

Next week, the City of Waterbury will recognize Mr. Xhemal Dani as the 2015 Albanian Mayor of the Day. On that day, the double headed eagle flag will fly over Waterbury City Hall, and we will celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of the Albanian community over the past fifty years. The AACC has been instrumental in bringing our community closer together through religious and non-religious events including festivals, picnics, and charity dinners. Regularly taught Albanian language, culture, and history lessons at the center highlight the rich and vibrant heritage of the Albanian community.

The Albanian-American Community Center's mission began fifty years ago when a small committee organized to advance an environment where religious and social activities could thrive. Through strong work ethic and fundraising efforts, the organization, then-known as the Albanian American Moslem Community, was able to build a new mosque and bring an Imam to serve the City of Waterbury and the surrounding region. In 1969, construction began on the current mosque located on Raymond Street, allowing the Albanian-American Community Center to expand its membership and services to the community.

Under the leadership of President Visar Tasimi, the AACC has strengthened its Scholarship Program, making college more affordable for youth and their families. Since the fund's establishment in 2012, over \$10,000 has been awarded for higher education scholarships. I was pleased to be a part of the scholarship reception this summer and meet the talented recipients.

To the members and leadership of the AACC, thank you for your tireless efforts to encourage friendships and unity among all Albanian-Americans and educate the public about your traditions and culture. Your achievements are a true testament to the positive impact diversity can bring to our community. I am proud to represent you in Congress.

Congratulations to the Board of Directors, members, volunteers, and all who have helped organize the anniversary celebration. I look forward to many more years of your continued success.

#### TRIBUTE TO KEVIN COONEY

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate longtime anchorman Kevin Cooney of KCCI-TV in Des Moines. After 33 years at KCCI and a lifetime dedicated to journalism, Kevin has decided it's time to put down the notes, turn off the teleprompter and enjoy retirement.

Since 1982, Kevin has been a constant figure in Iowa's living rooms, bringing us the news. During that time, he has covered some of Iowa's most important news stories ranging from the catastrophic floods of 1993 to interviewing President Clinton at the White House on the day of the Oklahoma City bombing. His wide range of knowledge on the issues of the day and his ability to captivate large audiences are second to none.

As an Iowa native Kevin has always had a unique perspective on issues Iowans care

about the most. His passion and genuine love of reporting the news is clear. He has earned the respect of those all across Iowa's media for his professionalism as well as his knack for making those around him better. Kevin is a leader in the truest sense of the word and an ambassador for all Iowans, they have counted on him for breaking news the last 33 years and he has delivered.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Kevin on his retirement as one of the most trusted faces in Iowa news broadcasting. His unwavering support for the state of Iowa and his commitment to providing news stories with integrity is a testament to his character. I am proud to represent him, his family and his fellow colleagues in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Kevin on this incredible milestone and wishing him nothing but the best in his retirement.

#### RECOGNIZING MARGE LOZINAK LAWRENCE

### HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Marge Lozinak Lawrence of Springfield for her service to our country during the conflict in Korea. Marge was a nurse in Korea, joining the cadet nursing program for \$15 a month. She cared for wounded soldiers and did her best to save lives. Marge will be honored tonight at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association Annual Dinner with the 2015 DCVMA Freedom Medal. It's a fine tribute for someone who has served our nation and our warfighters overseas.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. MARK TAKAI

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, November 18, I was absent from the House due to illness. Due to my absence, I am not recorded on any legislative measures for the day. I would like the record to reflect how I would have voted had I been present for legislative business.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on Roll Call 634, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1210) Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3189) Fed Oversight Reform and Modernization Act.

I would have voted "yes" on Roll Call 635, the Motion to Recommit with Instructions for the Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act.

I would have voted "no" on Roll Call 636, the Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act.

I would have voted "yes" on Roll Call 637, the Reforming CFPB Indirect Auto Financing Guidance Act.

#### RECOGNIZING JOLIET CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S ANNUAL VET- ERAN CEREMONY

### HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joliet Central High School and its Veterans Ceremony.

On Friday, November 6, 2015, Joliet Central High School hosted its 5th Annual Veterans Ceremony to recognize the sacrifice of alumni, faculty, and community members who have served in the armed forces.

This year, Joliet Central High School honored the following veterans:

Joseph Berman; Charles Muller; Bill Thorns; Ted Micci; Felix Pasteris; Dan Ursitti; Edward Mena; Christo Dragatsis; Jerald Brazeal; Donald Boyer; Gregory E. Warren; Larry Musson; Frank Varman; Larry Evert; and Hank Pillard.

I would like to commend Joliet Central High School for recognizing our veterans and I join the students, faculty, and administrators in thanking them for their service.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF DONNA AND MICHAEL BARBETTI, RECIPIENTS OF THE 2015 SAM AND JANE CALI STAR AWARD FROM THE BROAD- WAY THEATRE LEAGUE OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

### HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Donna and Michael Barbetti, recipients of the 2015 Sam and Jane Cali Star Award from the Broadway Theatre League of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Broadway Theatre of Northeastern Pennsylvania was established in 1959 by the late Benno and Gertrude Levy. The Levy's love for theatre stirred their desire to bring Broadway to Scranton, thus providing access to this unique American art form to the citizens of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Broadway Theatre was blessed with a great board president for many years, the late Sam Cali, whose dedication and support moved the organization into the new millennium.

Each year, the Sam and Jane Cali Star Award is presented to a distinguished community leader who has demonstrated exemplary dedication and service to the arts in northeastern Pennsylvania. Donna and Michael Barbetti are longtime patrons of the arts and were jointly chosen for the award by a committee that wished to recognize their history of support.

Donna and Michael Barbetti are residents of the City of Scranton. Donna is a Registered Dietician with a Master's Degree from Marywood in Food and Nutrition. In addition to her involvement with the Broadway Theatre League, Donna is the President of the Lackawanna County Women's Commission and is a board member of the Pennsylvania Women's Commission. She also is a board member of St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen and the Scranton Area Foundation, and she is on the Advisory

Board for Penn State Worthington Campus. Michael is a Certified Public Accountant and operates his own private practice. He sits on the Board of Directors for Broadway in Scranton. Michael has also served as Chairman of the Board for the ARC of NEPA, The March of Dimes, and as a board member of Allied Services.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Donna and Michael Barbetti. Their selfless devotion to the arts has enriched the lives of many and has had a lasting, positive impact on the quality of life in northeastern Pennsylvania.

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RECOGNIZING MR. RUSTY CARTER

**HON. PATRICK MEEHAN**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 19, 2015*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor U.S. Army veteran Rusty Carter for his service to our country. Rusty is a long-time Delaware County resident who enlisted in the Army in April, 2009. Rusty became a paratrooper with the "Screaming Eagles" of the famed 101st Airborne Division. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2010 and in July of that year came under heavy enemy fire. Rusty was awarded a Purple Heart for his injuries in the battle but just a month later was back in the fight. Rusty was again injured in a Humvee accident in 2011. He'll receive the Freedom Medal from the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association tonight.

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IN HONOR OF WINES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S 2015 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON AWARD

**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 19, 2015*

Ms. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Wines Elementary School. For over fifty years, Wines Elementary School has benefited our community through its dedication to the education and development of Ann Arbor's youth. The U.S. Department of Education recognized this commitment by naming the school a 2015 National Blue Ribbon Award recipient.

Founded in 1957, Wines Elementary School's mission is to "create for every student a joyful environment that stimulates lifelong learning and inspires respect for individual differences." The school has actively worked to instill this mission by making community and family participation a cornerstone in the life of each student. Family volunteers organize community events such as the annual Run-a-Thon, in which students run laps around a track to raise money for charity, a movie night, and a country fair, as well as many other fun events. The school also partners with local charities and nursing homes to ensure students are provided opportunities to participate in and give back to their community.

In addition to active community involvement, Wines Elementary School has worked to strengthen all of its students by focusing on

each individual as a unique and capable learner. This has been done through the creation of personalized learning plans which ensures each teacher understands the special needs of their students. The hard work of students, teachers, and parents has resulted in excellent academic achievement. Their standardized tests scores have registered in the top 5% of all Michigan schools in combined measures of student achievement and growth. This earned the school the designation from the Michigan Department of Education as a Reward School and led the department to nominate the school for the National Blue Ribbon Award.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor the teachers, students and parents of Wines Elementary School. Their multifaceted methods to prepare our children have created a vibrant community which will invigorate Ann Arbor for years to come.

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IN HONOR OF MISS RUTHA MAE HARRIS

**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 19, 2015*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a legendary singer and activist in the Civil Rights Movement, Miss Rutha Mae Harris. Miss Harris will be celebrating her 75th birthday on Friday, November 27, 2015.

Miss Rutha Harris was born on November 27, 1940 in Albany, Georgia to the late Reverend and Mrs. I.A. Harris. She attended Albany's public schools, graduating from Monroe High School in 1958 and Albany State College, now Albany State University, in 1970. She also studied at Valdosta State University, Dillard University, and Florida A&M University.

In 1961, Miss Harris, who always had a love and talent for singing, joined the Original Freedom Singers. The Freedom Singers traveled more than 50,000 miles singing for the cause of freedom and raising funds for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). During the Albany Movement, Miss Harris was thrown several times into the same jail where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was jailed on multiple occasions.

In 1963, the Freedom Singers were signed to a recording contract with Mercury Records. This was the beginning of Miss Harris's professional career and helped propel her to the national stage. She performed in 46 states and the Virgin Islands, in renowned venues such as Radio City Music Hall in New York City and the Civic Opera House in Chicago, Illinois. The Freedom Singers also performed at the March on Washington in Washington, D.C. in 1963.

In addition to performing with the Freedom Singers, Miss Harris also recorded with the Landmark Gospel Singers, Georgia Mass Choir, and the legendary Whitney Houston. One of the highlights of Miss Harris's professional career was being selected to perform with the Georgia Mass Choir in the film, "The Preacher's Wife," starring Whitney Houston and Denzel Washington. In 2004, Miss Harris recorded her first album, "I'm on the Battlefield."

In 1998, Miss Harris organized the Albany Civil Rights Museum (now Institute) Freedom Singers. This group performs every second

Saturday of the month and travels to other cities. This group, along with the Albany Civil Rights Institute, helps to keep the Albany Movement alive for younger generations to learn of the passion and sacrifices made by their ancestors.

Miss Harris has been widely recognized for her music, her involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, and her continued activism. She received the Martin Luther King Dream Award in 2001 and the Trailblazer Award for Outstanding Work Preserving, Promoting, and Advancing the Tradition of African American Music in 2013, among many other awards and accolades. On February 9, 2010, Miss Harris had the honor of performing at the White House for President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama in a special event, "In Performance at the White House: A Celebration of Music from the Civil Rights Movement."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." The Freedom Singers brought light and love to those on both sides of the Civil Rights Movement. Miss Harris has helped to keep this light and love alive through her continued performances and her efforts to preserve the successes of the Movement for younger generations to enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me and my wife, Vivian, in commending and recognizing Miss Rutha Mae Harris for the inspiring life that she leads. We extend our best wishes to her as she and her family and friends prepare to celebrate her 75th birthday.

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RECOGNIZING MR. JOHN COOK

**HON. PATRICK MEEHAN**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 19, 2015*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to John Cook, a Marine from Delaware County, Pennsylvania. John joined the Corps fresh out of high school, and served under Col. Lewis "Chesty" Puller. John landed with the Marines at Incheon and served in "Masacre Valley" during Operation Killer in February 1951. He was discharged in 1952 as a Sergeant, having served his country with honor and distinction. John will be honored with the Freedom Medal tonight at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association Annual Dinner. It's a fitting honor for a man who served his country ably in Korea.

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STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY WINS THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S SOLAR DECATHLON

**HON. ALBIO SIRES**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 19, 2015*

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Stevens Institute of Technology's remarkable achievement in winning the Department of Energy's prestigious Solar Decathlon. The competition challenges collegiate teams to spend almost two