

that survived the carnage fled their homes and businesses, leaving behind everything they had in their desperation.

The pogroms were not an accident. They were the culmination of years of vicious anti-Armenian propaganda, spread by the Azerbaijani authorities. The Azerbaijani authorities made little effort to punish those responsible, instead attempting to cover up the atrocities in Sumgait to this day, as well as denying the role of senior government officials in instigating the violence. Unsurprisingly, it was not the end of the violence, and was followed by additional attacks, including the 1990 pogrom in Baku.

The Sumgait massacre and the subsequent attacks on ethnic Armenians, resulted in the virtual disappearance of a once thriving population of 450,000 Armenians living in Azerbaijan, and culminating in the war launched against the people of Nagorno Karabakh. That war resulted in thousands dead on both sides and created over one million refugees in both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Time has not healed the wounds of those murdered in the pogroms in Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku. To the contrary, hatred of Armenians is celebrated in Azerbaijan, a situation most vividly exemplified by the case of Ramil Safarov, an Azerbaijani army captain who savagely murdered an Armenian army lieutenant, Guren Margaryan with an axe while he slept. The two were participating in a NATO Partnership for Peace exercise at the time in Hungary. In 2012, Safarov was sent home to Azerbaijan, purportedly to serve out the remainder of his sentence. Instead, he was pardoned, promoted, and paraded through the streets of Baku as a returning hero.

The assault on ethnic Armenian civilians in Sumgait helped touch off what would become a direct conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh. And today, Azerbaijan's dangerous behavior on the Line of Contact threatens peace and stability in the region. Artillery and sniper fire across the Line of Contact has become a fact of daily life for civilians in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, causing numerous casualties. I have urged the OSCE Minsk Group to deescalate the situation by ending a policy that equates unprovoked attacks by the Azerbaijan with the defensive responses of Karabakh and Armenian troops, and by pressuring Azerbaijan to accept the installation of technological monitoring devices along the border. The anniversary of Sumgait is a reminder of the consequences when aggression and hatred is allowed to grow unchecked.

Mr. Speaker, this April we will mark the 101st Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, an event the Turkish government, Azerbaijan's closest ally, goes to great lengths to deny. We must not let such crimes against humanity go unrecognized, whether they occurred yesterday or 28 years ago or 100 years ago. Today, let us pause to remember the victims of the atrocities of the Sumgait pogroms. Mr. Speaker, it is our moral obligation to condemn crimes of hatred and to remember the victims, in hope that history will not be repeated.

TRIBUTE TO AL MANN

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, America lost one of her greatest sons this week. Al Mann, physicist, entrepreneur, executive, and philanthropist, spent his more than nine decades on this earth working mostly to help others.

At age seventeen, when America was embroiled in the Second World War, Al Mann volunteered for the Army Air Corps, later becoming a pioneer in guidance systems for missiles and solar power for satellites. His technological advances helped us win that war, saving countless lives throughout.

Afterward, he resisted pleas to continue his extraordinary work in military hardware, following his heart and turning his mind toward the health of humanity. Al's ingenuity, insight, and resourcefulness focused on projects to restore sight to the blind, to bring hearing to the deaf, and return mobility to the disabled.

He did all this while developing a system to deliver insulin to diabetics without needles and creating pacemakers that those afflicted with heart disease would not need to replace frequently, thus sparing them great expense and disruption of their lives.

It has been my honor and privilege to know Al Mann for many years. As he benefited humankind he in turn benefited from a patent system that has been the envy of the world; indeed, he warned against politicians who would tamper with it to advantage powerful business interests against individual innovators like him.

Clearly, he wanted other Americans to succeed by their good works just as he had done.

Because he was one of the most inspirational men I have ever known, I made a point of introducing my children to him so that they, too, might live by his example.

If our country is to know more inspiring individuals like Al Mann, it is imperative that we reclaim and protect the conditions that made his exemplary creativity possible.

IN HONOR OF RAY LAUGHTER

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as my friend, Ray Laughter, prepares to retire as Vice Chancellor of External Affairs for the Lone Star College system, he is leaving big shoes for his successor to fill. How do you replace a driving force for education and economic development in our district such as Ray?

Since 2002, Ray has led the Lone Star College Foundation, the Community Leadership Institute, the Small Business Development Center, as well as the college's public information and publications, governmental relations, and regional economic development departments. He was also the driving force in the passage of bond issues that ensures the college system is meeting the needs of our growing region.

Prior to becoming vice chancellor, Ray served the college system as executive director of the Center for Business and Economic Development and the director of the Small Business Development Center. If you ever wondered why Ray sets such sky-high goals and achieves them, just remember he was once chief administrative officer for an international helicopter manufacturer.

Ray's community and civic commitments don't stop with his work at Lone Star. He shared his invaluable experience by serving on numerous national, state and local boards, and various committees focused on economic development and educational needs.

Development Councils, Partnerships, Chambers, and boards in The Woodlands and across the state and the south rely on Ray to bring together education and economic development projects in innovative and thoughtful ways.

As a military officer's son who settled in Texas, Ray graduated from the University of Houston, where he also earned his MBA. Ever since then, his days and many nights have been filled helping our community learn, grow and prosper.

While his wife and kids are hoping to see more of him now, Ray has already committed to serving as chairman of the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce board next year. My friend Ray is a servant leader who has set a high example for others to follow.

Many thousands of students and families have lifetimes of opportunities ahead because of Ray's hard work. I can't imagine the Lone Star College System without him, but then I know that he is always just a phone call or email away whenever our community needs him.

Thank you Ray Laughter, for showing us all that the sky is the limit for a true leader.

SUPPORT FOR H. RES. 551

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Israel is the United States' most important ally in the Middle East. But the President made a bad nuclear deal with Iran that brought a whole host of new security threats to Israel. H. Res. 551 is about bringing the importance of the U.S.-Israel relationship back into focus.

While security is the cornerstone of our relationship, many do not realize that we have very strong economic ties to Israel. Bilateral trade and investment has strengthened our partnership in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

I look forward to exploring new agreements with Israel in energy, medicine, technology, and security. Fostering deeper economic dialogue will more firmly cement the bond between the U.S. and Israel.

I support H. Res. 551 because it recognizes the importance of a strong U.S.-Israel alliance. Together with our Israeli allies we can initiate new areas of cooperation. It's time this Administration shows Israel how much the U.S. values our partnership.

And that's just the way it is.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, during Black History Month, we honor the contributions and achievements of African-Americans, and recommit ourselves to achieving the day when no person is judged by anything but the content of their character.

Let us stand on the shoulders of individuals like Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Dr. King, Rosa Parks, Shirley Chisholm, Louis Stokes, and our colleagues, JOHN LEWIS and JOHN CONYERS, who sacrificed so much to secure equal rights for all Americans, including generations yet unborn.

However, more progress must be made.

We must close the gaps in employment opportunities for African-Americans, eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline, and restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act.

Today, let us resolve to continue to march toward a day when every person is guaranteed the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

IN RECOGNITION OF EVELYN
MARY LABRAKE**HON. JUAN VARGAS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Rep. DUNCAN HUNTER and I rise today to honor the life of Evelyn Mary LaBrake, Sycuan tribal elder and former Secretary of the Sycuan Tribe. Ms. LaBrake is survived by her nine children, her brother, as well as twenty-eight grandchildren and thirty-five great grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Ms. LaBrake was the granddaughter of Solomon Paipa, an original allottee of the Sycuan Indian Reservation.

Evelyn was born on December 22, 1936 at Mercy Hospital in San Diego, to parents Louis Murphy and Martha Paipa, and grew up on the Sycuan Indian Reservation. She was recognized for being a passionate advocate for the causes of Native Americans and a defender of tribal self-determination and sovereignty. She was instrumental in the adoption of the tribe's Articles of Association of 1972 and many other critical tribal government documents.

As a former Secretary and Councilwoman of the Sycuan Tribe from the 1960s to the 1980s, Evelyn fought for and obtained major improvements in the tribe's water, housing and community building needs. She was also a champion of tribal government gaming, and was a driving force in creating the Sycuan Bingo Palace in 1983, the first tribal gaming establishment in the nation.

In the words of Cody Martinez, current Sycuan Tribal Chairman and grandson of Ms.

LaBrake, "She was an active participant in our general membership meetings as recently as this month. All Sycuan is today, is from the hard work of her and her contemporaries."

Evelyn was a firm believer in hard work and did so all her life, as a Secretary and Councilwoman of her tribe, but also as a machinist at Whittaker Survival System, where she worked for 20 years. She cherished her large family and deeply enjoyed their gatherings. She took special pride in the resurgence of cultural values expressed by her family.

I want to commemorate Evelyn Mary LaBrake for her lifetime of service to her community.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL SANBORN
AS THE METROCREST CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE'S CITIZEN OF THE
YEAR**HON. KENNY MARCHANT**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Michael Sanborn of Carrollton, Texas, on being named Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce's "Citizen of the Year." Michael's leadership and dedication to the Metrocrest community in the Dallas/Fort Worth area has made a lasting impression that North Texas will not soon forget. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Michael for his many years of selfless service to our community.

Michael has earned recognition as one of the most prominent and influential leaders in North Texas' medical community. Michael attended the University of Kansas, where he received his undergraduate and Master of Science in Pharmacy Administration. Beginning as a pharmacist, Michael was quickly promoted to System Director of Pharmacy of NCH Healthcare System and eventually Corporate Vice President of Cardiovascular Services for the entire Baylor Healthcare System. In his current position as President of Baylor Scott & White at Carrollton, Michael oversees the 235 bed acute care facility with more than 700 employees and 500 medical staff members. In addition, he is responsible for managing services at several specialty care clinics and diagnostic centers throughout Carrollton and surrounding cities.

The "Citizen of the Year" award is presented annually by the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce to an individual who has made a significant impact in the community. Michael has shown honesty, integrity, and leadership while serving others, which has left a wide reaching and lasting effect on many in North Texas. At Baylor Scott & White Medical Center, Michael has made local healthcare his top priority. Additionally, Michael is actively engaged and regularly works with local non-profits and service organizations. Michael currently serves on the boards of Metrocrest Services and the Children's Advocacy Center of Denton County, and is the former Chairman of the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize Michael Sanborn for receiving the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce's "Citizen of the Year" award. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing his contributions to the Metrocrest community.

HONORING 2015 "MR. AMIGO" ITATI
CANTORAL**HON. FILEMON VELA**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2016

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Charro Days Fiesta and commend the 2015 "Mr. Amigo," chosen by the Mr. Amigo Association of Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Tamaulipas, in Mexico.

A talented Mexican actress, singer, and dancer, Itati Cantoral has been selected as the 2015 "Mr. Amigo." Her style and charisma have won the admiration of audiences across the world. Through her work as a performer, Ms. Cantoral has brought communities together for more than 20 years. She is an excellent choice to represent the spirit of friendship.

First awarded in 1964, the title of "Mr. Amigo" is an annual tribute to an outstanding Mexican citizen who has made a lasting contribution during the previous year to international solidarity and goodwill. "Mr. Amigo" acts as an ambassador between the United States and Mexico and presides over the annual Charro Days Fiesta.

Charro Days dates back to 1937, when the citizens of Brownsville organized the event in the midst of the Great Depression to celebrate the cultural heritage shared between Brownsville and its sister city across the Rio Grande, Matamoros. The first Charro Days celebration featured a parade with horse-drawn floats and participants dressed in traditional Mexican costumes reminiscent of charros, or Mexican cowboys.

From these humble beginnings, Charro Days has evolved into a multi-day event, which includes dances, fiestas, a children's parade, and the Grand International Parade. Thousands of participants from both sides of the border celebrate these traditions each year.

The 78th annual Charro Days celebration commenced on February 22nd, with a grito, or celebratory yell. And just yesterday, the Mayor of Brownsville and the Mayor of Matamoros met at the Gateway International Bridge to extend their hands across the border, symbolizing the friendship between the two cities.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to honor the Charro Days Fiesta and for joining me in recognizing the importance of this annual celebration, which continues to strengthen the relationship between Brownsville and Matamoros, and the bonds between the United States and Mexico.