

## NEW DOGS IN OUR BACKYARD

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, our own backyard is in jeopardy. Recently Colombia, our ally in the war on drugs and in combating Marxist rebels bent on undermining democracy in the Americas, was threatened with military action by its neighbors Venezuela and Ecuador. Colombia had taken the military initiative to eliminate a FARC commander across the border in Ecuador in order to maintain its own security. Yet the leftist and anti-U.S. leaders from Venezuela and Ecuador took grave offense to the killing of one of their comrades in arms, and rolled up tank battalions to the border to try to intimidate Colombia. Thankfully, cooler heads prevailed in this round, yet the United States should be concerned from some emerging big dogs in our own backyard.

With our attention turned elsewhere around, other nations and interests have been undermining US influence in the Americas. As seen already, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has been trying to gather support of other Latin American leaders to oppose the U.S. This latest incident in threatening our ally is a prime example.

Yet there is an even bigger dog, and it is hungry. China is growing in influence in Latin America. Seeking trading, political, and military ties with Latin America nations, China's hunger for expansion is part of its goal to be a chief player in world politics. As China seeks greater ties and influence in South America, it will naturally rely on its Communist ties with Marxist and leftist leaning groups.

What is the result of these two big dogs in our backyard? US influence is lessening in Latin America. For decades we stood by and militarily backed our Monroe Doctrine. In essence, we claim that the Western Hemisphere and the Americas is our sphere of influence. While we were able to keep Europe out, we are failing to keep the Far East and Communism out. Theodore Roosevelt added his corollary to the Doctrine, stating that the US reserves the right to intervene in Latin America. American foreign policy should take notice of this situation. While we have our chickens outside grazing, the coop is empty and under threat. We should hold fast to our Monroe Doctrine, and include all emerging threats, whether from Europe, the Far East, or ideas such as Communism and radical Islam. Strangers in one's backyard do not make for a secure household.

And that's just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING JACK AND DONNA CLARK FOR THEIR SERVICE TO FLOWER MOUND HIGH SCHOOL

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jack and Donna Clark, long time administrators of Flower Mound High School. The Lewisville Independent School

District is honoring their service by naming Flower Mound High School's auditorium the Jack and Donna Clark Auditorium.

Naming the Flower Mound High School auditorium after Mr. and Mrs. Clark is especially fitting because they both enjoy and have an interest in the performing arts. Donna was a member of the world-famous Rangerettes at Kilgore College in Kilgore, Texas. The couple met when both were teaching at Lake Highlands High School in Dallas, Texas. Donna was an English teacher and director of the Highlandettes Drill Team and Jack was the head basketball coach.

The Clark family moved to Flower Mound in 1999 to help open Flower Mound High School. Four years later, Mr. Clark was named principal, the same year the couple's son, Cody, graduated from Flower Mound High School. Additionally, Mr. Clark was named Principal of the Year by Lewisville ISD.

The final paragraph of the nominating letter, which was signed by every assistant principal and member of the counseling staff, states: "The dedication that Jack and Donna Clark have shown through their years of education and to Flower Mound High School should not go unnoticed." This dedication is a great way to honor this couple for their devotion to the community of Flower Mound.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to rise today and pay tribute to Jack and Donna Clark and their legacy of service to the arts. I am proud to represent this couple in the 26th District of Texas and I am glad to know that their legacy will continue to live on.

REGARDING MARCH AS NATIONAL PEANUT MONTH AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TEXAS PEANUT PRODUCERS

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, today I rise in appreciation of the Texas peanut industry.

March is National Peanut Month, and it is timely to thank peanut farmers all over the great State of Texas for the work of their hands. Texas ranks second in the Nation in peanut production. The annual value of peanuts to our State is more than \$96 million.

As baseball is America's favorite pastime sport, what would a day at the ballpark be without a bag of peanuts? How would a child's favorite sandwich taste without the creamy goodness of peanut butter?

Few can deny the deliciousness of peanut brittle, peanut butter cups, plain roasted or boiled peanuts. The legumes are used in a great variety of ways and are an important industry to our State and Nation.

Texas peanut farmers produced nearly 370,000 tons of peanuts last year. The primary uses of peanuts, nationwide, are for popular confections. Peanuts are roasted and packaged in plastic bags or sealed cans. They are also used in significant quantities for peanut butter.

Texas is a state of grand scale. There were 190,000 acres of peanuts grown in Texas in 2007; the varieties include Runner, Spanish, Virginia and Valencia. Agriculture and cattle

ranching are major Texas industries, and it is fitting to recognize those who work the fields so that people everywhere can enjoy the products of their labor.

Madam Speaker, the Texas Peanut Producers Board and the Western Peanut Growers Association are valuable assets to Texas as leading producers in their industry. It is my privilege to recognize their contributions to our State's economy.

CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF RIVERDALE TOYS CAMPAIGN

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, for the past 8 years children in Babies and Children's Hospital of Columbia Presbyterian, Bronx Lebanon, Jacobi Medical Center, North Central Bronx Hospital, Lincoln Medical Center, Montefiore Medical Center, St. Barnabas Hospital, and Our Lady of Mercy Hospital have had their holidays brightened with gifts from the Chabad Lubavitch of Riverdale Toys Campaign.

Heartfelt gestures such as these have raised some from the despair of illness in a hospital during the holiday season to bring them hope and laughter. Toys are also given to children of more than 180 families living in homeless shelters in the Bronx.

This mitzvah, this kindness for those who are in need at that most special time of the year for joy and happiness, has earned the Chabad Lubavitch of Riverdale Toys Campaign the Community Organizational Award from the Riverdale Jewish Community Council.

HONORING PASTOR W. JAMES THOMAS II OF SHILOH CHURCH IN MEMPHIS, TN

**HON. STEVE COHEN**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, our pastor today was Pastor W. James Thomas II.

Pastor Thomas is God's visionary for Shiloh Church of Memphis, located in Memphis, Tennessee. Serving as Senior Pastor since 1994, his consistent obedience to God has taken the Shiloh congregation from glory to glory. The membership has grown from 75 to 600 and counting. During these years, Pastor Thomas has been preaching and teaching God's uncompromising Word with a boldness that has changed the lives of the people at Shiloh and throughout the country.

To accommodate the vision and growth of the church membership, Pastor Thomas led the congregation in the acquisition of a 19,000 square foot worship and educational facility in 1998. In 2003, the sanctuary was completely renovated and office complex expanded to accommodate staff and daily operational needs.

Spiritually, Pastor Thomas was saved and received much of his spiritual development in the Church of God in Christ. He was called to the ministry at the age of 14 and began pastoring at the age of 18 in Knoxville, TN.

Educationally, Pastor Thomas graduated cum laude from Crichton College in Memphis, Tennessee with a bachelor of science degree in biblical studies and is currently a candidate for the masters of divinity degree. He has also been awarded a doctor of divinity degree from St. Thomas Christian College in Jacksonville, FL. Pastor Thomas was selected from among 300 clergy nationally to participate in, and has completed the first Graduate School of Theological Studies Special intensive at Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge, MA in September, 2005 and Yale School of Divinity in September, 2006.

Pastor Thomas has accomplished many tasks on the local and national level. He is the founder and CEO of Grace Community Development Corporation and Grace for Living Ministries International and currently serves as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Marchell Foundation, a regional scholarship granting foundation. In July of 1998, he was appointed and installed as the District Overseer for the West Tennessee Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship. Apostolically, he serves as the overseer of True Praise & Worship International Church in Raleigh, NC and Fresh Anointing Christian Fellowship Church in Clarksville, MS. He is a member and chapter officer of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. He's very active in our community in Memphis, Tennessee. He is married to Minister Antonia R. Thomas, who serves alongside him in the ministry. And even possibly more important than his congregation, Pastor Thomas has two children. One is Private First Class Reginald Cleveland, who has been serving this Chamber for the past 4 years as an officer with the Capitol Police. His daughter Joshlyn Thomas is a student at Craigmont Middle School in Memphis.

Generations are changed because of his passion for mentoring youth, empowering the saints and serving as a spiritual father for Pastors. Through the ministry of Pastor Thomas, people are discovering their destinies. His favorite Scripture is Psalms 37:4—"Delight thyself also in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."

I appreciate Pastor Thomas serving the United States House of Representatives as our pastor this morning.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO DAYNA LYNN AHERN

#### HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and memory of my friend Dayna Lynn Ahern, whose passion for life was an inspiration.

Dayna was a native of Las Vegas who was a student of fashion merchandising at the Fashion Institute in Las Vegas, Nevada. Prior to enrolling in the Fashion Institute, Dayna had earned an Associates Degree from the prestigious Le Cordon Blue College of Culinary Arts in Las Vegas.

Among Dayna's many passions was traveling and music. These dual talents provided her with a number of unique opportunities, such as performing for the Pope at the Vatican and traveling with her high school choir to

perform at various locals in Europe. Dayna was also an active member of her Church, and had a strong sense of spirituality.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the life and legacy of my friend Dayna. On March 30, 2006, Dayna passed away but her enthusiasm and passion for life will serve as an inspiration for all who knew her. She will be greatly missed, but her legacy as a caring and motivated individual will live on.

#### RECOGNIZING CHARLES CITY, IOWA POLICE DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATOR TODD SMITH AND MASON CITY POLICE OFFICER STEVE KLEMAS

#### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Charles City, Iowa Police Department Investigator Todd Smith and Mason City Police Officer Steve Klemas as recipients of The Sullivan Brothers' Award of Valor for saving another's life by risking their own.

The Sullivan Brothers' Award of Valor Program was established in 1977 to recognize peace officers and firefighters, who while serving in an official capacity, distinguished themselves by performing a heroic act while fully aware of a threat to his/her personal safety. The strict nomination process includes background investigations, and the final determination is made by the Governor of Iowa.

On June 18, 2007, Officer Klemas and Investigator Smith responded to a request by the Wright County sheriff to assist in an armed stand-off that occurred after the office attempted to serve a committal order on an individual. After failed negotiations, two rounds of tear gas, and a five-hour stand-off, Officer Klemas and Investigator Smith led a team of eight into the house. Investigator Smith served as the shield person, and was shot at three times as Officer Klemas fired on the individual to subdue him and take him into custody.

Investigator Smith and Officer Klemas' bravery goes above and beyond what we are asked of as citizens of this country. Their courage illustrates the compassion of Iowans; willing to risk their own lives for the safety of our fellow citizens. For this I offer them my utmost congratulations and thanks.

I commend Officer Steve Klemas and Investigator Todd Smith for their bravery. I am honored to represent them in Congress and I wish them the best in their future endeavors.

#### CONNOR KONZ ENDURES FIJI

#### HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize a young constituent of the Second Congressional District, Mr. Connor Konz, for his participation in the Discovery Kids Channel competition Endurance Fiji.

Connor is a 15-year-old sophomore at Atascocita High School in Humble, Texas. He was selected in June of this year as a participant after submitting a five-minute video de-

scribing himself and how he spends his free time.

The game consists of teams collecting 13 pyramid pieces which are essential inner qualities to complete the Pyramid of Endurance. They are Strength, Heart, Courage, Perseverance, Luck, Trust, Leadership, Discipline, Knowledge, Commitment, Teamwork, Ingenuity and Friendship. The first team to collect all 13 pieces wins the game. The teams earn pieces by winning physical and mental competitions.

Connor and his mother, Debbie Konz, were flown to Fiji on Aug. 12. After arriving, he was taken by boat from the airport to an island hotel and from there to another island for the competition.

By no means was this tropical island competition a Sunday picnic or vacation for Connor. He was without all of the daily teenage essentials such as no cell phone, MP3 player or digital camera the entire time he was on the island. He slept in a sleeping bag, in a bamboo hut with a thatched roof and no air conditioning. Connor said that the worst part of the experience was no electricity or indoor plumbing.

The teens also faced isolation by sleeping on a separate island away from their parents and didn't get to see them again until they were kicked off the show for losing a competition.

Connor had to use his physical and mental abilities to overcome the obstacles and challenges in the competition. It was an experience that pushed him farther than he thought he could go and resulted in lifelong friendships with the contestants.

Connor not only represented his family in the competition but Humble, Texas as well. I salute Connor Konz for enduring Fiji.

And that's just the way it is.

#### CONGRATULATING THE DENTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

#### HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) of Lewisville, Texas. The DCTA was recently awarded a Federal Transit Administration Ridership Award.

The Federal Transit Administration Ridership Awards honor and acknowledge the industry's commitment to excellence. The recipients of the Ridership Award are transit systems that have substantially increased their ridership since 2003 through a variety of techniques and innovations. The DCTA is one of four agencies being recognized that service an area with a population between 200,000 and 1 million people.

The Denton County Transportation Authority is a synchronized county transit agency that provides a wide variety of local services to Denton and surrounding communities, as well as a commuter service to downtown Dallas. The DCTA has strong relationship with the community. In 2005, the DCTA took over the daily operational and management responsibility of the campus shuttle service for the University of North Texas. The DCTA and the