

to represent the House of Representatives at appropriate ceremonies for the observance of George Washington's birthday to be held on Friday, February 21, 2003.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF HON. JO ANN DAVIS OR HON. ROSCOE G. BARTLETT TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH FEBRUARY 25, 2003

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following Communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
February 13, 2003.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JO ANN DAVIS or, if not available to perform this duty, the Honorable ROSCOE G. BARTLETT to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through February 25, 2003.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointment is approved.

There was no objection.

HONORING JIM SACKETT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like the opportunity to recognize the career of a leading personality in Palm Beach County.

For 25 years, the Treasure Coast of south Florida has been graced by the reassuring voice of WPTV News Channel 5 anchorman Jim Sackett. Mr. Sackett has distinguished himself over the years by providing outstanding coverage of some of south Florida and the Nation's leading stories. From Hurricane Andrew to the 2000 presidential election, from the Lake Worth, Florida, school shooting to the horrific events of 9-11, Jim Sackett's presence on West Palm Beach's NBC affiliate station gave south Floridians a place of trust to turn to during these difficult times.

His life and work, however, have not centered solely on reporting the tragic events. Mr. Sackett is known throughout south Florida as a journalist of tremendous character and a committed member of the community. He has a weekly segment called "Thursday's Child," which profiles hard-to-place adoptable children, and so far has benefited hundreds of young children. He is recognized for his continued efforts the last couple of decades. The Friends of Abused Children presented Mr. Sackett with their Child Advocate of the Year award.

Due to circumstances in his family, Mr. Jim Sackett is also a long-time

supporter of the leukemia and lymphoma society and has been a passionate fund-raiser and advocate for the society. He has also served for 3 years as co-chairman of the American Heart Association's heart walk, yet another cause to which Mr. Sackett devotes his time and energy.

Mr. Sackett has been a fixture of the West Palm Beach area since 1978, both on and off air. He is a great news broadcaster, but an even greater citizen. He dedicates himself to the cause of pursuing journalistic excellence.

I want to take a moment to commend my good friend and Channel 5 news anchor Jim Sackett. I commend him for his service to south Florida. I congratulate him on 25 phenomenal years at WPTV News Channel 5, and I hope against hope that these 25 years are really just the beginning. Best wishes on his anniversary. Keep going.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO. addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PENCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL RESEARCH CONDUCTED ABOARD "COLUMBIA"/STS-107

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on January 16, 2003, the space shuttle *Columbia* and her crew, Commander Rick Husband, Pilot Willie McCool, Specialist Michael Anderson, Kalpana Chawla, David Brown, Laurel Clark, and Ilan Ramon, rocketed off launch pad 39 A, the same launch pad which was used to launch Apollo 11, the first manned mission to the Moon. I was there on that day on January 16th. It was a beautiful launch, filled with tremendous excitement and hope for the potential work of the crew of *Columbia*.

They left on a 16-day research mission, and they were performing research in a number of disciplines, from biological and medical research to physical sciences, Earth sciences and space sciences, as well as product development. In total, an amazing 86 different research experiments were ongoing during this extended shuttle mission.

This required the crew to work 24 hours a day in two different 12-hour-a-day shifts. Their motto for the mission was "ex orbe scientia": from orbit, science. Many people are saying that

we should abandon research in low-Earth orbit and head straight to Mars, but I can tell my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, as a medical doctor, I can attest to the myriad number of medical problems a crew to Mars may face.

The crew of STS-107 was working hard on a number of experiments to help us understand better and counteract some of the challenges medically and physiologically that a crew would face on an extended voyage such as a trip to Mars. I will just cite a couple of examples of the types of research they were doing.

One of the principal challenges of zero gravity is a decline in bone mass that occurs when we are up in space. It is actually we lose 1 percent of our bone mass each month we are on orbit. If we are to venture out truly into long-duration space missions, such as a trip to Mars, we need to find ways to counteract this bone loss that occurs on orbit.

The crew of STS-107, the *Columbia* mission that was tragically lost, was trying to understand better the bone loss that occurs in space and things that can be done to counteract it. Needless to say, as a physician, I know full well the tremendous potential that this research could have yielded back on Earth. I took care of many patients who suffered personal tragedies from the consequences of osteoporosis, the same phenomenon that occurs on orbit with our astronauts.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the research experiment was actually done on the astronauts themselves, and so a tremendous amount of knowledge and understanding about the effects of space on bone loss was lost with the crew.

Additional research was being done on the immune system. As we all know, our Nation, our world, has been wracked by new challenges, medical challenges that affect the immune system in humans, and what has been discovered is that the immune system of astronauts on orbit is impaired. Whether it is the stress of rocketing off into space or adaptation to zero G or other features of the unique features of space environment, astronauts on orbit experience a loss of immune function, and the crew of STS-107 was studying this issue as well.

They were studying pharmacokinetics that are changed in space. Pharmacokinetic is the absorption of drugs from our gastrointestinal tract and how they are handled and eliminated by our body, and there are some very, very unique features of the zero G environment that this crew was studying.

Protein turnover in space. We all lose muscle mass as we age. As well, we lose muscle mass in space, and this loss of muscle mass with aging, there may be ways to counteract that, and there may be links to counteracting this muscle mass loss in space and what we