

the occasion of the town's Bicentennial in 2018. Throughout the next year, Amherst will reflect on and celebrate its 200th anniversary.

On April 10, 1818, the Town of Amherst was officially created from part of the town of Buffalo, later known as the City of Buffalo. As the largest town in Erie County, New York, Amherst has a total area of 53.28 square miles. Amherst encompasses municipalities such as the Village of Williamsville, and the hamlets of Eggertsville, Getzville, Snyder, Swormville and East Amherst.

In the nineteenth century Amherst was a prosperous farming community with seven grist mills, several saw mills, a tannery and boot and shoe factory and two forges with commercial activity centered in Williamsville. Amherst draws on its history in its modern development, with structures such as the Williamsville Water Mill complex finding new purpose today.

From its beginnings as a primarily farming community, Amherst transformed into an urban area in the twentieth century with the creation of new subdivisions. Landmarks such as the University of Buffalo Campus North Campus and Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital made Amherst their home.

Today, Amherst is comprised of approximately 125,000 residents. Those who live in Amherst enjoy a four rink recreational facility that attracts national and international ice tournaments, a state of the art senior center, three libraries, and a State Park within its borders.

The Town of Amherst will proudly mark its 200th Anniversary with a series of events throughout its Bicentennial Year, beginning on January 1, 2018 with a 200th Birthday Party. The celebrations continue with a gigantic Parade, historic walking tours, slogan contest, Interclub Service Club Luncheon and gala Bicentennial Ball.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to recognize the Town of Amherst's rich history and enduring contributions as we celebrate its Bicentennial. Congratulations to the Town of Amherst and its residents on this exciting and noteworthy milestone.

HIGHLIGHTING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A YOUTH GROUP IN NORTH-EAST PORTLAND

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to highlight the achievement of a group of young people in Northeast Portland.

In 2014, fourteen 6th grade girls at Beverly Cleary School formed the Grant Park chapter of Jane Goodall's "Roots and Shoots" youth service organization. Their goal was to raise funds for orphaned chimpanzees at Goodall's Tchimpounga Rehabilitation Center in Africa.

The girls' idea was to produce a vegetarian cookbook with sales benefiting the chimpanzee sanctuary. They wrote letters to chefs across the country asking for recipes and then spent most Friday evenings together cooking the food and taking notes. They also created artwork and bios for the chefs to go along with each recipe. Three years later, these young women are in 9th grade and the cookbook, called "Saving Pan," is done.

A first printing of 400 copies of Saving Pan was sold out in a week and raised \$4,000 for the Sanctuary. For meeting their goals and making a difference, congratulations to Brooke Abbruzzese, Talia Baskin, Lily Buckenmeyer, Martha Bulkeley, McKenzie Caldicott, Ruby Cooper-Karl, Emma Francioch, Willa Gagnon, Maeve Larco, Matisse Nash, Maya Rashid, Charlotte Stoeger, Hanna Stokes and McKenzie Tell.

HONORING MARY COBB-HILL

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life of Mary Alice Cobb-Hill, a singer, and pianist, and impresario of the negro spiritual, who passed away on December 9, 2017.

Ms. Hill was born in Oakland, California on March 16, 1945 to Mary Magdalene and Roosevelt Cobb. Her parents instilled in her from an early age a love of music, and in particular the spiritual and gospel music which was a staple of their family worship services. Mary's mother was a teacher, and she imbued the music with a strong understanding of the history behind it, especially the experiences of the black struggles for freedom from slavery.

Mary attended Golden Gate Academy in Oakland, and later studied at Merritt and Laney Colleges, along with the Pacific Union. She also took private music lessons in classical opera singing.

Mary made the preservation of the Negro spiritual her lifelong passion. Throughout her life, she spent more than 50 years singing and performing in this historical tradition. She also worked to advance the tradition by writing three original musicals, Flowers from Heaven, Dis Train, and The Seven Exaltations of Simeon of Cyrene.

In addition to her work as a performer and writer, Ms. Hill also dedicated her life to teaching others about the history and technique of the Negro spiritual. She founded and served as the creative director for the Voices of Legacy, a community choir that performs in churches, schools, and community events, and was selected to perform at the inauguration of then mayor Dianne Feinstein in San Francisco. Through her work as an educator, Ms. Hill has trained scores of new performers and fostered a love of the Negro spiritual tradition in new generations.

Through her tireless efforts, Ms. Hill endeavored to use the Negro spiritual tradition to maintain a link between those whose experience and yearning for freedom initially created the music, and modern generations who can learn from that struggle to continue the push for true equality. I am grateful to her for her dedication to promoting African American culture and history, and keeping alive the stories and traditions of our ancestors.

Ms. Hill is survived by her husband, Carl, and her daughters Maranatha and Gabrielle, as well as her grandchildren Duane, Josiah, and Nicole. She is also survived by her brothers Paul & Michael, her sisters Gloria Jean, and Sharon, and their families.

Today, on behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, it is my honor to commend

the life and achievements of Ms. Mary Alice Cobb-Hill. I offer my sincere gratitude for her continued commitment to promote the arts and arts education, and for the profound legacy she has left in our East Bay community. I also offer my condolences to Ms. Cobb-Hill's family and friends as they cope with this immeasurable loss and join together to celebrate her life.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF ROBERT "BOB" WILMERS

HON. KEITH J. ROTHFUS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, today, we remember the life of Robert "Bob" Wilmers, a visionary, successful business man, loving father and husband, who passed away this past Saturday.

In 1983, he became Chairman and CEO of M&T Bank and held those positions until his recent passing. Under his leadership, M&T grew from \$2 Billion to \$120 Billion in assets in 35 years. He saw the bank's reach grow from Buffalo to Maryland and the D.C. area, as well as Pennsylvania. Through it all, he never lost touch with his customers.

Bob's annual letters to shareholders were legendary and he was critical of over regulation that hurt regional banks.

His even handed, steady analysis will be missed. In addition to his successful career, Bob shared a deep commitment to the city of Buffalo, New York through his charitable giving and service to the community.

He was fiercely loyal to his work and bettering the community, an example we can all learn from. I extend my condolences to his family and friends. He leaves a large void that will be felt for years to come.

CONGRATULATING KAREN BALLARD ON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE GRAPEVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Karen Ballard on her numerous years of service and dedication to the Grapevine Police Department in Grapevine, Texas. Karen retires this year after serving for fourteen years with the City of Grapevine, and accumulating over thirty-one years of dedicated service in emergency communications for the State of Texas.

Karen's admirable career first began when she joined the Arlington Police Department as a dispatcher in 1986. After serving for over seventeen years in the City of Arlington, Texas, Karen began her tenure with the City of Grapevine in 2003.

Throughout her career, Karen has served as a Dispatcher, Communications Coordinator, Coordinator Training Assistant, and a Communications Supervisor. Since joining the Grapevine Police Department, Karen has honorably served her community and has built a reputation as an outstanding Dispatcher and Communications Supervisor.