

George had an incredible love for the community and worked on many projects to enhance the quality of life for all who called Anchorage home. He was a true public servant and visionary who strived to make Anchorage a better community for future generations while he was mayor and during his retirement.

George was a great Alaskan. George was my friend.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL W. HODES

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mr. HODES. Madam Speaker, due to unforeseen circumstances, I missed one vote in a series of votes on Thursday, November 5, 2009. I would have voted "yea" on the following vote: H.R. 878, a resolution expressing support for the goals and ideals of National Family Literacy Day.

HONORING JOE LARSON FOR 30 YEARS OF SERVING WASHINGTON COUNTY VETERANS

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Joe Larson of Washington County, for the more than 30 years he has served in the Washington County Veterans Service Office. As a veterans service officer over 3 decades, Joe has surely touched the lives of thousands of returning service men and women. It's a calling that requires perseverance, diligence and passion.

As a veteran and Purple Heart recipient himself, Joe was uniquely qualified for this position. The instant bond among veterans was nurtured by Joe's experience and dedication to both his job and his fellow vets. For over 30 years, it has been his duty to file paperwork, make follow up calls and contact agencies on behalf of Minnesota's veterans. But for 30 years, Joe's calling was much higher. He was an advocate, a listener and a friend to so many veterans readjusting to life at home. His concern was genuine and his passion was unparalleled.

And so I rise today, Madam Speaker, to give thanks to and honor Joe for the difference he has made to veterans scattered throughout Minnesota. And as he looks forward to his retirement, he can move forward knowing his was a job well done. He will be very truly missed by coworkers and veterans alike.

NANCY PILVER BREAST CANCER HEROINE AWARD

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Margarita

"Maggie" Gardner of Hartford, Connecticut, to whom I was honored to present the Nancy Pilver Breast Cancer Heroine Award.

Each year, I present the Nancy Pilver Breast Cancer Heroine Award to a resident of Connecticut's First Congressional District who has displayed extraordinary dedication to the issue of breast cancer through education, prevention, treatment, and awareness. The award is named in honor of Nancy Pilver, formerly of Manchester, Connecticut, and the first recipient of the award.

In 2006, Maggie contacted my office to request assistance with her Social Security Disability Claim. Her dire needs required that her claim be expedited. Thankfully, Social Security was receptive to our request and as a result, Maggie was able to win her fight against breast cancer and carry on her life without difficult financial ramifications.

Maggie's successful fight against breast cancer has inspired her to help others battling various types of cancer. Maggie started the Gardner House, a non-profit organization with the goal of providing a one-stop center for cancer patients to receive guidance and assistance in their fight against the disease. Its mission statement is "to assist the cancer patient and their family to return to a normal, healthy and productive life in their community." Included among the Gardner House's many objectives are referrals to state and local agencies, medication expenses and general financial assistance, housing assistance, transportation to medical appointments, and counseling and emotional support groups.

Perhaps one of the Gardner House's most successful stories involved Elizabeth Hurd, Maggie's first referral. Elizabeth underwent a severe struggle with uterine cancer, and eventually overcame the disease.

During her fight she was unable to schedule a disability hearing, resulting in the loss of her apartment and rental assistance, and most of her belongings. After being placed in contact with Maggie, and through the assistance of the Gardner House and my office, she was able to schedule a disability hearing. Elizabeth, grateful for the help she received, aptly calls Maggie "her angel."

We in Connecticut's First Congressional District are extremely grateful for Maggie's extensive efforts, and she is very deserving of this year's Nancy Pilver Breast Cancer Heroine Award.

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER LYONS REMEMBERED FOR SERVICE TO COUNTRY

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize U.S. Army CWO Niall D. Lyons for his bravery and heroism while serving to protect our country's freedoms.

Chief Warrant Officer Lyons deployed from the B Company, 3rd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment at Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia to Afghanistan. On October 26th, 2009, Chief Warrant Officer Lyons gave the ultimate sacrifice for his country along with six special operations soldiers and three

agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration when their MH-47 helicopter crashed in Badghis province in western Afghanistan. The crash happened when the soldiers and federal agents lifted off in the helicopter after an operation to disrupt arms smuggling and drug trafficking in the Darreh-ye Bum Village in Qadis District.

Being a native of Spokane, Washington, Chief Warrant Officer Lyons was an avid Seattle Seahawks football fan. He also loved the great outdoors. He enjoyed water skiing and fishing. But most of all, he loved spending time with his son, John.

Today, his family, friends, and country must say their final goodbye to Chief Warrant Officer Lyons. Although the journey will be tough for his family and friends, we know that Chief Warrant Officer Lyons will always be looking from above watching over those he loved most.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Chief Warrant Officer Lyons for fearlessly sacrificing his own life in order to protect our freedoms from the evils of terrorism. I invite my colleagues to join me in a moment of silence for Chief Warrant Officer Lyons as well as all of the men and women who lost their lives in the recent helicopter crash while serving in Afghanistan.

TRIBUTE TO FORT MYERS MAYOR JIM HUMPHREY

HON. CONNIE MACK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mr. MACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor one of southwest Florida's hardest-working public servants, Fort Myers Mayor Jim Humphrey, who is retiring after an exceptional career.

I've known Jim for a number of years now. He's been a great friend of the Mack Family, and he was one of my earliest supporters when I first decided to run for Congress. Jim's civility and demeanor have earned him the nickname "Gentleman Jim," and I can't think of a more fitting description for a great public servant, family man, and friend.

Jim has been a strong force for the people of southwest Florida. His enthusiasm and passion for serving the community is inspiring. Jim's the type of elected official that all of us strive to be: accessible, dedicated and effective.

But perhaps the most important job Jim has ever held is that of a father and grandfather. He is so proud of his daughters and beams when he speaks about his grandchildren. Jim's family bring him his greatest joy, and this joy shines through in everything he does.

Jim has worked tirelessly to make southwest Florida a great place to live, work and visit. Under his leadership, the city of Fort Myers was designated as the Healthiest City in the Southeast in 2003 and a Preserve America Community in 2004, among other accolades. In addition, Jim has worked to obtain vital funding to preserve our community's unique treasures, such as the Edison & Ford Winter Estates and the Langford-Kingston Home.

Of course, Jim's public service does not end with his stint in the Mayor's Office. Jim has

held countless positions on numerous civic and charitable organizations throughout southwest Florida. He's the type of person who believes in giving back to his community tenfold and has done just that. From his service as the first full-time Lee County Attorney, to his time as a city judge in Fort Myers, Jim will have left a lasting mark on southwest Florida.

Madam Speaker, the city of Fort Myers, and indeed all of southwest Florida, are better off today because of Jim's service. It is truly an honor and a privilege to represent Jim in the U.S. House of Representatives, and I wish Jim, his wife Nancy, and their beloved family all the best.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, this morning our national debt was \$11,990,561,444,829.48. We have added \$11,607,722,003.58 to the national debt since just yesterday.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

The means the national debt has increased by \$1,352,135,698,535.68 so far this year.

According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the forecast deficit for this year is \$1.6 trillion. That means that so far this year, we borrowed and spent an average \$4.4 billion a day more than we have collected, passing that debt and its interest payments to our children and all future Americans.

JOHN FISHEL

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, we are honored to pay tribute to our friend, John R. Fishel on the occasion of his retirement from the Jewish Federation, and honor him for his decades of invaluable service to our community.

John has spent decades of his life at work with non-profit organizations and charitable groups. He has earned high esteem and respect for his diligence and hard work as well as his many achievements and contributions to these causes.

During his time with the Jewish Federation, his attentive management style, vision, and dedication resulted in many innovative projects which transformed the organization. He created the Tel Aviv/Los Angeles partnership, a new way to nurture a close relationship with Israel and bring the people of these two cities together. In recent years, he launched efforts to engage young Jewish professionals in The New Leaders Project, a civic leadership training program for young adults. Under his leadership, many valuable programs were developed, such as KOREH L.A., a literacy program and Fed Up With Hunger, a community-wide movement to end hunger in Los Angeles.

His effective leadership was especially evident following the Northridge earthquake and the 1999 shooting at the North Valley Jewish Community Center. His work to encourage increased support for Israel was on display during the second Intifada and Israel's war with Hezbollah. His resilience in these times of trouble was a calming source of inspiration to the community.

Prior to his service at the Federation, he worked tirelessly as the top professional executive at the Allied Jewish Community Services (the local Jewish Federation) in Montreal, Canada, at the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and the Council Migration Services in Philadelphia, as planning associate at the Federation of Jewish Agencies of Greater Philadelphia, and as a resource developer for the Ohio State Department of Health.

Mr. Fishel graduated with a Bachelors degree in anthropology and a master of social welfare administration and policy from the University of Michigan. He and his wife, Karen, have one daughter, Jessica. They live in Cheviot Hills.

Madam Speaker and distinguished colleagues, we ask you to join me in saluting John R. Fishel for his impressive career and dedication to the community and The Jewish Federation, and to congratulate him on the occasion of his retirement.

THE DEATH OF JOHN O'QUINN, PROMINENT HOUSTON ATTORNEY, PHILANTHROPIST, AND FRIEND

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I request that the House of Representatives take a moment to remember a fellow American and friend of mine, John O'Quinn, of Houston, Texas. Mr. O'Quinn died last Thursday, October 29, 2009 in a tragic car accident that also claimed the life of his longtime assistant, Johnny Lee Cutliff.

By all standards, Mr. O'Quinn was an extremely successful lawyer in Houston society, but to those of us who knew him well, John was a dedicated professional, a generous benefactor, and a loyal friend.

Publicly, John has been recognized as an icon and was named one of the "100 Legal Legends of the Law" by the Texas Lawyer. He was recognized by the National Law Journal and the Harvard Law Review as one of the "Best Lawyers in America." Mr. O'Quinn received four of the largest verdicts in Texas legal history, having won more than \$20 billion for his clients throughout his career, including a \$17.3 billion tobacco settlement for the State of Texas. He was an honors graduate of the University of Houston Law Center, served as a Regent for the University of Houston, and trustee of the University of Houston Law School Foundation.

The man behind these impressive achievements was also fiercely loyal to the town that raised him and brought him to statewide and national prominence. John was a philanthropist and gave generously to assist the University of Houston, which named a law library and stadium after him; the Children's Assess-

ment Center; the Women's Center; Baylor College of Medicine; the End Hunger Network; St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital; the South Texas College of Law Advocacy Center and many more organizations and causes of equal importance.

Mr. O'Quinn was a passionate car collector. Before his passing, he planned to open a public museum to display and share his love of cars and the histories accompanying each.

There are few Houstonians who have not been affected by Mr. O'Quinn's work, either through his role as attorney, benefactor or philanthropist. Mr. O'Quinn will be remembered as a dedicated legal professional, generous philanthropist, and dear friend. It will be hard to imagine Houston without one of its most dynamic personalities and legal giants. Mr. O'Quinn will be greatly missed.

HONORING SONOMA TREASURE ARTIST OF THE YEAR LIN LIPETZ

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, Representative MIKE THOMPSON, to honor Lin Lipetz, the Sonoma Treasure Artist of the Year. Selected by the city's Cultural and Fine Arts Commission, Ms. Lipetz was chosen for her talents as a teacher and an artist as well as for her contributions to the community.

With an MFA from the University of Washington in ceramics, painting and textiles, a bachelor's degree in art from the University of Washington, and a bachelor's degree from San Jose State University in interior architecture, Lipetz has the academic credentials to back up her long experience as an artist. With drawings and beautifully colorful and joyous paintings ranging from abstract to landscape, she has exhibited frequently, both as a solo artist and with groups.

Her work is in numerous collections, and she has also won honors and grants including Friends of the Crafts in Seattle, Washington; National Endowments for the Arts High School Art Instruction in Missoula, Montana; and the Art Across the Valley Tour through the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art.

Her contributions to the City of Sonoma enrich the lives of its residents and add to the vibrancy of its arts community. She teaches painting and intuitive drawing at the Sonoma Community Center, is active with the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art and served as a commissioner on the Cultural and Fine Arts Commission.

Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to celebrate Lin Lipetz's selection as Sonoma Treasure Artist of the year. We join the Sonoma community in our appreciation of her talents and her contributions.

SALUTING JOHN HAMILTON FOR 29 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 6, 2009

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I'd like to recognize a model patriot