

recognize that the mission of the Peace Corps is as important as it has ever been. At a time when there is still tremendous need outside our borders, Peace Corps volunteers must continue their mission of helping others help themselves. Additionally, those volunteers must continue to serve—as they have in the past—as our nation's citizen ambassadors to people in other countries, and, once they arrive back home, as liaisons between the citizens of our country and the citizens of the country where they served.

I hope that Congress will continue to support and expand this vital institution for decades to come.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 4, 2010*

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, on Monday, February 22 I was unavoidably absent from the House Chamber. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 49 and 50.

#### NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK

#### HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 4, 2010*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, as a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer who spent two years in Ethiopia with my wife Patti eradicating small pox and building schools, it is my pleasure to recognize National Peace Corps Week.

Forty-nine years ago this week, President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps as a way to show the world that the United States is interested in helping our struggling neighbors across the globe. Since then, nearly 200,000 Americans have served in the Peace Corps in 139 countries around the world.

Peace Corps volunteers educate children, treat illnesses, assist local businesses, introduce new technologies, modernize agricultural techniques, and help protect local water supplies. To millions of people in the developing world, Peace Corps volunteers are the face of America, and we are a safer and more appreciated nation because of it.

To the 7,671 volunteers around the world presently engaged in the Peace Corps' noble mission, thank you for your service. So long as I am in Congress, I will resolutely support you in your efforts. You stand on the shoulders of giants, and you are a vital contributor to a more peaceful and just world.

#### RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF JAMES B. BLASINGAME

#### HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 4, 2010*

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, today I congratulate James B. Blasingame on

his retirement from the Alaska Railroad. Mr. Blasingame started at the Alaska Railroad at age 35 starting as a programmer. He has moved up through the company culminating his career as Vice President of Corporate Affairs. In 1985, Mr. Blasingame was appointed by the Alaska Railroad as the Federal coordinator where he oversaw the transfer of the Federally-owned Alaska Railroad to the State of Alaska.

The Alaska Railroad has been an outstanding organization in Alaska promoting expansion and economic development throughout the state. I commend Mr. Blasingame and his tireless effort within the company to improve the railroad's operations, facilities and safety performance. Not only do I want to commend him on his work, I would also like to applaud the amount of time he spent volunteering on a number of non-profit, civic boards and organizations, including Providence Hospital, Anchorage School Business Partnership, World Trade Center of Alaska and Credit Union National Association.

Today, I congratulate and recognize Jim on his retirement and years of service to Alaskan residents and the development of the Alaska Railroad and wish him good luck in the next chapter of life.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to submit a resolution approved by the Alaska Railroad Board of Directors commending Jim for his service.

#### RESOLUTION 2009-58

Whereas, James B. Blasingame, at the young age of 35, began his employment with the Alaska Railroad as a Programmer and was later promoted to various positions including Supply Analyst, Management Analyst, and Executive Administration Director leading to his ascension in 1993 to Vice President of Corporate Affairs; and

Whereas, James B. Blasingame not only loves history, but has helped to make history at the Alaska Railroad, by serving as the State Manager of the Alaska Railroad Transfer Project supporting the effort in the early 1980s to transfer the Railroad from Federal to State ownership; and

Whereas, James B. Blasingame has served as the Alaska Railroad Board of Directors' Board Secretary since 1985, managing corporate governance, policy development, government and community relations, corporate asset oversight including records preservation and philanthropy; and

Whereas, throughout his tenure as Board Secretary and Vice President Corporate Affairs for the Alaska Railroad, James B. Blasingame was part of a team instrumental in qualifying the Alaska Railroad for federal grants used to improve the Railroad's operations, facilities and safety performance; and

Whereas, James B. Blasingame has worked tirelessly to mentor fellow railroaders, earning terms of endearment such as "Mother", "Dutch Uncle", and "Oracle" and instilling an understanding in all for our past and a commitment to our future as a state-owned enterprise that safely operates on a self-sustaining basis and supports the economic development of our state; and

Whereas, James B. Blasingame has served our Alaska community through his volunteer time and efforts on a number of non-profit, civic boards and organizations, including Providence Hospital, Downtown Partnership, Association, Anchorage School Business Partnership, World Trade Center of Alaska, Alaska Credit Union League, Denali/Alaskan Federal Credit Union, Credit Union National Association; and

*Therefore be it resolved*, the Alaska Railroad Board of Directors extends its most sincere

appreciation to James B. Blasingame for his long-standing dedication to the Alaska Railroad and his distinctive leadership role in the maturation of the Railroad into an award winning, world class state-owned corporation; and

*Be it further resolved*, that since James B. Blasingame has invested countless hours toward the development of the Alaska Railroad and because his dedication warrants permanent recognition, the Alaska Railroad Corporation Board of Directors hereby adopts this resolution renaming the Alaska Railroad's Denali Board Room the "James B. Blasingame Board Room".

#### NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK, THE 49TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF THE PEACE CORPS

#### HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 4, 2010*

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I am continually inspired by the great philanthropy and giving nature of the American people. When humanity suffers, where calamity arises—floods in Indonesia, earthquakes in Haiti or Chile, war-torn landscapes around the world or in poverty stricken populations in the Sudan—Americans respond with their time, energy and sacrifice. This outpouring of generosity to foreign lands and different cultures is a uniquely American trait. The Peace Corps, created 49 years ago this week, embodies that trait.

It was President John F. Kennedy who urged Americans to serve their country by working in developing countries and their local villages to enhance the quality of life for others. Approximately 7,600 Peace Corps Volunteers, including five from Southwest Missouri, are serving in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific Islands.

I am proud of the service of the five Southwest Missourians currently volunteering in the Peace Corps. Megan Abbott began her service in Belize four months ago. Austin Durr has been in Paraguay since 2007. Laura Pegram has served in Botswana since June 2008. Bruce Taylor has served for one year in Kenya and will serve another year. Scott Tuttle has been in Niger since 2008. Leaving behind the comforts and conveniences of home, Peace Corps volunteers like Abbot, Durr, Pegram, Taylor and Tuttle are symbols of our nation's commitment to progress, opportunity and development in the developing world.

Their desire to make a difference, like that of 200,000 Americans who have served since 1961, has improved the lives of millions of people around the world.

Peace Corps volunteers learn languages and receive extensive cross-cultural training, enabling them to function effectively at a professional level. Volunteers have made lasting contributions around the world in agriculture, business development, information technology, health, education, HIV/AIDS, youth and the environment.

Recognizing the legions of Peace Corps volunteers, past and present, who work hard everyday to improve the lives of the people they assist affirms our nation's commitment to helping people help themselves in the pursuit of

life, liberty and prosperity throughout the world.

To Megan Abbott, Austin Durr, Laura Pegram, Bruce Taylor and Scott Tuttle, I want to express my sincere thanks for your service in the Peace Corps.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF RAYMOND E. DOBRATZ, JR.

#### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 2010

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark the passing of a great citizen and member of the community in eastern Connecticut. Raymond E. Dobratz, Jr. of Old Saybrook, a beloved son and brother, devoted husband and grandfather, died tragically while working on the site of the Kleen Energy Plant in Middletown on February 7, 2010.

Ray was a masterful tradesman and a 40-year member of the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 777 who spent his life giving back to the people around him. He served his country with honor in the Army National Guard and also served a member of the Old Saybrook Police for 13 years. He had an incredible sense of what it meant to be a citizen and he spent his life putting that into practice.

Ray's love for his wife, 3 sons, and 5 grandchildren is what really defined him. Two of Ray's sons grew up shadowing their father as a pipefitter. They admired him greatly and were thrilled when they got to spend time with him on the football field. Ray co-founded the Old Saybrook Youth Football Athletic League as a coach in the 1980s and it still exists today. He loved sports and often played football, soccer, and baseball with his friends and family when he had the time. He was a fixture in the community and will be deeply missed.

Ray had a seemingly endless amount of energy to give to his country, town and family. He was a model citizen and family man. I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning the loss of Raymond E. Dobratz, Jr.

#### RECOGNIZING CURT TOMASEVICZ OF SHELBY, NEBRASKA

#### HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 2010

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a rare achievement, the pursuit of which took years of hard work and dedication. On February 27, 2010, Curt Tomasevicz became the first born and raised Nebraskan to win a gold medal at the Winter Olympics. The gold medal ended a 62-year drought for the United States in the 4-man bobsled event.

Curt Tomasevicz was born and raised in Shelby, Nebraska. He attended the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, where he walked on to play football for the Cornhuskers and was named to the Academic All Big XII team in 2002. He began his bobsledding career in 2004, just two years prior to being named to the United States 4-man bobsled team.

Curt made his first appearance in the 2006 Olympics, when he and his team brought home sixth place. With this first taste of competing on the world stage, he used his Nebraskan spirit and work ethic to strive for excellence in the 2010 games. The United States bobsled team, known as the "Night Train," set records as they accumulated a time of 3 minutes, 24.46 seconds which proved to be nearly four-tenths faster than second place.

He has made all of Nebraska and America proud and is an inspiration to younger generations. His intensity, work ethic, and service to the country was on display for all the world to see during the Winter Olympics. His efforts and accomplishments are remarkable and I thank him for his dedication to the country and excellent example to our State.

#### THE FALL OF THE ALAMO

#### HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 2010

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, throughout U.S. history, individuals selflessly and courageously have taken a stand for freedom and liberty, many times against great odds.

March 6, 1836 was one of those times. This date is what most Americans know as the day the Alamo fell against Mexico General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna and his Mexican troops. The siege against the Texian Army lasted 13 days. The battle began on February 23rd when Santa Anna and his army arrived at the Alamo and caught the Texian Army by surprise. On the second day of the siege, Texian Alamo Commander William Barret Travis called for reinforcements, bravely stating: "I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism, and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch . . . Victory or Death."

On the eighth day of the 13-day siege, 32 additional men from Gonzales arrived ready to fight for Texas. Legend has it that Commander William B. Travis drew a line on the ground asking the few men present to step over if they were willing to stay and fight, to defend the Alamo for the sake of Texas. All present stepped over, except one.

There were 189 defenders, including famous knife fighter Jim Bowie and former Tennessee congressman Davy Crockett. All of the defenders were volunteers and originated from all over the globe. Eleven of the defenders were born in Texas, 131 of the defenders were born in some 23 various states in America, 29 of the defenders were born abroad, mostly in Europe, one defender was a freed slave, and there are 17 defenders of which their birthplace has not been identified.

All of the Alamo defenders stood their ground against the overwhelming odds. Some estimate that Santa Anna's army consisted of 6,000 troops. At the end of the day on March 6, 1836, after the smoke cleared, all 189 defenders gave their lives for Texas. The enemy casualties were enormous. As Travis said, "Victory will cost the enemy more than defeat."

This historic battle resulted in General Sam Houston having enough time to gather a

strong army of men to avenge Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto 46 days later. On April 21st Sam Houston led an army of 800 volunteers and angry Texans to defeat Santa Anna and his 1,500 strong Mexican army, most of whom were the same invaders that were at the Alamo. This victory played an important role in the Texas Revolution.

Texas was an independent nation for 9 years following the Battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto. The freedom the Texans enjoyed during those years would not have occurred without the thousands of selfless volunteers who risked and gave their lives to protect the liberties they believed every person should retain.

Today the Alamo remains a great treasure to the story of Texas and represents the steadfast, unrelenting character of the American spirit. The fight for freedom that these heroic Alamo defenders displayed is a testament of living boldly and courageously for the cause of liberty. We honor and thank these volunteers for their role in defending and fighting for Liberty and for Texas.

And that's just the way it is.

#### ALAMO DEFENDERS

1. Abamillo, Juan, TX, 2. Allen, Robert, VA, 3. Andross, Miles DeForrest, VT, 4. Autry, Micajah, NC, 5. Badillo, Juan A., TX, 6. Bailey, Peter James III, KY, 7. Baker, Isaac G., AR, 8. Baker, William Charles M., MO, 9. Ballentine, John J., PA, 10. Ballantine, Richard W., Scotland, 11. Baugh, John J., VA, 12. Bayliss, Joseph, TN, 13. Blair, John, TN, 14. Blair, Samuel, TN, 15. Blazeby, William, England, 16. Bonham, James Butler, SC, 17. Bourne, Daniel, England, 18. Bowie, James, KY, 19. Bowman, Jesse B., TN, 20. Brown, George, England, 21. Brown, James, PA, 22. Brown, Robert, unknown, 23. Buchanan, James, AL, 24. Burns, Samuel E., Ireland, and 25. Butler, George, D., MO.

26. Cain, John, PA, 27. Campbell, Robert, TN, 28. Carey, William R., VA, 29. Clark, Charles Henry, MO, 30. Clark, M.B., MS, 31. Cloud, Daniel William, KY, 32. Cochran, Robert E., NH, 33. Cottle, George Washington, MO, 34. Courtman, Henry, Germany, 35. Crawford, Lemuel, SC, 36. Crockett, David, TN, 37. Crossman, Robert, PA, 38. Cummings, David P., PA, 39. Cunningham, Robert, NY, 40. Darst, Jacob C., KY, 41. Davis, John, KY, 42. Day, Freeman H.K., unknown, 43. Day, Jerry C., MO, 44. Daymon, Squire, TN, 45. Dearduff, William, TN, 46. Dennison, Stephen, England or Ireland, 47. Despallier, Charles, LA, 48. Dewart, Lewis, NY, 49. Dickinson, Almeron, TN, and 50. Dillard, John Henry, TN.

51. Dimpkins, James R., England, 52. Duvall, Andrew, Ireland, 53. Espalier, Carlos, TX, 54. Esparza, Gregorio, TX, 55. Evans, Robert, Ireland, 56. Evans, Samuel B., NY, 57. Ewing, James L., TN, 58. Faunterloy, William Keener, KY, 59. Fishbaugh, William, unknown, 60. Flanders, John, MA, 61. Floyd, Dolphin Ward, NC, 62. Forsyth, John Hubbard, NY, 63. Fuentes, Antonio, TX, 64. Fuqua, Galba, AL, 65. Garnett, William, VA, 66. Garrand, James W., LA, 67. Garrett, James Girard, TN, 68. Garvin, John E., unknown, 69. Gaston, John E., KY, 70. George, James, unknown, 71. Goodrich, John C., VA, 72. Grimes, Albert Calvin, GA, 73. Guerrero, José María, TX, 74. Gwynne, James C., England, and 75. Hannum, James, PA.

76. Harris, John, KY, 77. Harrison, Andrew Jackson, TN, 78. Harrison, William B., OH, 79.