

at Cannon Mills, which at the time was the world's largest producer of sheets and towels. She married her husband Henry R.C. Wilkerson, a United States Army veteran who fought in World War II. They spent 59 years together and raised three children, who later blessed them with six grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

In her free time, Gertie has led a full life. She was a passionate bowler who played regularly until she was 98 years old. In addition to being a fervent bowler, she has been a faithful member of Central Baptist Church for the last 63 years. Gertie has earned the esteemed reputation of being a funny, dedicated and compassionate individual, who possesses the true principles and morals to which we all aspire. I know all of you will agree with me when I say, she is a blessing to all who know her and a treasured part of this community.

Madam Speaker, please join me today in wishing Mrs. Gertie Wilkerson a very happy 100th birthday.

IN HONOR OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH AND PARISH

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 6, 2019

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, today I rise in celebration of the 150th Anniversary of St. Joseph Catholic Church and Parish in New Waverly, Texas.

St. Joseph Catholic Church, now a celebrated place of worship, first began as a small gathering for planter families who formed the Waverly Emigration Society. In 1869, Father Orzechowski officially formed the Parish of St. Joseph. The parish met at various farms until 1877 when they opened the first church—a small box building only 20 by 30 feet. The land they built the church and school upon was acquired for the modest price of one dollar.

In 1892, as the parish expanded, a second building was constructed to make room for the growing congregation. This building, designed by Tom Lawandorski, was much larger and more ornate than the first. Mrs. Catherine Ripowski donated trees from her property to aid with construction.

The longest serving priest was the adored Father Bily, whose tenure lasted 19 years. Under his leadership, the church still in use today was built. The gothic style building was designed by architect L.S. Green and took three years to finish. At its opening, it was deemed the finest church in the South. In 1909, four years after the opening of the third church building, St. Joseph's school was built on the property for 160 students.

Since its opening, the church has been restored and repaired, but the welcoming community atmosphere and the parishioners' enthusiasm for worship has remained constant for the last 150 years.

As St. Joseph's Catholic Church celebrates a century and a half of worship, I thank them for creating a welcoming space dedicated to bringing people together to worship The Lord. Congratulations on 150 years, and may the next be just as prosperous.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT LAKES MARITIME ACADEMY

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 6, 2019

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the 50th Anniversary of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy. Through its commitment to excellence and dedication to its students, GLMA has become an indispensable part of Michigan's First District.

Founded in 1969, the Great Lakes Maritime Academy is one of only six maritime academies in the United States. The first cadets of the academy received an associate degree and a license allowing for service on the Great Lakes upon graduation. In the 1980s, GLMA partnered with Ferris State University to allow cadets to earn bachelor's degrees, opening opportunities for graduates to serve in the United States Navy and Coast Guard. In 2012, thanks to the dedicated efforts of President Nelson and other public leaders, Governor Snyder signed legislation allowing community colleges to award bachelor's degrees in disciplines including maritime technology. This change allowed GLMA to partner with Northwestern Michigan College and enabled cadets to earn a bachelor's degree at a fraction of the cost.

The work of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy is essential for providing the next generation of Merchant Marine officers with the education, training, and credentials needed to serve on the Great Lakes and the high seas. Piloting everything from cruise ships and ferries to tankers and cargo ships, graduates of GLMA play an essential role in supporting our economy, national security, and everyday lives. The impact of their work on the people of Michigan and the United States cannot be overstated.

Madam Speaker, Michigan's proud maritime history is continued every day by the students, graduates, faculty, and leaders of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy, and it is my honor to congratulate them for fifty years of excellence. Michiganders can take great pride in knowing the First District is home to such dedicated citizens. On behalf of my constituents, I wish GLMA all the best as it ventures into the future.

CONGRATULATING MARY RYMAN ON HER RETIREMENT AFTER 46 YEARS AS BRISTOL TOWN CLERK

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 6, 2019

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mary Ryman on her retirement after 46 years as Bristol Town Clerk, making her the longest-serving town clerk in the State of Indiana.

For the people of Bristol, Indiana, walking into Town Hall means seeing a friendly face every day. For nearly half a century, Mary has been there to serve the community of Bristol, and she is always the right person to ask

when residents have a question or need assistance. Her unparalleled commitment to her community exemplifies what it truly means to be a Hoosier and a public servant.

Guided by the values of integrity and respect for all people, Mary has proven to be a pillar of the town and a model citizen. Her unmistakable passion for making Bristol a better place inspires all who know her, and it's no surprise that she plans to continue serving her community as a volunteer at Bristol's Community Food Pantry.

Mary's compassion and warmth go far beyond her duties at Town Hall. She constantly strives to give back to those in need and to strengthen her community. As a member of the Bristol United Methodist Church, she has taught Sunday School for many years and enjoyed singing in the choir. She is also often found helping stray animals by providing them food and comfort. And she is a devoted wife and loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of Indiana's 2nd District, I want to thank Mary for the many years she has dedicated to serving the hardworking Hoosiers of Bristol and building a brighter future for northern Indiana. With her retirement, she leaves behind a legacy full of accomplishments, but her impact on the community is sure to last far into the future.

TRIBUTE HONORING COMMISSIONER RAYMOND BUXTON, II

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 6, 2019

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding leader Raymond Buxton, II, who is retiring after 40 years of service to the State of South Carolina. Mr. Buxton is a personal friend and his many contributions have not gone unnoticed.

Mr. Buxton received his Bachelor of Science degree from Savannah State University in Savannah, Georgia. He went on to serve his country as a dental technician in the United States Army with the 87th Medical Detachment in Nuremberg, Germany and at Moncrief Army Hospital in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He furthered his education by taking graduate courses at the University of South Carolina and graduating from the South Carolina Executive Institute.

In 1979, when I was South Carolina Human Affairs Commissioner, I hired Ray as a community relations consultant. While in this position, he consulted with community leaders around the state to build relationships among a diverse group of citizens to promote unity. He went on to work as an employment investigator, senior analyst for employment discrimination, division director of the private sector/employment, and executive assistant for internal affairs before being tapped to run the agency in July 2012.

As the agency director, Mr. Buxton has worked diligently to make positive changes within the agency. He was responsible for fully restoring the once underfunded budget for the agency and increased staff from 20 to 46 employees. Also, Mr. Buxton instituted a new initiative, the "Quality of Life" dialogue, within the Community Relations Department to promote better human relations among diverse