

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MARK SANFORD**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 672 and YEA on Roll Call No. 673.

## RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF SPACE CENTER HOUSTON

**HON. BRIAN BABIN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Space Center Houston, the Official Visitor Center of the NASA Johnson Space Center.

Since opening in 1992, Space Center Houston has welcomed nearly twenty million visitors and currently hosts nearly one million visitors annually in its 250,000 square-foot educational complex. The Manned Space Flight Foundation, a private entity separate from NASA, funds Space Center Houston, its educational programs and the preservation of artifacts in its space science museum. Educational emphasis is placed on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in a fun and engaging way.

At Space Center Houston you can see the history and future of human spaceflight under one roof and it is the only Smithsonian Affiliate museum in Houston. The Visitor's Center is home to a one-of-a-kind exhibit displaying the world's only shuttle replica (Independence) mounted on an original Shuttle Carrier Aircraft (NASA 905). For the first time, only at Space Center Houston, you can see the spacecraft from the first and last lunar landings under the same roof. Currently, Space Center Houston is partnering with the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum to display both the Apollo 11 and Apollo 17 command modules to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of our nation's extraordinary achievement of man's first step on the Moon in 1969.

Through Space Center Houston, the foundation can teach future generations how far we've come with the space program and emphasize how far we have to go to touch the rest of our universe.

Mr. Speaker, as the Congressman who represents Space Center Houston, and as Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Space, it is my distinct honor to recognize Space Center Houston on this milestone occasion.

## CONGRATULATING THE NEW HAVEN SHAMROCKS BOYS CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

**HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in con-

gratulating the New Haven Shamrocks Boys Cross Country team on winning the Class 1 Cross Country State Championship.

This team and their coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing the New Haven Shamrocks Boys Cross Country team for a job well done.

## RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER ARMY SPECIALIST (SPC) RAPHAEL SAPTIAN DAVIS

**HON. TRENT KELLY**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Specialist (SPC) Raphael Saptian Davis who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation on December 2, 2003, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SPC Davis was killed when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in Tampa, Iraq. SPC Davis was assigned to B Company, 223rd Engineer Battalion, Mississippi Army National Guard, based in Calhoun City, Mississippi.

According to the Associated Press, SPC Davis grew up in the Mississippi Delta. He lived with his mother in Tutwiler, Mississippi. SPC Davis graduated from Tallahatchie High School in Webb, Mississippi in 1998. SPC Davis attended Holmes Community College in Goodman, Mississippi where he was pursuing a degree in engineering. He then attended Hinds Community College in Jackson, Mississippi. Davis joined the Mississippi Army National Guard in 2001. SPC Davis was deployed during his second year of college.

Clifton Bailey, SPC Davis' father, remembers the last time he talked with his son on the phone. "He called me on November 16th," Mr. Bailey said. "He tracked me down until he found me at work. I never heard him sound so happy. He told me he was coming home. We all assumed he meant Tutwiler, but he knew he was going to his heavenly home. He was calling to say goodbye." Betty Davis Pimpton, SPC Davis' mother, said she always worried about her son as any mother would. "You always hope for the best, never thinking about the worst that can happen," Mrs. Pimpton said. "I was really proud of his service. He enjoyed it and wanted to make a career out of it."

Lakeitha Johnson, a classmate of SPC Davis, paid tribute to him on a memorial website. "There isn't a day that goes by when I don't think about my classmate and friend, Raphael," Lakeitha said. "I think everyone here agrees that the last two years without him have been tough. Even though his loss has left a huge void in our community, I always think of him and smile. I know that you are in heaven smiling down on us and we love you and miss you so much. We'll see you when we reach that other shore, Raph."

SPC Davis was the father of three children, Raphael Davis, Junior, Ravin Davis, and Razavier Seon Davis. His youngest child, Razavier Seon Davis, was born four weeks before SPC Davis was killed. Deetra Tucker,

mother of Razavier, was also a member of the Mississippi Army National Guard.

A funeral was held for SPC Davis at West Tallahatchie High School in Webb, Mississippi. SPC Davis was laid to rest in the family cemetery located on Sharkey Road in Glendora, Mississippi. SPC Davis' sisters and brothers wrote a special tribute to their brother which was printed in the program for the funeral. It read, "Ralph, our beautiful brother, there's really no need for words. Your life spoke loud and clear. You were not perfect and that's okay. No human being is. You are still our brother and we love you. There's a lot of press these days about how there are no heroes or great men for our children to look up to. They were wrong. Ralph, you are a hero and we will make sure that all of your nieces and nephews know you were that special hero. We love you."

SPC Davis is survived by his father, Clifton Bailey; his mother, Betty Davis Pimpton; his girlfriend, Deetra Tucker; the mother of his two oldest children, Kimberlie Blount; his three children, Raphael Davis, Junior, Ravin Davis, and Razavier Seon Davis; his eleven brothers, Cedric Davis, Demarcus Davis, Lamonte Harris, Clifton Davis, Junior, Zavier Bailey, Bernard Berryhill, Taierry Brown, Areail Wallace, Steve Hill, Terrence Steele, and Maurice Steele; his two sisters, Wynde Bailey, and Premmie Stevenson.

SPC Davis will always be remembered for his service and sacrifice to protect America and to preserve the freedoms we all enjoy.

## GODSPEED MARTIN WHITMER

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, we are thinking of my family friend Martin Whitmer and his wife, the former Julie Thurmond, as Martin is scheduled for open heart surgery this Thursday, December 14. We pray for his family in this difficult time and have faith that he will recuperate quickly to become even stronger than before.

## IN HONOR OF LANETT WINNING AHSAA CLASS 2A HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TITLE

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize Lanett High School for winning the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) Class 2A football state title for the first time ever.

The Panthers sealed their victory by beating Leroy High School 33-15 on December 8 at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the students and faculty of Lanett High School, the coaches, the players and all the Panthers fans on this exciting achievement. Go Panthers.

RECOGNIZING THE BAYTOWN SUN  
ON ITS DESIGNATION AS A  
TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL  
MARKER

**HON. BRIAN BABIN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Baytown Sun for its designation as an official Texas State Historical Marker.

The Baytown Sun can trace its roots to the weekly newspaper The Goose Creek Gasser, established by Frank Boyer in 1919, two months before construction began on the Humble Oil & Refining Company's Baytown Refinery. The Gasser was created to serve the rapidly growing tri-cities of Goose Creek, Pelly, and Baytown, which evolved from oil boom towns to a permeant community. In 1924, new ownership the paper's name to the semi-weekly tribune, and again in 1929 to the daily tribune, when it's circulation was around 4,500.

The financial strain of the great depression led the owners of Goose Creek's Tribune, The Pelly Telegram, and Baytown's Tri-Cities News-Herald to merge into a single paper, the Tri-Cities Sun, operating out of the Tribune's building. First published on July 19, 1931, it was renamed The Daily Sun two years later.

Goose Creek, Pelly and Baytown consolidated in 1948, and the paper, renamed The Baytown Sun, became the sole daily newspaper in the old tri-cities area. In 1949, the facility was greatly expanded, including a new press and, for the first time an air conditioned work space. That year, The Sun surpassed a circulation of 8,000 and employed forty individuals. In 1965 the sun moved to its current location. The first papers printed at the new location went out to more than 12,700 subscribers.

Longtime Publishers and editors of the Sun included William Pendergraft, Robert Matherne, Fred Hartman, and Preston Pendergrass. Janie Gray has served as Publisher since 2010.

Since 1919, The Baytown Sun and its predecessors have primarily focused on the area's local news and history, while providing readers with matters of state, national and international importance. Today, The Baytown Sun covers Southeast Harris County, Chambers County, and Southeast Liberty County.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize The Baytown Sun on its designation as a Texas State Historical Marker.

TRIBUTE TO COMMISSIONER  
TIMOTHY (TIM) BRADFORD

**HON. DANNY K. DAVIS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Tim Bradford graduated from Richard T. Crane High School on the Westside of Chicago where he was an outstanding athlete and well-liked student. He secured a job at

Western Electric before obtaining and rising to a senior level position at Quaker Oats where he worked for more than twenty-five years. He later became a successful entrepreneur and owned a dock fish feed franchise and had an interest in a St. Louis based Miller Beer distributor-ship. Tim was passionate about life, civic engagement and politics. He served as commissioner and President of the Olympia Fields Park District and Administrator of Rich Township. Tim's greatest legacy will be his service to the community and helping those in need is his passion, his mission. He was a well-respected pillar of the community who made sure that the south suburban community of Cook County was never overlooked.

To say that he was immersed in politics would be an understatement. Tim worked around the clock and became known as the Godfather of south suburban politics. He served as vice chair for Cook County Democrats, a Commissioner of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Rich Township Committeeman, Rich Township Administrator, Matteson Rotary Club, Olympia Fields Police Board and countless other civic organizations, boards and commissions. Notwithstanding all of his external activities and affiliations, Tim was totally devoted to his wife of 51 years, Mary-Ann and all other members of the Bradford clan, his mother, his brothers, his children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, other family members and friends. Timothy (Tim) Bradford was an extraordinary man filled with boundless energy, a great mind and a heart filled with love for his family and anyone that he might meet.

Love is patient, love is kind, love is generous, love is Commissioner Timothy (Tim) Bradford.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALL-  
EN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER ARMY  
STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) ROBERT  
LEE LOVE, JUNIOR

**HON. TRENT KELLY**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Robert Lee Love, Junior who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation on December 1, 2006, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SSG Love died from injuries he sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during combat operations in Ar Ramadi, Iraq. SSG Love was assigned to the 16th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Glissen, Germany.

According to the Associated Press, SSG Love, a Livingston, Alabama native, graduated from Livingston High School in 1996. Mary Love, SSG Love's mother, said he enlisted in the Army following graduation and served in the military a total of eight years. Prior to deployment, SSG Love lived in Germany with his wife, Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Brianna K. Love. The couple had a three-year-old daughter, Brianna. SSG Robert Love also had an 11-year-old daughter, Tanessa.

The Meridian Star newspaper interviewed members of SSG Love's family. Mary Love

said her son was liked by everyone. "He was a very sweet person who got along with everybody," Mary Love said. "Everybody loved him and he loved everybody." Robert Lee Love, Senior, SSG Love's father, said the loss of their son was difficult. "It has been hard, but we are holding up," Mr. Love said.

Graveside services for SSG Love were held on December 20, 2006 at the Pentecostal Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Russell, Mississippi. Elder Keith Tisdale and Bishop Marcell Evins officiated the funeral. SSG Love is survived by his wife, Brianna; his two daughters, Brianna, and Tanessa; his father, Robert L. Love, Senior; his mother, Mary Love; his two sisters, Rickitta Thomas and Evelyn Ford; and two brothers, Reginald Love and Jeremy Love.

SSG Love proudly served America and gave his life to protect the freedoms we all enjoy.

TRIBUTE TO JOHNNIE MYERS

**HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 13, 2017*

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, In honor of Mrs. Johnnie Elizabeth Hammontree Myers, I would like to celebrate the amazing life she lived with my colleagues and others.

Johnnie was a long time close, personal friend to both me, and my father, Congressman John J. Duncan, Sr. There couldn't have been a stronger supporter of the Republican cause.

Born in 1919, in Greenback, Tennessee, Johnnie was brought up attending Pine Grove Presbyterian Church where she would become an elder, clerk, and life time member.

She volunteered her time in the community as well. She was a past chair of the Loudon County March of Dimes, president of the Loudon County Republican Women, and was the first female vice-chairman of the Loudon County Republican Party.

She was a staunch, dedicated Republican, but more importantly, she was a strong Christian and truly patriotic American.

When she wasn't serving her church, or our community, she was enjoying life to the fullest.

She cheered on the University of Tennessee men's basketball team as often as she could with the season tickets she held since 1962.

She also loved to embark on trips to new places including Hawaii, Alaska, Israel, and Europe.

Johnnie is an example to us all to live life each day with humility, compassion for others, and grateful hearts. She will be greatly missed by me, my family, and our community.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation is a better place today because of the life that Johnnie Myers led, and I hope that many people will read this tribute honoring one really outstanding woman.