

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 ending it in 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

University worked together to provide free fares for students, and ridership on the shuttles increased by 15 percent between fall 2005 and fall 2006. The program was expanded in 2006 to allow free access onto the DCTA Commuter Express service and to expand the service on campus by two stops. The number of students, faculty, and staff that rode transit increased substantially in 2006 and, by the end of the year, 35–40% of passengers on the Commuter Express were associated with the University.

I extend my sincerest congratulations to the Denton County Transportation Authority. Their commitment to improving the public transportation system is to be commended and I hope other transit agencies will follow in their successful, innovative footsteps.

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SUPPORTING OUR NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED

**HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Mr. BOUSTANY. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the bipartisan Senate-passed update to the Foreign Intelligence and Surveillance Act, a chief component of national intelligence.

Three weeks have passed since our national security community lost the ability to track valuable intelligence without going through slow and burdensome bureaucratic hurdles. That's more than 3 weeks of terrorist communications that cannot be recovered. Yet, the Democratic House leadership under Speaker NANCY PELOSI refuses to debate a bipartisan Senate bill, which would give intelligence officials expanded authority to track terrorists outside of the United States. Since August last year, a temporary set of new laws authorized this program, but it expired on February 15, 2008.

Violent extremists operating around the world have one aim—kill Americans. I am committed to providing responsible and appropriate tools to our intelligence community to protect and defend Americans at home and abroad. It is not a coincidence that the U.S. has not been attacked at home since September 11, 2001. American intelligence officers protected us, and Congress must provide the tools and techniques they need to meet the long-term challenges that remain. Those standing on the frontlines battling these terrorists must have the ability to quickly intercept foreign communications to stop terrorists.

The Democratic leadership in the House has said, "there is no urgency" on updating our Nation's intelligence laws. I vehemently disagree, allowing this law to expire is completely irresponsible. I will continue to stand up for our men and women who defend us against future terrorist attacks.

I urge my colleagues to adopt the Senate-passed bill to expedite this necessary and timely update to the FISA law. Another day should not pass without our passing this bill.

HONORING THE MIAMI MEDICAL TEAM FOUNDATION

**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a wonderful organization in my home State and district in Florida, the Miami Medical Team Foundation, M.M.T.F. The M.M.T.F. is celebrating their 25th year as a local organization with worldwide significance and deserves more than a moment of recognition for their service.

The Miami Medical Team Foundation is a group of wonderful people that have formed a nonprofit, humanitarian, self-supported organization whose goals are the improvement of the sanitary and medical conditions in Third World countries.

The M.M.T.F. is composed at its core by medical doctors of all specialties, but as well, nurses, physical therapists, medical technicians, and Pharmacists. Founded in the early 1980s when refugees began piling in the borders between Nicaragua and Honduras, the group has since been involved in many different scenarios of tragedy in five continents of our planet, providing assistance to a total of 19 countries and makes available medical and surgical teams and the shipping of donated medicine and medical equipment. Members of the M.M.T.F. have always covered the costs of each and every humanitarian operation they embark on.

With the strong leadership of their president, Dr. Manuel A. Alzugaray, they have seen their efforts put to amazing use. Manuel is a dedicated individual with a professionalism that can not be easily matched. I know that it will be with his guidance that the M.M.T.F. will continue to play a vital role in making sure the world's most disadvantaged populations receive the timely care that they so desperately deserve.

Again, I praise the Miami Medical Team Foundation for all their successful initiatives across the globe and moreover, I commend them for their willingness to operate as a financially independent organization that could not exist without its members' dedication to the noble principles that they hold so dear. For all that the Miami Medical Team Foundation has done in support of their global humanitarian mission, and will certainly continue to do, I thank them so very much.

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EXCERPT FROM THE WORLD OF WATCHERS

**HON. MARCY KAPTUR**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2008*

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, the attached article is submitted at the request of the American Center of Polish Culture.

[Excerpts from The World of the Watchers by Edward Pinkowski]

INTRODUCTION

Almost a century after it was created, the equestrian statue of General Casimir Pulaski

in Washington, D.C., has overshadowed discussion of many subjects. For example, very few are familiar with the Polish roots of Frank C. Watcher, who was elected in Baltimore, Maryland, as a Republican to the 56th Congress in 1898 and was reelected three successive times. None of the other congressmen then had a drop of Polish blood.

When Abraham L. Brick, who came from South Bend, Indiana, to Washington at the same time as Watcher, introduced a bill for the erection of the monument to Pulaski, Watcher saw that it had little support. He realized that if he didn't speak out, none of his colleagues would pay attention to the bill to honor the Polish hero of the American Revolution. He was known as an efficacious man, with a cheerful smile, who easily won others to his side. "On the last day of the session the Speaker of the House brought it up for consideration," he told a reporter of the Baltimore Sun in 1902. "The bill passed."

It took years after that for the federal government to set up a commission, find a site for the Pulaski monument in the nation's capital, and work out the rest of the details. The sculptor was Kazimierz Chodzinski, who had studied under the famous Matejko in Krakow, Poland, and was the one who carved the Kosciuszko statue before in Chicago. When his equestrian statue of Pulaski was unveiled in 1910, critics said it was the best they ever saw.

CITY OF BALTIMORE

Frank Charles Watcher was born September 16, 1861, in South Baltimore, where the Baltimore and Ohio company built the largest railroad station in the world in 1852 and the stockyards butchered more hogs than any other city on the Atlantic coast. Built on the Patapsco River not far from the Watcher home, Fort McHenry, which Francis Scott Key immortalized in the Star Spangled Banner, was used in the 1860s to hold thousands of Confederate prisoners of war.

When he was growing up, Frank Watcher dreamed of being a tailor like his father. Upon graduation from St. Paul's German English School, however, he got a job as a clerk for \$1.50 a week in a clothing store. In time, because of his energy, determination, and brains, he managed a business.

POLITICAL CAREER

The first important campaign of his life came in 1898 when he received the Republican nomination for Congress. Nobody expected him to win. One of the issues in his favor was immigration. The Democratic Party, largely in Irish hands, was against new immigration because the immigrants who came mostly from Poland and Italy were taking the places of Irish workers in mines and factories and working for less money. In the coming election, the Polish citizens of Baltimore, most of whom previously supported Democrats, voted in large part for Watcher. He was elected to the Fifty-sixth Congress by a majority of 122 votes.

Watcher ran again two years later and won by more than 2,071 votes. After three terms in Washington, he ran for mayor of Baltimore. He won in the primaries and lost in the general election by less than 500 votes.

His family was at his bedside when he died on July 1, 1910. His body was followed to Loudon Park Cemetery by a long cortege of political and business associates. The honorary pall bearers included Speaker of the House Joseph G. Cannon.