

The town did receive financing to create a unique attraction at the Portal 31 exhibition mine. Visitors tour a restored section of an underground mine where workers produced more than 100 million tons of coal from 1917 to the early 1960s.

Recordings and animatronic displays tell the story of mining and the town over decades, covering technology, safety concerns, union organizing, and the rise and fall of Lynch.

**'HERE TO HELP PEOPLE'**

Residents say Meridzo also is a key resource for the town.

In addition to renovating the building for the coffee shop, the ministry operates a convenience store, a gym, a veterinary clinic, retreat centers and a stable in Harlan and Letcher counties.

Meridzo sees its mission as helping people with practical needs, including jobs, and in the process share the Gospel of Christ, said Lonnie Riley, who founded the ministry with his wife, Belinda, in 1999.

"We're here to help people," Riley said.

Meridzo is working to recruit a chiropractor, and has started a facility to grow shiitake mushrooms in sections of hardwood logs in the old bathhouse where miners cleaned up before going home.

There also is an effort underway to develop a customer-service center to provide jobs locally.

Betsy Shirey, who is developing the project, said her idea is a center where employees would field telephone calls and emails for other companies, and could provide other services, such as bookkeeping and marketing.

Shirey works for Humana, but after visiting Lynch on mission trips coordinated by Meridzo, she felt a spiritual calling to try to bring jobs to the area.

She can do her job from home, so she bought a house in Lynch and moved from Louisville.

Shirey said the lack of jobs in the area has helped create an attitude of entrenched hopelessness for many people.

"We've got to build up some infrastructure of meaningful work for people," Shirey said.

**MERGER AHEAD?**

Some think merging services for Lynch, Benham and Cumberland—or even merging local governments—would put all three on better footing.

The three lie end to end over a space of a few miles and have been known as the Tri-Cities for decades, but grew up as distinct places, with their own schools and competing sports teams, and have always maintained separate city services.

With all three stretched thin, however, their councils agreed to a merger study proposed by the Tri-City Chamber of Commerce, which said in its application for a grant that with declining populations and tax bases, the three towns "have struggled mightily in their efforts to maintain basic services to their citizens."

The study will focus on how the towns could form one government, how services could be combined, potential savings and how layoffs would be handled if needed.

W. Bruce Ayers, former president of Southeast Community and Technical College in Cumberland and head of the chamber, said many members believe merger is needed.

A merger would reduce costs, increase efficiency and give the unified city a better shot at government grants, Ayers said.

"I really fear for their existence unless they are willing to come together and work as one," Ayers said.

It will probably be next year before the study is done and the towns have to decide on merging.

Even if they do, Lynch won't lose its identity in its second century, said Mary Jo O'Bradovich, who with her husband Mike is involved in the centennial committee.

"After 100 years, I don't think anyone is going to say, 'I am from the Tri-Cities,'" she said. "Lynch will be Lynch."

**IN HONOR OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF ALICE LEE THOMASON WALKUP**

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 13, 2017*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention to recognize the 100th birthday of Alice Lee Thomason Walkup.

Alice was born on September 4, 1917 to Dr. James Wiley Thomason and Virginia Land Mizelle Thomason in Bullock County. She had one brother and one sister that she called "Denny" and "Son."

Alice attended Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama and after Huntingdon attended Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana.

When she returned to Alabama, she worked as a social worker in Bibb County, Alabama and married Reverend Bob Walkup in 1943. Bob was a Presbyterian minister in Ozark, Alabama. They were blessed with four children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

As the wife of a minister, she lived in numerous states including Alabama, Missouri, Mississippi, Texas, Arkansas and Tennessee.

Alice presently lives in Auburn, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the 100th birthday of Alice Lee Thomason Walkup.

**HONORING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF VICKIE HALE**

**HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 13, 2017*

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish a happy 100th birthday to Vickie Hale of New Richmond, OH.

Through her life, Vickie has been an incredible member of our community here in Ohio's Second District. It's people like her who make the world a lot nicer.

A retired school teacher and member of the New Richmond Historical Society, Vickie has spent her life dedicated to the life and improvement of her community and those around her.

Her public service and example to other is admired.

Vickie, as well as her husband John, a World War II veteran, have made New Richmond a better place throughout their lifetime, through their kindness and dedication to all.

Happy Birthday Vickie.

**HONORING RICK PANZAR ON RETIREMENT FROM MORE THAN 24 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**

**HON. SCOTT PERRY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 13, 2017*

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I offer my heartfelt congratulations to my constituent, Rick Panzar, on his upcoming retirement after more than 24 years of service to the United States Air Force.

Since he began his service to our Nation, Mr. Panzar has been assigned to the 366th Fighter Wing, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho; the 5th Bomb Wing, Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota; and since 2002, the 193rd Special Operations Wing in Middletown, Pennsylvania. He's deployed to Egypt, Bahrain, Turkey, Italy and Afghanistan. His numerous commendations and awards, including the Global War on Terror Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal and others, are a testament to his courage, tireless work ethic and character. His enduring legacy of service to our Nation truly is commendable.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, I commend and congratulate Rick Panzar upon his retirement and for his service to the United States of America.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO HANNAH ADAMS**

**HON. TED S. YOHO**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 13, 2017*

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate, honor and thank Ms. Hannah Adams, a young constituent from my district, for her exemplary service as a National Youth Ambassador for the Hyundai Hope On Wheels foundation to fight pediatric cancer.

Ms. Adams, a 14-year-old childhood cancer survivor from Middleburg, Florida, was selected to serve as a Hyundai Hope On Wheels National Youth Ambassador in March 2016.

Since that time, Ms. Adams has traveled across the country to share her story of courage and hope and to inspire others to join in the fight against cancer.

Ms. Adams joined Hyundai Hope On Wheels in its mission to educate people about pediatric cancer and to raise money—over \$130 million since 1998—to find a cure.

Over the last two years, Ms. Adams visited many children's hospitals and attended events to stand in solidarity with other children and families who are battling cancer or who have been impacted by the disease.

Ms. Adams was only five years old when she was diagnosed with a Stage 3 Wilms tumor that enveloped her kidney, and she has become one tough cancer survivor.

Ms. Adams is an inspiring example of bravery for all of us, and I am exceptionally proud of her for giving others hope. It is critical that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contributions this young woman has made.

Ms. Adams gives me hope for a better tomorrow and a future where no child has to hear the words, "You have cancer."