

PALM HARBOR 9/11 MEMORIAL

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 21, 2018*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to the Palm Harbor 9/11 Memorial located at Curlew Hills Memory Gardens in Palm Harbor, Florida and to recognize all those who worked diligently to make this venerable memorial a reality.

On September 11, 2001, the world was changed forever by a senseless act of terrorism; the worst attack against civilians on U.S. soil in our nation's history. In August, 2011, Palm Harbor Special Fire Control and Rescue District received a steel beam from the remains of the World Trade Center, identified as I-0053B. On December 12, 2011, the Palm Harbor Board of Fire Commissioners and Curlew Hills Memory Gardens entered into an agreement to lease the artifact as a focal point in a permanent 9/11 Memorial located at Curlew Hills Memory Gardens in Palm Harbor, Florida.

Through the efforts of the original committee, the Palm Harbor 9/11 Memorial was unveiled on September 11, 2012. Since then, the Palm Harbor 9/11 Memorial Planning Committee, consisting of members from Palm Harbor Fire Rescue, Curlew Hills Memory Gardens, Gene O'Kane Division of FDNY Retired, NYPD Retired Suncoast 10-13 Club, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, and others, organize the annual Palm Harbor 9/11 Memorial Ceremony. This ceremony is attended by thousands to pay tribute to the heroes who gave their lives on September 11 and to the countless others who have perished in defense of liberty since that day.

I am proud of these wonderful and patriotic constituents and ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the efforts put forth by this committee to ensure that the events of September 11, 2001, will never be forgotten.

IN MEMORY OF GENE CONNOLLY,  
CONCORD HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

**HON. ANN M. KUSTER**

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 21, 2018*

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Gene Connolly, the beloved former Concord High School Principal, who inspired his community through his unmatched strength and grace in the face of adversity. Connolly epitomized the slogan "Connolly Strong". Despite his diagnosis with ALS in 2014, Connolly constantly showed persistence, humility and courage, continuing to greet his students every morning as they arrived at school. Even after retiring in 2016, Connolly remained an educator at heart, dedicated to teaching and serving as a trusted mentor to many Concord High students.

While Connolly commonly cited the Concord community and schools as sources of consistent and loyal support throughout his battle with ALS, I know that his fighting spirit and openness about his struggle also inspired and

elevated the entire Concord community. The 2017 documentary, Mr. Connolly has ALS, highlights how Connolly inspired his students, colleagues and friends. The documentary, revolving around questions submitted by his students, tells a powerful story of how disabled members of our society can still live fulfilling lives and give so much to their communities.

As a proud alumna of Concord High School and the Concord public schools, I express my profound gratitude for Connolly and his many years of devoted service to New Hampshire's students. He will be greatly missed, but his memory and spirit will live on in the students and the community he loved so deeply. I extend my deepest condolences to his family and wish them and the entire Concord High School community comfort during this difficult time. May he rest in peace.

CONGRATULATING THE FIRST  
CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH

**HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 21, 2018*

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to extend my congratulations to the First Chinese Baptist Church located in Chinatown, one of Manhattan's historic neighborhoods, as it celebrates its 92nd year anniversary on August 12, 2018.

It is with great pride that I congratulate this longtime church from my district on its 92nd anniversary. The First Chinese Baptist Church, established in 1926, evolved from the Morning Star Mission in a then strife-torn neighborhood and became part of the rich fabric and history of the Chinatown community. Over the past 92 years, the church served as a safe haven for the community's Chinese Americans and immigrants during the early half of the 20th century at the time of the Chinese Exclusion Act and turmoil in China. Founded by Dr. Mabel Lee, a Chinese-American pastor, community organizer, feminist and suffragist, the church created a community that has served thousands of Chinatown residents. Lee advocated for continuous education and taught English to congregants who passed down her teachings to those who arrived later. Additionally, during World War II, many men from the church served in the United States Armed Forces.

Today, the First Chinese Baptist Church continues to hold weekly worship services open to all and offers English classes, sponsors basketball teams, manages youth summer mentorship programs, and assists those seeking citizenship. It works with community-based organizations to conduct special events and support immigration rights and social justice throughout the year. Its dedication to service for God and country, education, advocacy and respect for individuals has been the cornerstone of the First Chinese Baptist Church and has not diminished in its 92-year history.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the First Chinese Baptist Church and its leadership on this special 92nd year anniversary. The Church has long exemplified outstanding community and public service to the greater New York City community. I wish them continued success and many more years of service.

CONGRATULATING VICTOR RANGEL ON ACHIEVING THE CONGRESSIONAL AWARD GOLD MEDAL

**HON. FILEMON VELA**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 21, 2018*

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Brownsville resident Victor Rangel. A student at Harmony School of Innovation-Brownsville, Victor is being honored with the Congressional Award Gold Medal, the only Congressional award specifically for young people. Recipients of the Congressional Award Gold Medal complete 400 hours of voluntary public service, 200 hours of personal development, 200 hours of physical fitness, and a four-night expedition of their choosing.

Victor went above and beyond these requirements on the path to the Congressional Award. For the public service component, Victor completed over 450 hours of volunteer service at a local hospital in South Texas, helping with patient and family care. Additionally, Victor learned traditional martial arts for personal development, and pushed himself as he is now only one level away from the black belt. For physical fitness, Victor performed aerobic exercises to help build his strength. An enthusiast of history, Victor traveled from Brownsville to San Antonio to learn more about the rich history of Texas, immersing himself in the culture through observation and conversation.

I am very proud of Victor's success in earning the Congressional Award. Most importantly, I commend him for his dedication and passion to help those most in need and give to our community with an open heart. Victor demonstrated tremendous courage and leadership, and made a positive impact in our community. I am honored to congratulate Victor Rangel on his special accomplishment.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE  
EDWARD A. PEASE

**HON. LARRY BUCSHON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 21, 2018*

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Honorable Edward A. Pease for his tireless commitment to the Boy Scouts and continued leadership within the Terre Haute community.

Pease, a former member of this House representing the Hoosier state, has been extensively engaged in the betterment of his community, holding many positions on the boards of local, state, and national organizations most notably the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

He has been involved with the Boy Scouts for more than five decades, earning the Eagle Scout Award in 1965 and was selected as the Boy Scouts of America Alumnus of the Year in 2015. Pease has not only served as the chairman of the organization but has also received the Distinguished Eagle Scout, Silver Antelope, and Silver Beaver awards in recognition of his outstanding volunteer service.

Congratulations on another well-deserved recognition of service to our community and for leading by example.