

after she born. This was the church she was raised in, was baptized in, was married in, and the church in which we laid her to eternal rest.

From 1911 to 2017, what a ride, what a remarkable life and unforgettable woman. Through it all, she stayed true to what was important to her and what makes America such a strong nation: her faith, her family, and her Kansas prairie values.

Grandma, we were so blessed to have so many years with you. You lived an amazing 105 years. I think if we look closely and we listen closely, you gave us a roadmap for a long and happy life. As you pass on to eternal life, please know that you are an inspiration to all of us every day. May you rest in peace, Grandma.

Mr. Speaker, may you and my colleagues in this body join me in keeping her in your prayers.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 45 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Bless abundantly the Members of this people's House. During this season of new growth, may Your redemptive power help them to see new ways to productive service, fresh approaches to understanding each other, especially those across the aisle, and renewed commitment to solving the problems facing our Nation.

The disagreements on the Hill are profound. Send Your spirit of hope and goodwill upon those who are struggling through current, contentious issues.

May all Members, and may we all, be transformed by Your grace and better reflect the sense of wonder, even joy at the opportunities to serve that are ever before us.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ADAMS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

DENY TERRORISTS THE RECRUITS OF THE NEXT GENERATION

(Mr. KINZINGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, we woke up this morning to yet more horrific images of dozens of people killed by another chemical weapons attack in Syria.

Mr. Speaker, this included children who were gasping for their last breath as they perished because of the brutal, murderous dictator Bashar al-Assad, who decided that chemical weapons would be used to extinguish their life.

Mr. Speaker, for 6 years, we have failed in the Western world to address this horrific act. In fact, for the first time since World War II, we are accepting the use of chemical weapons as just a normal part of everyday life.

Mr. Speaker, the Western world, the free world, needs to stand up, needs to make clear that Assad needs to go, and needs to stand up for humanity, lest we see these images again.

We wonder how to defeat terrorism. Mr. Speaker, you do it by denying terrorists the recruits of the next generation, of which Bashar al-Assad is creating many.

HAWAII'S PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCHERS AND RADIO TECHNICIANS

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend a warm mahalo to Hawaii's public safety dispatchers and radio technicians who provide an essential service to our community.

These hardworking men and women process more than 1.4 million 911 calls each year in Hawaii and are literally the first line of response in an emergency situation. Their ability to relay accurate and up-to-date information is essential to the success of our police officers, firefighters, paramedics, and to the safety of those in desperate need of help.

Last year, Hawaii's public safety telecommunicators helped our State

become one of the very first in the Nation to implement a text-to-911 program that is helping to close the gap in emergency response. This program addresses a very real need for situations where you may have a home invasion or domestic violence scenario where making a phone call to 911 safely is simply not possible.

Mahalo to our telecommunicators for leading the way on this initiative and for your work every single day on behalf of Hawaii's people.

MOMENT OF SILENCE HONORING DONALD BURGETT

(Mr. BISHOP of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of World War II veteran, noted author, and longtime Eighth Congressional District resident Donald Burgett, who recently passed away at the age of 81.

Don was an Army paratrooper, and he participated in the opening operations of the Normandy invasion with A Company, 506th Parachute Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division.

After his service, Mr. Burgett published four books, including "Currahee!" published in 1967 and endorsed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Mr. Burgett used his photographic memory to paint vivid scenes during the chaos of war.

In addition to his writing, he also was an active member of several veterans organizations, including the VFW, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, and the Military Order of the Cooties. He was a local builder and loved spending time outdoors.

Don is survived by his wife, Twyla, his 5 children, 12 grandchildren, and 28 great-grandchildren. A memorial is being held for him this week in his honor in his hometown of Howell, Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for a moment of silence for this great American patriot.

May God bless Don and his family.

OUR DEMOCRACY UNDER ATTACK

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it pains me to come to this Chamber this morning to say that nothing was done as our democracy came under attack.

We know Russia intervened in our Presidential election. This was not done in the interest of the people, by the people, or for the people of America. It was done to make America a vehicle for Russian interests.

You know that, in 2016, President Trump said he hoped Russia would hack our former Secretary of State's emails. You know General Michael Flynn was forced to resign due to his

unreported contact with Russian agents, who he also had business ties to.

Yesterday, you learned that the President had a contractor meet with Russian officials on his behalf to have a back channel to the Kremlin.

Where is the transparency from the White House? How is it that Meals on Wheels is the enemy, but you turn a blind eye to an attack on democracy by Vladimir Putin?

Russian spies have long attacked American businesses. Now they are attacking our freedom. You must investigate the Russian grip on our government. We must investigate swiftly and seriously.

Mr. Speaker, this is on your watch.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

CELEBRATING THE MASTERS

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, as you know, I have the honor of representing the 12th Congressional District of Georgia and the good people who live and work there.

This week, thousands will gather in Augusta to take part in a tradition unlike any other.

Beginning in 1934, the Masters, hosted by the Augusta National Golf Club, has become the most prestigious golf tournament in the world. Known for its lightning-fast greens and gorgeous azaleas, this tournament captivates the world for both the talent of those playing and its beauty. Since its inception, many legends have conquered the greens to prove their skill and earn the coveted green jacket.

This year will be a little somber, as we will deeply miss another of the great legends, four-time Masters champion Arnold Palmer. His presence will certainly be missed on that first tee as an honorary starter and throughout this great week.

I wish the best to all those competing in this truly remarkable event and invite those who are traveling from far and wide to experience and enjoy the wonderful hospitality of the 12th Congressional District of Georgia and my home, Augusta.

REJECT THE NEW HEALTHCARE BILL

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, word coming out of the White House and House Republicans is that there is a new healthcare bill, and this bill would obliterate the patient protections for preexisting conditions and eviscerate essential benefits and cost controls.

Under the new healthcare scam, insurance companies could opt out of all

consumer protections. In other words, insurance companies could write fake policies with big premiums and little or no coverage.

Mr. Speaker, under this plan, a parent of a kid who is struck with childhood cancer could still buy a policy, but the policy is worthless because the policy would not have to cover their children's cancer treatment.

This is how House Republicans and the insurance lobby plan to get out from under their obligation to cover preexisting conditions.

This means more power for the insurance companies and less protection for good people, the American people, who play by the rules. This plan should be rejected again. It is deceitful, cold, cruel, and wrong.

GORDIAN KNOT

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight legislation I recently introduced, the VA GORDIAN KNOT Act, which would help improve and reform the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In Greek mythology, the Gordian knot represents a complex problem that needs out-of-the-box thinking to solve, and that is exactly what we need.

The VA's Gordian knot is its repeated manipulation of key data and overall lack of accountability. The VA has been known to yield less-than-truthful information when it comes to collecting and reporting data about patient care, appointment wait times, and employee hiring and firing practices.

This behavior is an erosion of public trust and a disservice to our Nation's veterans, our true heroes. It also makes it difficult to properly address the VA's shortcomings and enhance its successes because there are successes as well.

The VA GORDIAN KNOT Act requires the VA to standardize its data collecting and reporting mechanisms and increases oversight of the integrity and accuracy of the information.

I believe this bill is absolutely necessary to reform the VA and assist in its mission to care for our true American heroes.

EQUAL PAY DAY

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, it is Equal Pay Day. I rise to support not only women but the American family and the economy.

Women drive our economy. We buy more goods. We own more small businesses, and we earn more degrees. Despite this, we still earn less than men. This should embarrass every lawmaker

in this Chamber and every person listening.

In 2017, Mr. Speaker, how can we justify underpaying women across this Nation? Women still earn 20 percent less than their male counterparts, and it is even worse for Black and Hispanic women.

Shortchanging women shortchanges our children and our economy. When women succeed, we all succeed. Women and our families demand paycheck fairness. We stand boldly united today embracing the words of Florynce Kennedy who said: We won't agonize. We will organize. We will show up and cut up until Molly earns the same pay as Billy.

As Susan B. Anthony said: "Men, their rights and nothing more. Women, their rights and nothing less."

I urge you to call your Representatives, demand that we support you by supporting the Paycheck Fairness Act.

RECOGNIZING SERVICE ACADEMY APPOINTEES

(Mr. DUNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three outstanding young people from Florida's Second Congressional District who will be continuing their education serving our country next year at the Naval Academy and at West Point.

Sean Moriarty and Zachary Moser will be attending the United States Naval Academy. Sean plays football at Arnold High School, and Zac is on the swim team at Rutherford High School.

Shane Ferry will be attending the United States Military Academy, West Point. He attends Mosley High School and is a member of the wrestling team.

The bar is high and the competition is stiff to earn entry into our service academies, and it should be. I am confident that each of these young men possess the character, ability, and determination to excel at Annapolis and West Point and to earn the privilege to do extraordinary things for our Nation and for those who they will one day command.

As they join their Federal fellow cadets and midshipmen, they also have our support and our gratitude for choosing this life of service.

Thank you and good luck.

□ 1215

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION NEEDED TO INVESTIGATE TRUMP'S TIES WITH RUSSIA

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are now joining Democrats in calling for Chairman NUNES to recuse himself from the House Intelligence Committee's current investigation into Russia's interference in the 2016 election.