

ahead. It is great to have Scarlett visiting Washington, D.C., this week. All of eastern Washington and, indeed, all of Congress and the Nation share in the pride of her accomplishment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the Member from Delaware (Representative McBRIDE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. McBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy and contributions of dedicated volunteers at the CHEER Community Center in Sussex County, Delaware.

Recently, CHEER hosted its annual Volunteer Appreciation Awards Ceremony in Georgetown to recognize neighbors who have tirelessly given their time to supporting older adults across the county.

CHEER's volunteer base is critical to their ability to provide meals, transportation, activities, companionship, and support services to the thousands of older adults who they serve. Last year alone, over 750 volunteers provided a combined 40,000 vital services that made CHEER's work possible.

CHEER's work and services are absolutely critical to the entire State, and especially Sussex County, where one-third of the population is 65 or older.

Maggie Smith, who volunteers daily at the Long Neck Center, where she assists with meals and running a weekly nickel poker game, among other responsibilities, was awarded the 2026 CHEER Volunteer of the Year award.

Maggie greets each new member by name and ensures those with mobility concerns are able to get their meals.

This honor, rightfully earned, represents something that we could all use more of: selfless dedication to the well-being of our neighbors.

I congratulate Maggie and all the nominees for the award, and I thank them for all that they do to keep Delaware's communities running and to deliver critical services to our neighbors.

COMMEMORATING SEPARATION DAY

Ms. McBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the liberation of Delaware from the corrupt and tyrannical yoke of the British Crown and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, 250 years ago, Delawareans stared fate and history in the eyes, picked up the quill, and began to write a new chapter.

Our Delawarean forebearers said plainly and with outsized ambition and determination: We can govern ourselves, and our future is ours to make.

No tyrant, whether they are in Pennsylvania or England, will have authority over the first and greatest State in the Union.

Separation Day is celebrated with overwhelming pride in my State, with my neighbors coming together annually each June in Old New Castle, one of the most historic towns in America, to honor our legacy and mark another year free from the despotism of the past.

Of course, Separation Day is about more than the past. It serves as a re-

minder that democracy is not guaranteed or inherited. It calls on each generation to face challenges with resolve and to take action to secure our liberties.

Just as Delawareans have always reminded our fellow Americans, the real heroes of democracy are the ordinary people who believe that a better future is worth fighting for.

More importantly, 250 years ago, those patriots understood something that we should all remember today: There are no kings in a democracy.

This year, as we mark the semiquincentennial of both the greatest State in the Union and our country, may we recommit ourselves to the unequivocal rejection of tyranny in all of its forms.

To my friends from Pennsylvania: You wish you were us.

To all of my friends and constituents in Delaware: Happy Separation Day.

HONORING RUTH PATRICK THOMAS

(Mr. BACON of Nebraska was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the late Mrs. Ruth Patrick Thomas, an Omaha icon and pioneer for the North Omaha community.

Living a wonderful and blessed 105 years, Mrs. Thomas' life is marked by service and love for all, touching the hearts of many in each of the various roles she maintained.

Graduating from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln in 1943, Ms. Thomas wed Francis Thomas the same year and joined him in caring for the home and family business, the Thomas Funeral Home.

Active in the community, she also devoted her efforts to the League of Women Voters for nearly two decades, directed the YWCA, and focused on cultivating kinship within her neighborhoods.

Behind her service to others, Mrs. Thomas championed many milestones, such as being one of the first board members to vote in favor of desegregating Omaha Public Schools, being the first of three women at Zion Baptist Church to be appointed to trustee, and, in 1954, enrolling and graduating from the College of Mortuary Science in St. Louis as the only female and African-American person in her class.

Her lifetime of accomplishments has been recognized by the NAACP with the NAACP Freedom Fighter's Award and with a Diamond Award bestowed by the Delta Epsilon Omega Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., for over 75 years of service.

Mr. Speaker, to the family and North Omaha friends of Mrs. Thomas, I offer my deepest condolences on her passing, and I stand with pride to have had such a wholesome and selfless person to be a part of developing our community.

RECOGNIZING LAVON STENNIS WILLIAMS

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize a true ex-

ample of resiliency, generosity, and commitment to serving others, my friend LaVon Stennis Williams from Omaha, Nebraska.

LaVon is a woman of many titles: attorney, author, entrepreneur, and mentor. Perhaps her most defining characteristic is her unwavering commitment that our past does not define our future and that history, when preserved, can be a powerful tool for healing.

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A graduate of Creighton University with her bachelor's and juris doctorate degrees, LaVon has spent her life building bridges. In 2012, drawing from her own personal journey, she founded Re-Connect, Incorporated. This nonprofit has served over 500 individuals, helping those currently or formerly incarcerated navigate the difficult transition back into society. Through her Success Prep curriculum, she teaches a philosophy that our communities desperately need: the mindset of being better, not bitter.

But LaVon's service to Omaha doesn't stop at professional development. She understands that to move forward, we must also look back. She transformed her private doll collection into a doll museum of African-American history. This museum houses a collection of over 3,000 historic dolls, and it is free for all.

Far more than simple artifacts, these figures serve as a unique lens through which people can examine these three centuries of Black history and culture. This museum stands as a testament to her belief that understanding where we have been is essential to determining where we are going.

Whether she is writing children's books to honor the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen through her publishing house, TwoBee Publishing, or coaching a client toward a new career path, LaVon Stennis Williams is a builder of dreams.

LaVon Stennis Williams has made extraordinary contributions to Nebraska's Second Congressional District, and we are grateful for her tireless work in preserving our Nation's history by empowering its future.

I thank LaVon Stennis Williams.

HONORING JAQUIE ALGEE

(Mrs. RAMIREZ of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and celebrate Jaquie Algee, a powerful and loving champion for justice, humanity, and solidarity.

As the daughter of civil rights activists from the south who marched alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Jaquie's political education began at home. She was raised on the stories of neighbors fighting side by side to defend their dignity and to realize their collective liberation. Those early lessons shaped her consciousness and became the foundation on which her impressive life's work is built.

For decades, Jaquie has organized people to build power, to demonstrate solidarity, and to stand up and fight back against injustice.

Whether as the board president and founding member of Chicago's Women's March, her work with the Poor People's Campaign, or her current service as the vice president of external relations for SEIU Healthcare, Jaquie has not only been on the front lines for some of the most significant struggles, but she is the light that has guided our movements with fierceness, joy, authenticity, and powerful love.

The work she holds closest to her heart unfolded over two decades ago after the murder of her son and only child, Kenneth. Kenneth was a victim of gun violence. As an assignment of love, Jaquie helped organize one of the biggest marches in the Nation's Capital that the Nation had ever seen: the Million Mom March on Mother's Day of 2000. In front of the White House, she held up Kenneth's picture, honored her son and every single child we have seen lost to gun violence.

For Algee, marching is a sacred act. When we march, we resist despair. When we stand up and press on, we demonstrate that we will keep fighting until we are, in fact, victorious. When we lock arms, we remember that we are not alone.

That is the gift of Jaquie Algee. For so many of us, she has motivated us to persist, to face the light, to never give up, and to hold out hope because we, in fact, are not alone. Whenever she can be, she is right next to us, arm in arm, marching on.

On behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, it is my honor to commend Jaquie Algee for her lifelong commitment to building the beloved community, championing civil and worker rights, and practicing solidarity across our intersections, across our identities, and across our issues.

I thank Jaquie Algee for being a spiritual mother for me. We know that all power is to the people.

CELEBRATING LIFE OF KEVIN GONZALEZ

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life and legacy of Kevin Gonzalez, my 18-year-old constituent who was a U.S. citizen boy who lived his last few weeks of life fighting to be reunited with his parents, showing us all the power of love.

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

Born in Chicago, Kevin was a U.S. citizen whose family was separated after his parents, Isidoro and Norma Anabel, were deported to Mexico. To keep their family together, Kevin moved to Mexico. But during a recent visit to Chicago, he became ill, was diagnosed with terminal colon cancer, and began undergoing treatment.

After Kevin stopped responding to treatment, his parents sought permission to travel to the U.S. to see their son. Their visas were denied by DHS. Desperate to reach their son, they tried to return to him the only way they

knew: by crossing the border. But instead of being reunited, they were detained by CBP for a month.

That is when Kevin showed us the power of love. He fought—even as he lay dying—to be reunited with his parents. He spoke out. And while a community came around him to reunite him with his parents, Kevin's love kept him alive until he could see them one more time. He waited for them. And he passed away less than 24 hours after reuniting with them.

Kevin's example invites us to love one another in a way that defies borders and death and authoritarians and all those who would separate our families and seek our destruction.

So, on behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, it is my honor to commend Kevin Gonzalez. May we honor his memory by fighting for a more compassionate and just world that honors our shared humanity and dignity.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life and legacy of Kevin Gonzalez—my 18-year-old constituent, who showed us all the power of love.

Kevin, nacido en Chicago, era ciudadano estadounidense; su familia fue separada después de que sus padres, Isidoro y Norma Anabel, fueran deportados a México. Para mantener a la familia unida, Kevin se mudó a México. Sin embargo, durante una visita reciente a Chicago, enfermó, fue diagnosticado con cáncer de colon terminal y comenzó a recibir tratamiento.

Cuando Kevin dejó de responder al tratamiento, sus padres solicitaron permiso para viajar a Estados Unidos y ver a su hijo. El Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (DHS) les negó las visas. Desesperados por llegar hasta él, intentaron reunirse con su hijo de la única manera que conocían: cruzando la frontera. Pero, en lugar de reencontrarse, fueron detenidos por CBP durante un mes.

Fue entonces cuando Kevin nos mostró el poder del amor. Luchó—incluso mientras moría—por reencontrarse con sus padres. Alzó la voz. Y mientras la comunidad se unía para lograr ese reencuentro, el amor de Kevin lo mantuvo con vida hasta que pudo verlos una vez más. Los esperó. Y falleció menos de 24 horas después de haberse reunido con ellos.

El ejemplo de Kevin nos invita a amarnos unos a otros de una manera que desafía las fronteras, la muerte, a los autoritarios y a todos aquellos que pretenden separar a nuestras familias y buscan nuestra destrucción.

Por eso, en nombre del Tercer Distrito Congresional de Illinois, es un honor para mí reconocer a Kevin González. Honremos su memoria luchando por un mundo más compasivo y justo, que respete nuestra humanidad y dignidad compartidas. Descansa en paz.

Mrs. RAMIREZ. May Kevin rest in power. I thank him for showing us the power of love, the power of a boy who just wanted to be reunited with his parents one last time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHMIDT). The gentlewoman from Illinois will provide the Clerk a translation of her remarks.

HONORING LIFE AND LEGACY OF KYLE BUSCH

(Mr. MCDOWELL of North Carolina was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MCDOWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Kyle Busch, a fierce competitor, a legendary race car driver, and, most importantly, a great man.

Kyle was a husband to Samantha and a father to two beautiful children. He was a brother, a son, a businessman, a driver, an entertainer, and one of the greatest competitors to ever get behind the wheel racing cars.

If I sat here and listed every checkered flag that Kyle Busch ever won, my time would expire before I could finish.

Kyle Busch was a winner. Kyle won 234 races across the top 3 series in NASCAR, including 63 wins at the cup level, making him the ninth all-time winner on the cup series.

Kyle was a fierce competitor. It was like he hated losing more than he loved winning. We all got an inside look at that through listening to his team radio on race days. Kyle had an expectation that if he was behind the wheel of a car, he should win. He had every right to believe that because he was that good.

We all remember the Michael Jordan flu game during the 1997 NBA finals. Imagine Michael Jordan playing every game after the All-Star break with the flu and still winning MVP because that is what Kyle Busch did.

In February of 2015, Kyle wrecked hard at Daytona and compound fractured his right leg and broke his left foot. After multiple surgeries, by early May, Kyle was back racing in the All-Star race. By November, Kyle Busch was a NASCAR champion.

Behind the wheel, Kyle Busch was fast. Truth be told, sometimes he was too fast. Even NASCAR couldn't contain him, and he was regularly penalized for speeding off of pit row. This would infuriate Kyle. But he was so fast that by making him go to the back of the pack, that didn't mean he wouldn't still win.

Mr. Speaker, Kyle Busch's story was that of race legends racing with incredible teams. He started in the truck series for Jack Roush and Roush Racing. He spent time with Hendrick Motorsports racing for Rick Hendrick. From 2007 to 2023, Kyle drove the number 18 for Coach Joe Gibbs at Joe Gibbs Racing. Then, in 2023, he joined Richard Childress Racing and welcomed North Carolina, racing in the number 8 car proudly representing my hometown.

He also drove for two of the best team presidents in NASCAR with Dave Alpern at Joe Gibbs Racing and Mike Verlander at Richard Childress Racing. Both call the Sixth District of North Carolina their home.

Kyle's impact across the NASCAR family was massive. He inspired a generation of drivers who are working their way through the ranks right now. That impact alone is an incredibly strong legacy to leave.