

JOHN COBEAGA

**HON. DINA TITUS**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2017*

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say goodbye and Godspeed to a longtime friend, John Mitchell Cobeaga. Mitch, his wife Sylvia, and their children have lived next door to us for some thirty years. We often hid the "presents from Santa" in our garage until Christmas morning when the children could be surprised by shiny new bikes. His law office was also next to my congressional office in downtown Las Vegas and I often visited with him there.

Mitch was well respected for his advocacy work for fellow veterans. Mitch graduated from the U.S. Airforce Academy and was a proud member of the 20th Cadet Squadron, "Tough Twenty Trolls." He became a Wild Weasel fighter pilot and flew over 100 combat missions in Vietnam. After his military service, he founded the Veterans Ask-a-Lawyer program, a free legal program to help vets in need.

Mitch also had a reputation as a hero for the little guy in the courtroom where he had a commanding presence. He contributed to many of Nevada's largest cases, including the one involving the 1988 perchlorate explosion at the Pacific Engineering and Production Company which killed two people and caused billions of dollars in damage throughout the Henderson area. His colleague Robert Murdock noted that "he had a hand in mentoring most of the lawyers in Southern Nevada at one point or another" and should be honored by having a courtroom named for him.

Sylvia said that Mitch will be remembered for his intelligence, sense of morality, and the importance he placed on family. And he never took himself seriously, she said. He always had time for everyone he passed in the courtroom, office, and around town. We will all miss his warm laughter, his kind words, and his sage counsel very much.

RECOGNITION OF FIRST BAPTIST  
CHURCH CENTRALIA

**HON. A. DONALD MCEACHIN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2017*

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 150th Anniversary of First Baptist Church Centralia, founded in 1867 in Chesterfield County, Virginia Originally Salem African Baptist Church, the African American congregation held its first 30 years of services under an arbor made of brush on a modest one-acre plot. The first building was officially erected in 1897 under the leadership of the Reverend T. H. Johnson, incorporating Gothic Revival and Colonial Revival style elements.

Later this building was remodeled by Reverend William Thomas into the historic building we know today as Centralia, featuring its signature twin towers. Under the leadership of Reverend Samuel Carter and Dr. Wilson E. Brown Shannon the church grew as a congregation and as a spiritual beacon for its members. Dr. Shannon extended the reach of the church by expanding the Samuel Moss

Carter Family Life Center to accommodate up to 150 preschool children, banquet amenities to accommodate 750 occupants, and other family life ministry facilities including an indoor Olympic sized swimming pool.

Shortly after the groundbreaking of this highly anticipated Family Life Center, the Historic First Baptist Church Centralia was destroyed by fire on April 16, 1996. Rebuilt to original specifications in 1997 following the arson attack, a rededication ceremony was held in celebration. On November 22, 2014, the Historic First Baptist Church Centralia was designated a Chesterfield County Historic Landmark. A Virginia Historical Highway Marker was also erected in recognition of its historical and architectural significance in November 2015.

As First Baptist Church Centralia celebrates its 150th year anniversary, may your efforts and continued courage to spread the gospel of God through oratory teachings, community involvement and leadership be commended.

HONORING LOUIS FARINELLA

**HON. ROBERT A. BRADY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2017*

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my sorrow at the loss of my friend Louis Farinella. Lou was one of the most dynamic men I know.

He worked his way up from the bottom of the Philadelphia Electric Company to the post of Administration Manager. That was a sign of his talent.

He was a Democratic Committeeman in the Ward 66 B for 45 years. He was also Chairman of the Parkwood Civic Association Zoning Committee. Those were signs of his commitment to his community.

He worked for me at the Philadelphia Democratic City Committee for 22 years. That was a sign of his loyalty.

But most of all, Lou was Florence's loving husband for 56 years. They had two children, Louis III and John and four grandchildren, John, Ryan, Tyler and Angela. He loved and was loved by his sister, Marie. Those were all signs of his heart.

Mr. Speaker, Lou probably never knew how important he was to me. But, I know it. I miss him and I ask all of my colleagues to join me in giving the condolences of the House of Representatives to his family.

KATY PRINCIPAL NAMED DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL FINALIST

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2017*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kwabena Mensah of Katy, for being named as a Texas National Distinguished Principal finalist by the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA).

Out of 123 nominations, only eight were selected as finalists for this prestigious honor. The National Distinguished Principal is the

highest honor a principal can achieve, with the winner receiving \$10,000 and a trip to Washington, DC, in the fall. Kwabena is the principal at Polly Ann McRoberts Elementary School and was chosen as a finalist for being an engaging leader who's created a unique learning environment. This year, Kwabena was named Principal of the Year at Katy Independent School District and the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators. Way to go.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Kwabena Mensah for earning this distinction. Our children benefit from his commitment to education and we thank him for his hard work.

IN RECOGNITION OF ELIZABETH SHAFER ON HER OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

**HON. ROBERT E. LATTA**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2017*

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Elizabeth Shaffer of Hicksville, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Elizabeth's offer of appointment permits her to attend the United States Air Force Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2021. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country, but also guarantees a world-class education while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Elizabeth brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2021. While attending Hicksville High School in Hicksville, Ohio, Elizabeth was a member of the National Honor Society and class president.

Throughout high school, Elizabeth served as team captain on the basketball, track, and volleyball teams, and participated in the marching band. I am confident that Elizabeth will carry the lessons of her student and athletic leadership to the Air Force Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Elizabeth Shaffer on the offer of her appointment to the United States Air Force Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Elizabeth will excel during her career at the Air Force Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to her as she begins her service to our Nation.

GIRLS OF STEEL

**HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 2, 2017*

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the