

Troop Bugler, and Senior Patrol Leader. Dane is a brave in the Tribe of Mic-o-Say, where he has taken the name "Mighty Wolf Stalking Prey," and is also a brotherhood member in the Order of the Arrow. In addition, Dane has earned the God and Church Award, World Conservation Award, Eagle Bronze Palm, and H. Roe Bartle Heritage Award.

For his Eagle Scout project, Dane constructed a fence around the City of Kearney's water tower and variform pump house, and planted evergreens and shrubbery around the new fence.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Dane K. Hagen for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING ANTHONY PECONE AS HE RETIRES AS PENNSYLVANIA STATE DIRECTOR OF THE U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Anthony Pecone who is retiring as Pennsylvania State director of the U.S. Economic Development Administration following 39 years of service with the agency.

Mr. Pecone has had a distinguished career and has guided the investment of nearly \$2 billion in Federal funding throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which has had the effect of creating or retaining tens of thousands of jobs.

Mr. Pecone came to the EDA after 11 years of working in the private sector, 2 years of service with the U.S. Army in Germany, 9 months with the Central Intelligence Agency and 16 months with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Goddard Space Flight Center.

As State director of the EDA, Mr. Pecone was an invaluable ally for local communities and economic development organizations, guiding them through the economic development process for planning, technical assistance, business loans, construction and special programs for assistance related to natural disasters, base closings and severe industrial dislocations or curtailments.

Noteworthy Pennsylvania EDA investments achieved during his tenure include brownfield restorations, creation of a statewide revolving loan fund, base closing assistance, restoration of areas impacted by hurricanes and tornadoes, construction of several technology incubators, workforce development initiatives, construction of many industrial, business and commercial parks, initiatives to combat the effects of job losses in the coal and steel industries and construction of roads, sewage and water systems and bridges.

More than 30 years have passed since I first met Tony during the aftermath of Hurricane Agnes, which devastated the Wilkes-Barre area in 1972. His can-do spirit and practical approach to stimulating economic activity shaped my overall impression of the EDA and

made me a life-long fan of both Tony and his agency. Always courteous, Tony was also tough and fair in his determination of which projects were worthy of Federal funds. Every applicant seeking EDA funds learned to expect hard questions but also wise guidance as Tony worked to make sure that every EDA project was a successful project. Although few of them know his name or even the name of his agency, thousands of Pennsylvanians have jobs because of Tony's hard work. He will be missed.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Pecone upon the completion of a career that has helped so many people achieve a better quality of life. Mr. Pecone's singular dedication to improving communities deserves special recognition and I am pleased to be able to enter a tribute to him in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

THANKING AMERICA'S DIPLOMATS FOR SUKKOT ASSISTANCE

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my sincere thanks to the men and women of our Embassy in Egypt and, particularly, to Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone. I also want to commend Assistant Secretary David Welch, Deputy Assistant Secretary Liz Dibble and a host of their colleagues in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. I am pleased to report to the House that through vigorous behind-the-scenes engagement with the Government of Egypt, America's diplomats made a critical difference for millions of Jews across America and around the world celebrating the Jewish holiday Sukkot.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, I began to receive reports that merchants purchasing the palm fronds used for ritual celebrations of the holiday, were discovering that their historic supply in Egypt was in jeopardy. In previous years, Egyptian palms had provided the overwhelming proportion of the roughly one million palm fronds used for the holiday. As commanded in the Bible, Jews celebrate Sukkot with "the four species"—a lulav, composed of palm, myrtle, and willow branches, and a citron, an aromatic but inedible citrus fruit called an etrog—that are used to sanctify the holiday.

This year, however, Egyptian agriculture officials, reportedly concerned about the health of Egypt's orchards of date palms, ordered a cessation of the harvest and export of palm fronds expected by Jewish communities around the world.

For those unfamiliar with the holiday, a sudden palm frond shortage may have seemed a bit odd, if not downright absurd. I would compare it, however, to a situation where 2 weeks before Christmas, people began to suddenly discover that there were no Christmas trees available for sale, or that those few trees on the market were undersized, illegally cut and only available for triple the normal price.

I am proud to say that once informed of the situation, our diplomats acted swiftly, speaking forcefully on behalf of the entire United States and drawing upon the strong and deep ties

between our government and Egypt's. Again and again over a 2 week period, our diplomats pressed officials in the Egyptian government to increase the number of cuttings available and to ensure their successful export. And here, I also want to express my thanks to Egypt's ambassador, Nabil Fahmy and his staff at the Egyptian embassy for their very important role in conveying the seriousness of this problem to their colleagues in Cairo.

In the end, I believe there was enough. The Egyptian government heard our concerns and did the best it could to accommodate our needs. Ultimately, I'm told the restrictions on cuttings were effectively lifted in the last hours. There were shortages in some places, some people had to pay more than usual, and more people had to share than in years past, but no one, to my knowledge, was unable to fulfill the religious requirements of the holiday.

Mr. Speaker, the week-long festival of Sukkot celebrates the fall harvest and is often referred to in Hebrew as z'man simchataynu, "the season of our rejoicing." I can tell you, there would have been a lot less rejoicing absent a lot of hard work by America's diplomats. I know the whole House will join me in thanking them for this extraordinary effort.

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER B. HEARNE FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher B. Hearne, son of Sue and Jerry Hearne, of Kearney, MO. Chris is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and by earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Chris has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the 8 years Chris has been involved with scouting, he has earned 36 merit badges and held several leadership positions. Chris has served his troop as patrol leader, librarian, chaplain's aide, and den chief. Chris is a brave in the tribe of Mic-o-Say, where he has taken the name "Last Son of Silent Snow Goose." In addition, Chris has earned the World Conservation Award, H. Roe Bartle Heritage Award, and Mile Swim Award.

For his Eagle Scout project, Chris removed litter and rubbish from the half-mile entry road into Kearney's Mack Porter Park. He also constructed "No Littering" signs along the road.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher B. Hearne for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

WHY AMERICA IS A GREAT NATION

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, Hurricane Katrina was a natural disaster. Its effects were