

All at the ready . . . all out in front ever steady while on the hunt, for our freedom to so insure . . .

But, in life . . . There are new battles, and new wars . . . Only won by heart's of gold so fine and pure, that which so touch us all with their sacrifice all the more . . . Building day by day, passing heartache's way . . . lifting up her head . . . This Magnificent Force . . .

In Susan Downes . . . In what was lost, we so see in life . . . against all odds, what so can be found! When Courage Crests, as her faith does us so bless . . . when but the best of all heart's so astounds . . .

Could we, would we? Ever find the such strength to go off to war, then come back home and fight one more? To rebuild where none lies left, without arms or legs . . . not to cry or beg, to so touch our Lord!

Some people, are put upon this earth . . . So sent down from our Lord above, to but teach us all above faith's true fine worth! To Teach Us To Reach Us, To So Touch All Our Hearts . . . inside all of our souls here first!

Against all odds! When, all the chips are down . . . only where heart's of faith so found . . . In such courage now, do our hearts astound . . . all in Heroes like Sue Downes! In Hearts As Found!

Susan Downes was a gunner in Afghanistan. She is an F4 in The United States Army. She lost both her feet and part of her legs in an IED explosion. She is from Tazewell, Tennessee, is married to her husband Gabriel, and they have two wonderful children named Austin and Alexis.

TRIBUTE TO LTG JOHN R. WOOD

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, it has come to my attention that LTG John R. Wood is retiring from the U.S. Army.

Lieutenant General Wood graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1972. He has served in many posts, including as the platoon leader to the commanding general of the 2nd Infantry Division of the 8th U.S. Army—Republic of South Korea, as a National Security Fellow to the White House, and as a commander at the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Experimentation Directorate.

Lieutenant General Wood has overseen the Joint Forces Command's missions on training, experimentation and integration for the U.S. military. Lieutenant General Wood is a highly decorated commander, earning the Bronze Star, Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, and many others. The General also holds advanced degrees from the University of Chicago and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Madam Speaker, LTG John R. Wood is a valuable member of his community, but moreover, an honorable soldier. His dedication to the Armed Forces should certainly be noted. I know the Members of the House will join me in thanking Lieutenant General Wood for his service in the U.S. military, and in wishing him and his family nothing but the best in the many years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 7063, THE U.S. AND THE WORLD EDUCATION ACT

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7063, the U.S. and the World Education Act, which I introduced in the House this week.

This bill addresses the need to improve student awareness of and achievement in international education so they will be able to compete in an information age world that is constantly shrinking due to rapid technological advances.

This bill will create a grant program to fund international education professional development for elementary and secondary teachers, and related supplemental extracurricular activities for students. These activities could include Model U.N., geography bees, and foreign language clubs, among many others.

In addition, H.R. 7063 would establish an international education research repository containing scientifically valid education research, and promising and exemplary practices related to international education and foreign language education. This repository would be available to state and local educational agencies in order to continually improve their international education curriculum and teaching methods.

This bill supports improvements in the way international education is taught in the classroom, and encourages students and teachers to engage in life-long learning on the various topics involved in international education, such as foreign languages, geography, world history, international economics and international culture.

These days with just a simple computer mouse click, we can create personal or professional relationships with anyone around the world. In the workplace, American-based multinational corporations and small businesses are increasingly in need of employees with knowledge of foreign languages and cultures.

Future generations need to be equipped with a skill-set that will help them be successful and meet the demands of a global workforce. H.R. 7063, the U.S. and the World Education Act will help prepare our students and our country for the global economy of the future.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN R. BLACKBURN, JR.

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of John R. Blackburn, Jr., Chairman of the UPMC Bedford Memorial Board of Directors. Mr. Blackburn will be retiring after 53 years of service to the UPMC Bedford Memorial Hospital. During his tenure John, or Jack, as he prefers to be known, has served in multiple leadership roles and has been active in a variety of committees includ-

ing the Finance Committee and the Scholarship Committee. Jack helped form the Memorial Hospital of Bedford County Foundation, worked on the Spring House Estates project, and was a key player during the transition of the hospital to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Mr. Blackburn was born on December 19, 1922 and has been a life-long resident of Bedford County. After graduating from Bedford High School he enrolled and graduated from the prestigious Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. Jack served in the Army Air Corps for 3 years and was 1st Lieutenant in the Pacific Theatre during World War II. He was also one of the select few who flew the B-32 bomber in the Philippines during that conflict. After his military service Mr. Blackburn returned home and became a partner of Blackburn Russell, a grocery distributor in Bedford.

When Jack became a member of the Bedford Memorial Hospital Board of Directors in 1955 he was following a path paved by his father, John Blackburn, Sr., who has been one of the original Board members. Jack's service to the hospital was anything but in his father's shadow. He served on 12 different hospital committees administering everything from the Buildings and Grounds Committee to the Congestive Heart Failure Committee. He was elected Secretary of the Board in 1964 and served in that role until he was elected Vice-President in 1976. Ten years later Jack found himself elevated to the position of President of the Board of Directors. His position was re-titled in 1994 making him Chairman of the Board. After 22 years of leading the Board, and 53 years of service overall, Jack made the decision to step down and enjoy retirement.

Mr. Blackburn and his late wife, Elizabeth dedicated their lives to improving their community. Jack has been an active member and leader in the Bedford community for many years and is well respected. A life of servitude to one's community is something to be proud of. It is also not one that is easy to step away from, because in a man like Jack Blackburn, the desire to help others and the community is something that never truly disappears. I would like to wish Mr. Blackburn all the best in his future endeavors. It is my pleasure to honor Mr. Blackburn today for his many years of service to the Bedford Community, and I hold him up as a model example of good citizenship.

TRIBUTE TO BOB AHRENS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the retirement of a local Ogden, Iowa mechanic, Bob Ahrens and to express my appreciation for his dedication and commitment to his community.

For 41 years, Bob has been fixing cars for his friends, neighbors and strangers in the Ogden area. He is known for doing quality car repairs without costing a fortune to his customers. He also has performed many jobs on cars where he did not bother to collect the money owed to him. His long-time business

has been a staple holding the community's transportation needs together, and his services will be greatly missed.

Bob Ahrens selfless, hardworking Iowa mentality has set a lasting standard for the people of the Ogden community. I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending Bob Ahrens for his service. I consider it an honor to represent Bob in Congress, and I wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement.

IN MEMORY OF PETTY OFFICER
JOSHUA T. HARRIS

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the life and memory of former Petty Officer First Class Joshua T. Harris, who was killed during combat operations in Afghanistan last week. Joshua was a native of Lexington, North Carolina, and was deployed to Afghanistan from an assignment at the Naval Special Warfare Development Group in Dam Neck, Virginia.

Joshua graduated from Lexington Senior High School where he distinguished himself as an outstanding linebacker earning both all-county and all-conference honors. He enrolled in Davison College in Davison, North Carolina, where he studied studio art before pursuing graduate studies in architecture at the University of North Carolina.

After enlisting in the Navy on August 23, 2000, Joshua attended Navy SEAL training in California.

Joshua Harris is survived by his mother Evelyn, his father Sam, his twin sister Mary-Maria Kirstin and his older brother, Sam Ranchor. He will always be remembered by his family and friends as a competitive athlete with a passion for art and design.

I would like to share with my colleagues a poem penned by Albert Carey Caswell in memory of Petty Officer First Class Joshua Harris, recognizing his heroism and sacrifice to America. The poem titled "Thou Art" reads as follows:

THOU ART

A thing of Beauty . . .
A sheer work of art . . .
Can only come but from deep inside one's heart . . .
From only deep down inside one's soul . . .
All in the brush strokes of a lifetime so . . .
All on the canvass of a life behold . . .
To all hearts and minds, and souls . . .
A thing of faith and courage, so!
A thing of beauty . . .
A work of art . . .
To warm all hearts as we grow old . . .
As was your fine life Josh, so . . .
All in courage's quote . . .
All in the seeds of freedom you so sowed . . .
As left behind, to all hearts which spoke . . .
All upon your fine canvass of life as lies such hope . . .
Which but means the very most . . .
That so touches all of our hearts and souls . . .
Is but your fine portrait of life, that which you so wrote!
Painted, all there by your oh so magnificent heart of gold . . .
All in this your Honor's Code . . .
Is but left a fine reflection of your very soul!

Bringing Light!
Bringing Hope!
As in the darkest days of war you fought . . .
Such a thing of beauty Joshua, as you Thou Art!
Are but the colors of your heart . . .
All in this your life's design!
Reminds us all, how against all odds your courage climbed . . .
As against the darkest of all evil's you so shined . . .
All in your Seal of Honor burning bright . . .
To win that day, that night!
Shining, all in your most sacrificial light . . .
Burning bold, burning bright . . . blessing all of us here this night!
For Joshua, how so you lived and died . . .
Brings such tears, even to The Angels eyes!
As so surely, it was but Heaven Joshua you'd find!
As we gaze upon this Masterpiece, all in the life you so left behind!
Mount Up Seal . . . Your new battle has begun . . .
It's your new war to be won!
All as an Angel in The Army of Our Lord, my son!
Now with wings of courage full . . .
A thing of beauty . . .
A work of art . . .
Joshua, my most magnificent of all sons . . .
You are Thou Art!
Amen. . .

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION THE PATIENT ADVOCATE ACT

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, access to quality, affordable health care is critical to the well being of our citizens. With 46 million uninsured, including 9 million children, and many more underinsured, we must focus on strengthening our existing system as we continue to work to assure that quality health care is available to all. The Patient Advocate Act will assist patients, particularly those with a chronic illness, in successfully meeting the challenges brought on by their illness.

Patients battling a life-threatening illness are generally ill-equipped to negotiate with insurance companies, hospitals and other medical providers. Advocates will be available to assist with job retention and other debt crisis matters, while the patients are dealing with the reality of their illness at the same time. The limited network of existing patient advocate programs have proven their value and cost effectiveness. It is in the best interest of the patient to have someone available to advocate on their behalf while suffering from chronic illness.

Madam Speaker, the Patient Advocate Act would establish a demonstration grant program for State, local, tribal and non-profit entities to develop and operate patient advocate programs. The programs will assist patients in resolving health insurance, job retention, debt crisis and other problems related to the patients' diagnosis and illness. Specific services include negotiating pre-authorization claims, expediting the appeals process on contested claims, resolving billing errors and other bill issues, resolving debt crises, brokering resources to supplement limits to insurance, gaining access to services for the uninsured,

and addressing other problems related to the patient's illness, at no cost to the patient. The grants will be made available to existing and new patient advocacy programs.

Madam Speaker, to ensure that patients facing serious illness are able to effectively address the major issues that confront them during their illness, it is vitally important that they have access to professional case management services. The Patient Advocate Act will provide communities with the ability to establish patient advocate programs to assist patients as they negotiate the challenges of serious illness. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

TRIBUTE TO JERRY HOWELL

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the retirement of Jerry Howell, organist at the Maxwell Church of the Brethren and Loring United Methodist Church of Maxwell, Iowa, and to express my appreciation for his dedication and commitment to his church and community.

For the past 50 years, Jerry has contributed his time and talents to his church community. He began piano lessons at the age of 11. In 1958, the organist at Santiago Methodist Church in rural Mitchellville retired, and at the age of 14, Jerry was called up to the organ bench. In 1989, Jerry and his wife Opal transferred their church membership to Loring United Methodist Church in rural Maxwell, Iowa. The organist at Loring retired, and Jerry was back on the organ bench. For the past 10 years, he was the organist for both Loring and Maxwell Church of the Brethren.

It is estimated that in the past 50 years, Jerry has played for 2,700 Sunday morning services, 120 funerals and 25 weddings. Unfortunately, Jerry's career has been cut short with his diagnosis of age-related macular degeneration that has caused blurry vision that makes reading and playing the music difficult. Although he no longer plays the organ at church, the memories of Jerry's musical contributions live on, and he continues to be an active member of his community.

Beyond retiring from his service at church, Jerry also retired from his job as an accounting technician at the Iowa Department of Transportation a year and a half ago, and he has taken the opportunity to travel around the country while his vision remains strong enough. I consider it an honor to represent Jerry Howell in the United States Congress, and I wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement as he continues to serve his community and travel around the country.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE RON LEWIS ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of the Honorable RON LEWIS for his service to the people