manatee from a storm drain in Melbourne Beach.

Local police officers, firefighters, and wildlife officials quickly responded to the call. Working carefully and patiently, they assessed the situation, monitored the animal's condition, and coordinated a safe extraction.

This rescue highlights something special about our coastline communities. Floridians understand that protecting wildlife is part of protecting our way of life. Our waterways are home to remarkable species, and safeguarding them requires vigilance and teamwork.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Melbourne Beach Police Department, local fire crews, and wildlife partners for their swift action. Their professionalism protected one of Florida's most cherished marine animals.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 24 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Reverend Jonathan Slavinkas, St. Bernard's Church of Our Lady of Providence Parish, Worcester, Massachusetts, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, Lord of all nations, we ask Your blessing upon this assembly and upon the people they serve. In a time marked by division, anxiety, and uncertainty, grant these leaders wisdom to seek the common good, courage to choose what is right over what is easy, and the humility to listen with open hearts.

Where there is anger, sow patience. Where there is mistrust, build understanding. Where there is fear, awaken hope. Remind us that beyond every difference, we remain one people, entrusted with the care of this Nation and of one another.

Bless those who defend our freedoms, those who serve in our communities,

and those who struggle quietly, wondering if their voices still matter. May this Chamber be guided not only by power, but by conscience, always mindful of the dignity of every human person.

May all who lead do so in a way that would make the people back home proud to say that they were heard here. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND  
JONATHAN SLAVINSKAS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, Mr. MCGOVERN of Massachusetts is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this morning I am honored to have my dear friend, Father Jonathan Slavinkas, pastor of St. Bernard's Church of Our Lady of Providence Parish in my hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts, give today's opening prayer.

Father Jonathan, as he is known by his parishioners, is a true force of good in the Lincoln Street area. He is always a welcoming and friendly face who is known for buying pizza for the neighborhood kids or opening up the gym for pickup basketball games.

He is also the chaplain for both the Worcester Police Department and the Worcester Fire Department. He cares deeply about our immigrant community.

Day in and day out, Father Jonathan lives out his Catholic faith in big and small ways. He shows up for his community and is always there for his people, especially when they are going through rough times.

Father Jonathan has long been a cherished friend of the entire McGovern family, especially of my daughter, Molly, who sadly passed away last April. Lisa and I will forever be grateful to him.

Mr. Speaker, with a friendly smile and a touch of humor, Father Jonathan goes out of his way to make those around him welcome both in the church and in the neighborhood. We should all be inspired by his remarkable example.

CELEBRATING STUDENTS AT  
PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an incredible group of students at Penn State University who have helped raise money for pediatric cancer patients.

THON is a year-long fundraising effort that culminates in a 46-hour dance marathon. THON is the largest student-run philanthropy event in the world and will help to financially support almost 5,000 families with children who are battling cancer.

This weekend, students, staff, and volunteers filled the Bryce Jordan Center to raise awareness and money for the Four Diamonds Foundation. Over 700 THON participants danced for 46 hours straight.

THON was first originated in 1973 by Bill Lear as a proposed dance marathon to raise money for a good cause. Mr. Speaker, 78 students participated, and over \$2,000 was raised. Over 40 years later, more than \$236 million has been donated, and not a single Four Diamonds family has received a medical bill. This year, THON raised over \$18 million.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the legacy that THON has established, and I am proud of the children and families who fight every day against pediatric cancer.

THANKING THE PEOPLE OF  
DENMARK AND GREENLAND

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the people of Denmark and Greenland for their quick professional evacuation last Saturday of a U.S. submariner on board the USS *Delaware* 7 miles off Greenland's coast. The submariner was experiencing an acute medical problem that required immediate hospital care.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honor of representing the Connecticut submarine base where the USS *Delaware* and its crew are homeported. In the north Atlantic, our subs have conducted joint NATO patrols in the waters off Greenland, Iceland, and the U.K. for many decades which benefits U.S. Homeland Security. It is a team effort and Denmark's response to a U.S. sailor in distress is a powerful example of how the NATO alliance is not just based on words but rather meaningful deeds.

Mr. Speaker, for some reason, there has been deafening silence from our Commander in Chief and Navy leadership to publicly thank Denmark for its act of friendship on Saturday.

As the Representative of the USS *Delaware's* home port and ranking member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, I will publicly tell the people of that nation that