

Details of Cpl Presley's bravery were included on a memorial website. The author recounted the details of the day Cpl was mortally wounded. "Corporal Presley was the vehicle commander for the second Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement (MTVA) in the convoy," the author wrote. "As the convoy passed a taxi that had pulled off to the right side of the route, the taxi pulled out and into the path of Cpl Presley's vehicle. When Corporal Presley observed this, he immediately started to initiate escalation of force procedures. Due to the fact that the vehicle was non-responsive, Cpl Presley drew his M16 A4 and was preparing to engage the lone occupant of the taxi. As he did this, the SVBIED initiated its device early, before it had actually impacted the MTVA. This action undoubtedly saved the life of the MTVA driver. Cpl Presley was wounded by shrapnel in the blast and later died from his wounds. Cpl Presley's quick actions saved not only his driver, but also the cargo that they were carrying, the Iraq ballots. He valiantly put his fellow Marines and mission accomplishment ahead of his own safety."

A relative of Cpl Presley recounted the day of his memorial service. "There were two huge fire ladder trucks parked across from the funeral home. Their ladders were fully extended," the relative wrote. "Draped between them was a huge American flag. As the procession made its way to the church from the funeral home, there were firefighters, local police, state police, sheriffs, active and retired military lining the street and all standing at attention and saluting as the process passed by. It was really amazing to witness."

Cpl Presley was laid to rest at Magnolia Cemetery in Batesville, Mississippi. Cpl Presley is survived by his mother Pam Cousar; his stepfather, John Cousar; his brother, Colin Hawkins; and his grandparents, Mary Sue Presley, Mary Frances Woods and Mitchell Woods.

Cpl Presley served our nation with courage and bravery. His service and sacrifice to protect the freedoms we all enjoy will not be forgotten.

#### CONGRATULATING THE HELIAS CRUSADERS VOLLEYBALL TEAM

#### HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Helias Crusaders Volleyball team on winning the Class 3 Volleyball State Championship.

This team and their coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing the Helias Crusaders Volleyball team for a job well done.

#### PROTECTING NORTH KOREAN REFUGEES

#### HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I held a hearing on the current situation facing North Korean asylum seekers and assessed both China's obligation to protect refugees and the effectiveness of global efforts to stop what the U.N. Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea called crimes against humanity experienced by refugees.

At a recent House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing, North Korean defector Ambassador Thae Yong-ho testified about the strategic value of both disseminating information into North Korea and the protection of North Korean refugees in China.

Drawing on an analogy about the fall of the Berlin Wall, Ambassador Thae claimed that there may be a similar result if China stopped repatriations of refugees and the U.S. and the international community expanded "soft power" news and information flows into North Korea.

As the Congress continues to look at ways to best apply maximum diplomatic and financial pressure on the regime of Kim Jong-un, this hearing explored the strategic relevance of further pressing the Chinese government to protect North Korean refugees and evaluate the impact of surging outside information into North Korea.

Amid escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula, we cannot forget those suffering under the North Korean regime and those North Korean refugees who are in China.

North Korean asylum seekers are at imminent risk of repatriation, torture, sexual violence, forced abortions, hard labor and even execution. China's repatriation of North Koreans is a stark violation of both the spirit and the letter of the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol to which China has acceded.

The Chinese government has a lot to answer for. It is no wonder that the UN Commission on Inquiry for North Korea Human Rights concluded that the Government of the People's Republic of China is aiding and abetting in crimes against humanity by forcibly repatriating North Korean refugees.

As many as 90 percent of North Korean women refugees in China fall prey to traffickers who sell the refugees into sexual slavery or forced marriages.

Labor trafficking is also pervasive. The government of North Korea and the government and businesses in China, Russia, and elsewhere in the world, profit from the trafficking of North Korean laborers.

In recent months, Chinese authorities reportedly deported hundreds of South Korean missionaries and NGO workers who have provided crucial help to the North Korean refugees in China.

The international community—especially the United Nations, the Trump Administration and the U.S. Congress—must insist that China honor its treaty obligations and end its egregious practice of systematic repatriation of North Korean refugees.

Chinese officials and businesses, complicit in repatriation of North Korean refugees or

those who profit from the labor trafficking should be held accountable.

The Congress has given the Administration the sanction tools that if used would send the right message—whether through the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act, the Global Magnitsky Act, or those sanctions attached to China's Tier 3 designation for trafficking in persons.

All should be used strategically and swiftly to send a clear message. For too long the world has tolerated China's failures to protect refugees. Those complicit in the repatriations of refugees and those who profit from the trafficking of North Koreans will be held accountable.

The ending of repatriations should be a bellwether for judging China's willingness to curtail Kim Jong-un's nuclear ambitions.

In addition to the protection of North Korea refugees, this hearing also assessed global efforts to surge news and information into North Korea.

Expansion of existing efforts to disseminate information into North Korea is critically important if for nothing else than to tarnish and undermine the Kim family's cult of personality.

The Kim family cult must be taken seriously as a national security threat and a barometer of Kim Jong-un's power. This cult of personality—sometimes called *Juche*—has inspired devotion from the North Korean people because of the cradle to grave propaganda they endure.

We must undermine the Kim family cult and the propaganda that grants Kim Jong-un almost god-like status. This status has allowed three generations of the Kim family to starve and abuse the North Korean people and divert scarce resources to the military and nuclear programs.

We must have an information surge into North Korea. Human rights groups are smuggling DVDs and USB sticks with video about the Kim family's sins into North Korea right now. Balloons are launched across the border with promises of a better life in South Korea. Radio programs broadcast daily messages and news, urging North Korea's "elite" to defect and turn against Kim Jong-un.

We know some of these efforts are having effect. We saw several high-level defections of diplomats, military officers, and the families of North Korea's elites in the last year. The number of asylum-seekers, depressed for several years by upgraded security efforts in China, has again begun to rise.

Efforts to get information into North Korea must be expanded dramatically. Washington should be leading this covert effort, working primarily with North Korea defectors groups in South Korea and with other human rights organizations.

The North Korean defector groups should be front and center in this effort—they know North Korea and they know the minds of its people. They know what information is needed to permanently tarnish the Kim family cult and what will motivate military leaders to defect.

Yesterday's hearing took place amid growing tensions on the Korean Peninsula. We must seek all viable options to deal with and resolve the North Korean issue, not only in military/diplomatic terms, but also in terms of human rights and freedom of the North Korean people.

I welcome and thank all of our witnesses. I valued hearing their observations and insights.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MARK SANFORD**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 672 and YEA on Roll Call No. 673.

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING  
THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
SPACE CENTER HOUSTON**HON. BRIAN BABIN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Space Center Houston, the Official Visitor Center of the NASA Johnson Space Center.

Since opening in 1992, Space Center Houston has welcomed nearly twenty million visitors and currently hosts nearly one million visitors annually in its 250,000 square-foot educational complex. The Manned Space Flight Foundation, a private entity separate from NASA, funds Space Center Houston, its educational programs and the preservation of artifacts in its space science museum. Educational emphasis is placed on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in a fun and engaging way.

At Space Center Houston you can see the history and future of human spaceflight under one roof and it is the only Smithsonian Affiliate museum in Houston. The Visitor's Center is home to a one-of-a-kind exhibit displaying the world's only shuttle replica (Independence) mounted on an original Shuttle Carrier Aircraft (NASA 905). For the first time, only at Space Center Houston, you can see the spacecraft from the first and last lunar landings under the same roof. Currently, Space Center Houston is partnering with the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum to display both the Apollo 11 and Apollo 17 command modules to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of our nation's extraordinary achievement of man's first step on the Moon in 1969.

Through Space Center Houston, the foundation can teach future generations how far we've come with the space program and emphasize how far we have to go to touch the rest of our universe.

Mr. Speaker, as the Congressman who represents Space Center Houston, and as Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Space, it is my distinct honor to recognize Space Center Houston on this milestone occasion.

CONGRATULATING THE NEW  
HAVEN SHAMROCKS BOYS CROSS  
COUNTRY TEAM**HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in con-

gratulating the New Haven Shamrocks Boys Cross Country team on winning the Class 1 Cross Country State Championship.

This team and their coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing the New Haven Shamrocks Boys Cross Country team for a job well done.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALL-  
EN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER ARMY  
SPECIALIST (SPC) RAPHAEL  
SAPTIAN DAVIS**HON. TRENT KELLY**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Specialist (SPC) Raphael Saptian Davis who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation on December 2, 2003, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SPC Davis was killed when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in Tampa, Iraq. SPC Davis was assigned to B Company, 223rd Engineer Battalion, Mississippi Army National Guard, based in Calhoun City, Mississippi.

According to the Associated Press, SPC Davis grew up in the Mississippi Delta. He lived with his mother in Tutwiler, Mississippi. SPC Davis graduated from Tallahatchie High School in Webb, Mississippi in 1998. SPC Davis attended Holmes Community College in Goodman, Mississippi where he was pursuing a degree in engineering. He then attended Hinds Community College in Jackson, Mississippi. Davis joined the Mississippi Army National Guard in 2001. SPC Davis was deployed during his second year of college.

Clifton Bailey, SPC Davis' father, remembers the last time he talked with his son on the phone. "He called me on November 16th," Mr. Bailey said. "He tracked me down until he found me at work. I never heard him sound so happy. He told me he was coming home. We all assumed he meant Tutwiler, but he knew he was going to his heavenly home. He was calling to say goodbye." Betty Davis Pimpton, SPC Davis' mother, said she always worried about her son as any mother would. "You always hope for the best, never thinking about the worst that can happen," Mrs. Pimpton said. "I was really proud of his service. He enjoyed it and wanted to make a career out of it."

Lakeitha Johnson, a classmate of SPC Davis, paid tribute to him on a memorial website. "There isn't a day that goes by when I don't think about my classmate and friend, Raphael," Lakeitha said. "I think everyone here agrees that the last two years without him have been tough. Even though his loss has left a huge void in our community, I always think of him and smile. I know that you are in heaven smiling down on us and we love you and miss you so much. We'll see you when we reach that other shore, Raph."

SPC Davis was the father of three children, Raphael Davis, Junior, Ravin Davis, and Razavier Seon Davis. His youngest child, Razavier Seon Davis, was born four weeks before SPC Davis was killed. Deetra Tucker,

mother of Razavier, was also a member of the Mississippi Army National Guard.

A funeral was held for SPC Davis at West Tallahatchie High School in Webb, Mississippi. SPC Davis was laid to rest in the family cemetery located on Sharkey Road in Glendora, Mississippi. SPC Davis' sisters and brothers wrote a special tribute to their brother which was printed in the program for the funeral. It read, "Ralph, our beautiful brother, there's really no need for words. Your life spoke loud and clear. You were not perfect and that's okay. No human being is. You are still our brother and we love you. There's a lot of press these days about how there are no heroes or great men for our children to look up to. They were wrong. Ralph, you are a hero and we will make sure that all of your nieces and nephews know you were that special hero. We love you."

SPC Davis is survived by his father, Clifton Bailey; his mother, Betty Davis Pimpton; his girlfriend, Deetra Tucker; the mother of his two oldest children, Kimberlie Blount; his three children, Raphael Davis, Junior, Ravin Davis, and Razavier Seon Davis; his eleven brothers, Cedric Davis, Demarcus Davis, Lamonte Harris, Clifton Davis, Junior, Xavier Bailey, Bernard Berryhill, Taierry Brown, Areail Wallace, Steve Hill, Terrence Steele, and Maurice Steele; his two sisters, Wynde Bailey, and Premmie Stevenson.

SPC Davis will always be remembered for his service and sacrifice to protect America and to preserve the freedoms we all enjoy.

## GODSPEED MARTIN WHITMER

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, we are thinking of my family friend Martin Whitmer and his wife, the former Julie Thurmond, as Martin is scheduled for open heart surgery this Thursday, December 14. We pray for his family in this difficult time and have faith that he will recuperate quickly to become even stronger than before.

IN HONOR OF LANETT WINNING  
AHSAA CLASS 2A HIGH SCHOOL  
FOOTBALL TITLE**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize Lanett High School for winning the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) Class 2A football state title for the first time ever.

The Panthers sealed their victory by beating Leroy High School 33-15 on December 8 at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the students and faculty of Lanett High School, the coaches, the players and all the Panthers fans on this exciting achievement. Go Panthers.