

many wonderful qualities of aging. As a prime representation of senior activism in America, the Ms. Senior America Pageant's philosophy is based upon the belief that seniors are the foundation of America, and that it is upon their knowledge, experience and resources that the younger generation has the opportunity to build a better society. As a representative of one of the largest senior communities in America, I share this philosophy and acknowledge the importance of seniors in the development of our youth and our communities as a whole.

Joanie Helgesen moved to Florida 4 years ago, and in that short time has been very active in the community. She is a tap dancer, showgirl and harpist with the Original Florida Follies, a non-profit organization of 50 performers, ages 60 to 90, who present spectacular stage extravaganzas each winter season with proceeds going to children in need and at risk in south Florida. She also does commercial modeling and is an animal lover who rescues homeless and neglected animals. A mother of two daughters and five grandchildren, Joanie believes life begins at 60, and she is making the most of her golden years.

I am proud to recognize Joanie Helgesen for being named Ms. Florida Senior America 2007; she is well deserving of this title and is a great representative of the senior community in south Florida.

#### TRIBUTE TO CHARLES E. HAAS

### HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 22, 2008*

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor a patriot and public servant, Charles E. Haas of Hurricane, WV for 39 outstanding years of service.

Charles retired this month from the Office of Personnel Management Federal Investigative Services Division. His span of 39 years includes working for the United States Air Force with the Office of Special Investigations, the Defense Investigative Services, and finally the Federal Investigative Services in Charleston, WV.

Charles is a true patriot who served with the West Virginia National Guard for 20 years, where he retired as Chief Master Sergeant in 2001. His commitment to serve our Nation and the personnel security mission as well as his high standards of character and professionalism are to be commended.

I wish Charles E. Haas congratulations on his retirement and thank him for his service to our country and all his contributions to our great State.

#### TRIBUTE TO KELVA NELSON

### HON. GEOFF DAVIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 22, 2008*

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise this evening to honor 27-year teaching veteran Kelva Nelson, who is a second grade teacher at Crabbe Elementary School in Ashland, KY.

Kelva was chosen by the U.S. Department of Education to receive the prestigious 2007 American Star of Teaching Award from Kentucky. Across the Nation, one teacher was chosen from each State to receive the American Star of Teaching Award, which recognizes dedication and innovation in the classroom.

As a teacher at Crabbe Elementary, Kelva believes that all of her students can achieve. Each day, she enters the classroom with enthusiasm to teach. Her innovative teaching style and imagination have brought learning to life for the many students that have entered her classroom. I applaud her commitment to educating the next generation of Kentuckians. I am extremely proud of Kelva and her tremendous professional accomplishments.

#### RECOGNIZING DAN BEARD, "GREENING OF THE CAPITOL"

### HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 22, 2008*

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, Members of the House, I rise today to recognize the great efforts by House Chief Administrative Officer Dan Beard to make the Capitol a more environmentally sustainable workplace. Mr. Beard has spearheaded the "Greening of the Capitol" initiative, a mission to make the millions of square feet of Capitol infrastructure a model of sustainability.

From recyclable paper and energy-efficient light bulbs to cafeteria composting and sustainable seafood, Mr. Beard has re-imagined the Capitol complex as a new, greener place to work. I would like to convey my gratitude for his hard work and dedication and vow to continue as a partner toward this very worthwhile goal.

I would like to submit for the RECORD an article appearing in the Washington Post on January 16, 2008. The article, written by Jane Black, reviews many of the excellent improvements Mr. Beard has brought about in our cafeterias.

#### ON CAPITOL HILL, A VOTE FOR EDIBILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Congress is back in session this week, soon to tackle such solemn matters as the destruction of CIA videotapes and the credit crunch. But in the halls of the Longworth House Office Building, much of the chatter is about another weighty matter: the new cafeteria food.

As staffers briskly walk the long corridors, they stop to poke into Goodies, the renamed and renovated Longworth Convenience Store, which now features organic chocolate along with the old Cup O' Noodles. Or they peep into the rehabbed Creamery, formerly Scoops ice cream parlor. The whole place has an aura of curious excitement, like a college during orientation week. (Then again, that may be because many of the staffers look as if they could still be in school themselves.)

Since members departed for the winter recess, the House cafeterias, which turn out 2.5 million meals a year, have undergone extreme makeovers. Longworth Cafe, the largest in the complex, was transformed first. Over the weekend of Dec. 15, the old salad bar was swapped for one made of sustainable materials, "green" signs were installed and entrees such as mystery meatloaf and mashed potatoes disappeared, replaced by

crispy chicken with goat cheese and spinach and a "panzanella" station, where staffers can build a salad of marinated figs, prosciutto and feta cheese.

As of Monday, Restaurant Associates—the new contractor, which also supplies food to the Kennedy Center and the National Gallery—had also reopened the cafeterias in the Rayburn and Cannon buildings and the Members' Dining Room.

If only more congressional work were done as swiftly. The changes are part of the larger Green the Capitol project, an initiative of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) that aims to make the House carbon neutral by the end of the session. The dining service was a prime target, and not only because of the 1950s-era food. Cafeteria waste accounted for half of the estimated 250 metric tons of trash the House sends to landfills annually. Now the plates, cutlery, cups—everything except the soup and coffee lids—is compostable and turned to pulp on-site. In addition, the cafeteria offers fair-trade coffee, certified sustainable seafood and as much organic, locally grown food as it can deliver.

"I don't know much about the greening, but the food is a lot better," said Caitlin Lenihan, press secretary for Rep. Brian Higgins (D-N.Y.), standing in line at the panzanella station. "I'd stopped coming a while back, but I've already had the pizza and the barbecue. It's all improved."

Other staffers agreed, giving high marks to the quality and variety of food. (And this reporter can vouch for their good taste. The panzanella salad, while a far cry from the Italian bread salad for which it is named, was fresh, and the Asian shrimp wrap was nicely balanced by crunchy Napa cabbage and carrot slaw in ginger dressing.)

But the embrace of change, so touted on the campaign trail, clearly has not quite filtered down to the aides who keep the Capitol wheels in motion. Along with the praise came the inevitable griping—off the record, of course.

The No. 1 topic of complaint: that biodegradable cutlery. "Funky," "wacky" and "weird texture" were common descriptions. Put too much pressure on the fork, several staffers noted, and it snaps in half. "I even hear the spoons melt in hot drinks because they're made of cornstarch," said one staffer. (A test of that claim proved it was untrue: the first cafeteria urban legend.)

Complaint No. 2: the prices. Under particular scrutiny by caffeine-fueled aides were the bottles of Starbucks Frappuccino. One staffer was so incensed that he e-mailed his friends a chart illustrating how the new \$3.30 price is 47 percent higher than the \$2.25 the bottles sold for in the old cafeteria and 4.8 percent higher than the approximately \$3.15 they sell for in Starbucks stores. "The wraps are more expensive," said a Republican aide. "The main entrees are a little more. I'm not sure about the pizza, because I never would have eaten the pizza before."

A reasonable complaint—if it were true. With the exception of those Frappuccinos, the price hike is in their heads, says Aidan Murphy, Restaurant Associates' vice president of operations. All like items cost the same, he said; only new dishes, such as those from the twice-weekly sushi station, are more expensive than items on the old menus.

And predictably, there was a resistance to change itself. "This is an improvement, but there are little quirks you have to get used to," said one senior Democratic staffer who visits the cafeteria every day. "I used to get this yogurt in the morning. They don't have it anymore. They have organic yogurt, which I don't want."

The green efforts are "generally a good thing, and we support it," the aide said. "But