

ranked as one of Arizona's fastest growing communities, and it is my great privilege to acknowledge this important milestone.

Avondale began as an agricultural community, as many in Arizona. William Moore built the community's first establishments. As the area attracted more settlers through its pleasant climate and favorable farming conditions, a post office was built at the Avondale Ranch in the early 1900's, lending the town its current name. On December 16, 1946, Avondale was incorporated as a city, and by then was an important part of the state's capitol.

Today, Avondale has reached a population exceeding 70,000, and has much to offer its residents. To keep up with the population's demands, the city offers a wide variety of academic establishments, arts festivals, among other cultural attractions, and is a favored destination of NASCAR fans. Because of these draws and the accomplishments of residents, Avondale enjoys a growth rate among the Nation's highest, and expects to reach 120,000 residents by 2020.

Avondale has come a long way from its agricultural beginnings. It is my great pleasure to congratulate them on this landmark.

A TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT
GENERAL JERRY SINN

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2006

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the leadership and dedication to public service of Lieutenant General Jerry Sinn, who has provided exemplary stewardship of the Army's resources and budgeting for the past 7 years. Beginning as a "tunnel rat" in Vietnam, Lieutenant General Sinn has retired as the Army's budget chief after 39 years in uniform.

After being drafted in 1968, Jerry Sinn was soon commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. The Army sent him to Vietnam shortly thereafter, where he fought as a tunnel rat—one of the deadliest missions in that conflict—and led a Rome Plow team. Throughout his career, he has never stopped inspiring, guiding and teaching soldiers—whether as a company commander in Korea, a mathematics instructor at West Point, a battalion commander with the Big Red One, an assistant chief of staff of VII Corps, a brigade commander in the 3rd Infantry Division, or commander of the Corps of Engineers' North Atlantic Division.

Lieutenant General Sinn has spent the last 7 years of his military career in the Pentagon as the Army's top uniformed budget official. His ideas, acumen, finesse and good humor were essential to guiding the Army from being a force at peace to a force at war. General Sinn oversaw the unprecedented growth in resources and mission since 2001, dedicating himself to ensuring that every soldier was properly equipped and trained. He looked after families, initiating and pushing numerous programs to improve their quality of life. And he made sure that everyone involved in financial management understood the importance of their work. General Sinn inspired the civilians and the uniformed members of Army financial management to do their very best and ap-

proach their tasks with the same vigor as the soldier on the battlefield. He also provided counsel to the Army leadership, the Defense Department, the Office of Management and Budget and many members of Congress.

General Sinn earned a Purple Heart and two Bronze Stars, both with oak leaf clusters and one with a V Device, among many other medals and awards. He lived the Soldier's Creed with great pride and dignity. He always placed the mission first. He never accepted defeat. He never quit. And though he could have, he never left a fallen comrade.

Mr. Speaker, throughout his youth in North Dakota, Jerry Sinn thought he would follow in his parents' footsteps, raising cattle and growing wheat. The U.S. Army, and his many supporters in Congress, are grateful that he devoted his life to public service instead. Please join me in thanking him for those 39 years of selflessness, and wish him well in his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO GRACE CHURCH

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2006

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Grace Church in the Borough of Madison, Morris County, New Jersey, a vibrant community I am proud to represent! On November 4, 2006, the good citizens of Madison celebrated Grace Church's 150th Anniversary.

Grace Church, the oldest building in Madison, New Jersey still being used for its original purpose, is one of the largest congregations in the Episcopal Diocese of Newark. The first church service was held on April 13, 1856. When completed, the building, including bell and organ, cost about \$9000 and seated two hundred persons. One hundred and fifty years later Grace Church is undergoing a \$3,000,000 capital campaign to enlarge the existing structure to meet the needs of a still growing congregation.

The earlier years in the history of Grace Church were marked by building and consolidating, participation of a wide segment of the community: black and white, abolitionist and slave owners, recent immigrants and colonial heirs. A new era for Grace Church arrived when more than ninety millionaires moved to Morristown and neighboring towns, many of whom were Episcopalian. Their generosity enabled the church to enlarge, but, unfortunately, membership did not grow as there was no need to broaden the financial base with increased membership. That changed after World War II, with the population explosion that followed the war and the resulting exodus to the suburbs. This brought Grace Church to a new era in its history and in the 1950's the church underwent a major expansion.

Today Grace Church's congregation includes parishioners from all the neighboring towns and its primary focus is outreach. A wonderful choir, with members of all ages, a large and active youth program, and many adult ministries fill the church 7 days a week. Under the leadership of the Reverend Lauren Ackland, the membership continues to grow.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Grace Church of

Madison on the celebration of its 150 years serving its parishioners County.

TRIBUTE TO THE DEDICATED
STAFF OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE
ON SPACE AND AERONAUTICS
FOR THE 109TH CONGRESS

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2006

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a group of patriots whose dedication and contributions to the United States space community has been exceptional. For the past 2 years I have served as the Chairman of the Science Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics and have had the honor to work with a staff comprised of some of the best and brightest in the fields of space and earth science, aeronautics and space exploration.

In the 2 years that I've been Chairman, the staff has worked diligently to implement the President's Vision for Space Exploration, maintain robust science and aeronautics programs and open opportunities for the private sector and space entrepreneurs. In short, they have tried to give America's space-farers the "Rules and Tools" to succeed in the Second Space Age. Last year, the President signed into law the first NASA Authorization Act in 5 years. Anyone can tell you how difficult it is to draft legislation that must balance the many needs of the Agency's various stakeholders while keeping the original Vision intact. The majority subcommittee staff worked tirelessly to secure passage and I commend their hard work and dedication. It certainly has paid off—NASA is charging full speed ahead with the Vision for Space Exploration and a commitment to ten healthy centers.

The subcommittee completed several resolutions commending successful shuttle launches and their crews; conducted hearings on a wide range of topics including "The Future of Aeronautics at NASA," "Future Market for Commercial Space," and "The NASA Workforce"; and conducted several legislative mark-up hearings on other relevant bills. The subcommittee even conducted the first hearing in Congressional history with a witness testifying from space when NASA astronaut John Phillips, a member of the crew aboard the International Space Station in June 2005, participated via satellite. The efforts of the subcommittee staff also enabled me to visit all of NASA's Centers, including the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the Applied Physics Laboratory, during the 109th Congress. None of this would have been possible without the intelligence and perseverance of the staff.

At this time I would like to recognize the individuals responsible for the subcommittee's many accomplishments:

Bill Adkins, former Staff Director. Bill was a thoughtful advisor and an influential force in the passage of the NASA Authorization Act during the 18 months we worked together.

Johannes Loschnigg, current Staff Director. Johannes has done a terrific job and has offered solid leadership to the subcommittee.

Ed Feddeman, Professional Staff. Ed is the resident expert on aeronautics and space science. I have appreciated his depth of

knowledge on these issues and his expertise during several NASA Center visits.

Ken Monroe, Professional Staff. Ken is the subject matter expert on the space shuttle program and financial management at the Agency. His first-hand experience, and strong attention to detail has been a true asset during the last 2 years.

Tind "Shep" Ryen, Professional Staff. Shep is the go-to-guy on the space exploration agenda being implemented by NASA, including the Constellation Systems program, NASA Workforce and Commercial Space issues. As one of the more recent additions to the staff, Shep has not wavered from delving deeply into his work and has exercised excellent oversight over these exciting new programs.

Tom Hammond, Professional Staff. Tom handles a long list of issues including the International Space Station, Earth Science, Remote Sensing, and International and National security programs. I appreciate Tom's dedication and know he will continue to excel in all his future endeavors.

Devin Bryant, Staff Assistant. Devin is the support system to all of the staff and has done an incredible job. As a fellow Californian, I appreciate his enthusiasm for America's space program as it reminds me of the ripple effect of NASA's achievements—inspiring the next generation of explorers.

Roselee Roberts, Chairman's Designee/Professional Staff. Roselee has been a tremendous asset to my chairmanship and the subcommittee. It was an honor to designate her as my representative. It has been a pleasure to work with her these past 2 years. She has been a trusted confidant to me and my staff and I appreciate her dedication and loyalty. She will always be a part of the Calvert team.

I would be remiss if I did not also mention my deep gratitude to David Goldston, Chief of Staff of the Science Committee. David impressed me with his intelligence, tireless work ethic, and his love of science policy. During the past 2 years we have shared some great conversations and debates and I believe I have been a better Chairman for them. I appreciate the tremendous support and expertise he has provided me and my staff during my Chairmanship.

To all of the subcommittee staff, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your hard work, diligence, passion, and service. I salute your dedication and wish you all the best of luck.

KYRGYZSTAN IMPROVES ITS
DEMOCRACY

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2006

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as this Congress comes to a conclusion, I rise to make some remarks on the state of democratic development in Central Asia. I am inspired to do this by the very significant recent events in Kyrgyzstan, where last month, a new constitution was adopted that limits the power of the presidency and enhances the authority of the legislative branch.

The Kyrgyz should be congratulated for peacefully negotiating a delicate political situation that could have turned violent. The outcome resulted in the strengthening of Kyrgyzstan's democracy at a time when its neighbors are moving in the opposite direction.

Throughout post-Soviet Central Asia—and all over the former USSR—the defining feature of political development has been the emergence of super-presidents, while parliaments and courts languish under executive control. As a result, the balance of powers, though constitutionally mandated, has remained a dead letter, and corruption has become endemic.

But Kyrgyzstan has always differed from other regional states by virtue of its strong civil society and relatively combative legislature; former President Askar Akaev was never as powerful as his counterparts in Central Asia. Moreover, there is a well-established tradition of "people power" in Kyrgyzstan—Akaev was almost forced from office by a countrywide protest movement in 2002. He managed to keep his seat, however, until last year's "Tulip Revolution" of 2005, which led to his ouster and his replacement in July by Kurmanbek Bakiev. By all accounts, the presidential election of July 2005 marked a real improvement in elections held in Kyrgyzstan, and particularly in Central Asia.

Since then, however, Kyrgyzstan has struggled with major problems, among them: uncontrolled criminality, high-level corruption, economic decline and a general sense of disappointment at unfulfilled promises. By this fall, discontent had risen to such a degree that a political movement, "For Reforms" led largely by President Bakiev's former associates, was able to mobilize protesters to pursue their agenda by peaceful rallies. Though the demonstrators originally called for Bakiev's resignation, in the end a compromise was reached in the form of a new constitution.

The document represents a real achievement, primarily for limiting the executive's powers—a first in Central Asia. Bakiev will remain in office until 2010 but his successor will not appoint the government, Prosecutor-General, the head of the Central Election Commission and the holders of other important posts. Whichever political party gains 51 percent in elections has that responsibility—an incentive for traditionally fractious political parties to align themselves in coalitions and work together.

Naturally, the heads of neighboring states have been displeased. State-controlled media in those countries have portrayed these events in the worst possible light, emphasizing "chaos and anarchy," and hoping thereby to discredit the Kyrgyz experiment by linking popular demonstrations with instability. But while crowds gathered in the streets of the capital Bishkek, the new constitution was adopted almost without violence, solidifying a tradition of politically effective peaceful protest. Most important, a framework has been created for developing all branches of power and resolving political disagreements.

I believe Kyrgyzstan's experience has genuine significance for the possibility of democratization in Central Asia, simply because the Kyrgyz political class, cooperating with civil society, has shown that it is possible without

bloodshed to reach compromise solutions to fundamental political problems. Whether Kyrgyzstan's experience can or should work in other countries is a different issue. But it is clear that all post-Soviet states need to find a way to limit the power and authority of their presidents if they are to escape the trap into which they have fallen. When people feel they have no representation or possibility of addressing grievances through state institutions, they will be tempted to find other methods. If this happens in other, more repressive countries with few or no democratic traditions, the outcome may not be so peaceful or positive.

So far, there is little evidence that this realization has penetrated elsewhere in Central Asia, where presidents continue to jealously hoard power. Sapannurat Niyazov remains the all-powerful "Turkmenbashi," or leader of all Turkmen, whom he continues to subject to his capricious campaigns, while running a permanent purge of the political class and making sure Turkmenistan remains the only one-party state to survive the Soviet bloc. Uzbekistan's Islam Karimov, who allows no opposition, has cracked down even harder and cuddled up to Russia since the international community reacted with outrage to the slaughter of hundreds in Andijan in May 2005. Tajikistan's Imomali Rakhmonov won re-election last month; constitutional amendments adopted last year will potentially allow him to remain in office until 2020. And Kazakhstan's bid to chair the OSCE in 2009 has been resisted by the United States and the United Kingdom for failure to improve its poor human rights record.

What happened in Bishkek is quite noteworthy, especially for the region—opposition groups were allowed to protest, the government did not respond with violence, and both sides agreed to a new constitution that actually decreases presidential powers and introduces a parliamentary system. Nothing like this is happening for thousands of miles in any direction.

All in all, Mr. Speaker, 15 years after the collapse of the USSR and the emergence of new states, it is hard to summon up much optimism for the prospects of democracy. Still, Kyrgyzstan has given me a bit of hope.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA CROTCHETT

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2006

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Linda Crotchett for her many years of service to the citizens of Jersey County, IL as County Clerk. Linda will retire this year after 44 years of service as the Jersey County Clerk.

For the past 44 years, Linda has greeted the citizens of Jersey County with a smile as they entered her office to conduct business. She has always lived up to her motto, "Happy to meet you, eager to serve you." Her friendly and courteous service will be missed. It is with gratitude that I thank her for her service and congratulate her on retirement. I wish Linda all the best in the years to come.