

COL Villaronga has been responsible for the donation of over \$175,000 in scholarships for local graduating seniors. He continues to serve veterans in his community alongside his wife. His tireless efforts have made Central Texas a place that we're proud to call home.

COL Villaronga's patriotism and commitment to service reflect the very best values of Central Texas. He is a hero who has devoted his life to defending our freedoms abroad and serving his community at home. I join his wife, Julia, along with his family and friends in wishing him the best in the years ahead.

BAHA'I BICENTENARY

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 23, 2017

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on the 200th anniversary of the birth of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith, it is with great pleasure that I send warm greetings to the Baha'i community of South Florida and beyond.

Baha'is have thrived in the United States for over 120 years, making the world a better place by being good citizens, serving their communities, and working with those around them to promote the common good. With over five million followers around the world, the Baha'i Faith continues to promote Baha'u'llah's message of justice, unity, and peace, as it calls for equality, education, interfaith harmony, and international cooperation, and an end to racial prejudice.

Despite the Baha'i message of peace, Baha'is in Iran continue to endure severe persecution because of their faith. In the last two Congresses, I have been honored to introduce a resolution which condemns "the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights." Last year the House unanimously passed this resolution, sending a strong message that Iran must be held accountable for its actions, and we continue to garner strong bipartisan support for a similar measure, H. Res. 274, this year.

As we celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of Baha'u'llah, let us remember his words: "so powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth." In our quest for justice and peace, we must all work together to combat religious persecution whenever and wherever it is found.

My best wishes to the entire Baha'i community on this very special occasion.

HONORING THELMA COLLINS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 23, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the retirement of Ms. Thelma Collins, who has tirelessly devoted herself to the betterment of Itta Bena, Mississippi, through her works as a Servant Mayor for 12 years. As a native to this Delta community, Mrs. Collins has always be-

lieved in her dreams to see Itta Bena develop into a vibrant, healthy place for growing up and growing old.

In the pursuit of her vision, Mrs. Collins attended and graduated from Mississippi Valley State University, and then continued her education by receiving a Master's Degree at Mississippi State University. Post-graduation, Mrs. Collins began her career with over 30 years in education—serving as a teacher, an adjunct professor at Mississippi Valley State University, and as a recognized member of many civil and spiritual boards.

In August 1996, Mrs. Collins was elected to serve her first Mayoral term in the city of Itta Bena, Mississippi. After sitting four years out of office, Mrs. Collins' continued vision inspired her to return to office and serve a second term in 2005. Still hopeful to see a progressive Itta Bena, Ms. Collins returned to serve a spiritual led third term in 2009. However, due to the poor economic state of Itta Bena, Ms. Collins refused a salary, and served this final term pro bono.

Amongst Mrs. Collins many noteworthy accomplishments, is her dedication and the success she achieved in not only getting the IRS to remove the city's lien, but also to abate its more than \$200,000 tax debt.

Mrs. Collins has been married to Reverend Johnny Collins for forty-nine years. They have one son, John Paul Collins, a daughter-in-law, and five grandchildren. At this juncture during her retirement, her ultimate aspiration is to continue her works in the improvement and livelihood of her citizens of Itta Bena, while remaining close and led by her relationship with Christ.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Mrs. Thelma Collins, for her dedication and service to the great city of Itta Bena, Mississippi.

DALLAS LOVE FIELD CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 23, 2017

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the centennial of Dallas Love Field Airport, which celebrated one hundred years of operation this month. Since the airport's opening in 1917, Dallas Love Field has experienced tremendous growth and positive change that has strengthened the Dallas area in a multitude of ways. Today, Dallas Love Field stands as an invaluable gateway for North Texas.

Dallas Love Field is rich in history and culture. The airport was initially opened as an Army Air Service field, named for Lieutenant Moss Lee Love, the eighth aviation officer to be killed and the 10th fatality in Army aviation. However, as flying became more accessible airlines started conducting commercial flights out of Love Field and eventually the airport was made the headquarters for Southwest Airlines when the company was founded in 1971. Throughout American history, it has stood as an important landmark, not only for the City of Dallas, but for the entire United States as well.

The airport has hosted aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh, after recently finishing the first flight from New York to Paris. In 1959,

Lady Bird Johnson celebrated the launching of the first jet service, an American Airlines 707, out of Love Field. Later, in November of 1963, the airport hosted an historic moment during one of the most shocking days that our country has ever lived through, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. It was at Love Field where First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy stood by Lyndon Johnson's side as he was sworn in as President.

Today, countless Americans rely heavily on Love Field's convenient access to air travel and the first class amenities that it provides for travelers. Love Field stands as a model for other municipalities in how to manage and grow a self-support airport of this caliber. I am proud to recognize Dallas Love Field during this important milestone, and I look forward to experiencing even more positive growth and change at Love Field in the coming years.

IN RECOGNITION OF ALFRED WILLIAM DE SANTIS, SR.

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 23, 2017

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Alfred William De Santis, Sr. for his 55 years of service to the Port-Au-Peck Chemical Hose Company No. 1 in Oceanport, New Jersey. Mr. De Santis' outstanding record will be celebrated at the company's 40th annual "Old Timer's Night," which Mr. De Santis himself originated.

Mr. De Santis' leadership and commitment to the department is evident. A Life Member and Ex-Chief, Mr. De Santis began his service with the company in March of 1962. In addition to his election as Chief of the Oceanport Fire Department in 1971, Mr. De Santis also served as Captain, Secretary and Treasurer of the company. He was elected Company President for six terms. He remains an active member of the company and is dedicated to his fellow fire fighters, organizing the annual "Old Timer's Night" celebrating and honoring members for the past 40 years.

In addition to his service with the Oceanport Fire Department, Mr. De Santis was a member of the Fire Police Division for 30 years and served as Secretary of the Oceanport Relief Association and Secretary of the Exempt Association of Oceanport for 35 years. He also held leadership positions with the Ex Chief's Association of Eatontown, Oceanport and West Long Branch.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I join with the Port-Au-Peck Chemical Hose Company No. 1 in honoring Alfred William De Santis, Sr. on his outstanding record of accomplishment. Mr. De Santis has dutifully served Oceanport for 55 years and his selfless commitment is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

RECOGNIZING "MOTHER" ROSA MCKIE

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 23, 2017

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of "Mother"