

into their natural habitat, the Pomona fourth graders are providing a huge service to the advancement of environmental science. For several years, I have worked in Congress in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program, which seeks to ensure the recovery of the razorback, the pike minnow, and several other species of fish. It is a pleasure to see how this effort is being complimented by the efforts of Ms. Nadiak's fourth grade class.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to recognize Pomona Elementary's fourth grade class before this body of Congress and this nation for the contributions they are making toward the preservation of our natural habitat. Coloradans are fully aware that our lands and waters are some of our state's most precious resources, and I am grateful that our tradition of scientifically supported environmental awareness is being passed down to such an intelligent and capable group of kids at Pomona Elementary.

TRIBUTE TO CANDACE HUNTER-WIEST, INLAND EMPIRE COUNCIL OF BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication to her country and community is exceptional. The Inland Empire has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated business and community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give time and talent to make their communities a better place to live and work. Mrs. Candace Hunter-Wiest is one of these individuals and her exemplary leadership is being recognized at a dinner on Thursday, November 7, 2002 as she is honored as the 2002 Inland Empire Boy Scouts of America Distinguished Citizen.

Candace's career path is as unique as it is exceptional. She was married at age 18 and was a proud mother of three by age 22. As the sole provider for her family, she began working in the restaurant business and later took a clerical support position with an independent insurance agency. She was quickly promoted to bookkeeper, then to office manager and soon became a licensed agent. Her career in banking began when she associated with an agency owned by a bank holding company that had been perpetually unprofitable. Under her excellent management, Candace turned a profit in ten months. She moved to Riverside in 1988 and her career with the Inland Empire National Bank (IENB) began. Under her superb leadership, IENB has become one of the best banks in the country and has been named a Super Premier Performing Bank.

Candace has been involved in numerous community organizations and she currently serves on the board of directors for the United Way of the Inland Valleys, the Community Foundation, the Mission Inn Foundation, and the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce—to name a few. She is also on the University of California, Riverside's Chancellor's Executive Roundtable and the A.

Gary Anderson Graduate School of Management Executive Forum.

In 1998 Candace was recognized as one of "Twelve Women Who Make A Difference in the Inland Empire" by the Inland Empire Magazine and the Business Press name Wiest "A Woman of Distinction." She has also been listed in the International Who's Who of Professionals in the Year 2000 edition of Who's Who and has been named an Athena recipient as a YWCA Woman of Achievement in 1995.

Candace's tireless work as a community leader has contributed immeasurably to the betterment of the Inland Empire. Her involvement in community organizations, especially the Inland Empire Council of Boy Scouts of America, make me proud to call her a fellow community member, American and friend. I am grateful for her efforts and service and salute her as she is deservedly honored as the 2002 Inland Empire Boy Scouts of America Distinguished Citizen. I look forward to continuing to work with her for the good of our community in the future.

TRIBUTE TO VIETNAM VETERANS

HON. KAREN L. THURMAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, in these troubled times when we in Washington are debating war, it brings us back to another time when the nation was debating its responsibility to preserve freedom throughout the world. It's hard to believe it has been more than a quarter century since the Vietnam War. Time has not healed all of the wounds. But time has allowed us to come together on one unmistakable conclusion—the soldiers who answered America's call in the Vietnam War are heroes by any measure.

I have had a lot of respect for the military all my life. My father served in the Air Force, and I grew up benefitting from the examples of men and women willing to make any sacrifice for this country and the ideals for which it stands. That experience may be the reason I cannot help but be devoted to our veterans and our men and women who serve now, particularly those from Florida and those who have moved to Florida.

Florida has a growing population of Veterans including Vietnam Veterans and I have been concerned that the rapid influx of these vets has strained the resources allocated in our state to keeping the many promises that we have made to them. Due to that concern, I sponsored a measure that resulted in a funding allocation change for veterans' health care that has brought an additional \$385 million to Florida and southern Georgia since 1997 and enabled the opening of additional community-based outpatient VA medical clinics in the 5th District and the state.

These Veterans' benefits, however, are nothing more than the least our nation can and must do to thank those people who answered the nations' call to defend our freedom. The respect I and all of my colleagues—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—feel for those who have served this nation is particularly strong for those who served in Vietnam. The Vietnam conflict was America's longest war and the burden it placed on those

who answered the call to duty was immeasurable. Those who were there showed incredible physical courage. But they also showed incredible courage just to be part of America's armed forces at a time when people too often held our bravest men and women responsible for Washington's decisions which—whether right or wrong—they were sworn to execute to the best of their ability.

These men and women dealt with challenges that most of us cannot possibly contemplate. They could not sleep through a night because that's when the Viet Cong attacked. They could not get supplies because ambushes blew up convoys. There were no front lines to fortify. The enemy frequently was unseen. A booby trap could kill a soldier's buddies without him having any capacity to shoot back. The frustration, fear, physical and psychological wounds that these men and women endured must never be forgotten by the people and the nation that benefitted from their sacrifices. As Americans who are here today, we must acknowledge that we enjoy our lives and our freedom in part because 58,000 of our fellow countrymen laid down their lives for us.

Mr. Speaker, on October 18 through October 20, a 240-foot replica of the national Vietnam Veterans Memorial will be exhibited at North/Meadowlawn Funeral Home and Cemetery in my Congressional District in New Port Richey, Florida. The replica is part of a traveling memorial called the Vietnam Wall Experience that is allowing millions who cannot come to Washington to experience some of the serene power of the memorial and reflect on the sacrifices that thousands of Americans made for us. Like the Washington memorial, the Vietnam Wall Experience is an interactive and living memorial. It contains the names of the 58,175 Americans who never came home from Vietnam. However, the wall becomes the best memorial to them when it reflects the image of a living person who is remembering, mourning, and thanking these American heroes.

I want to thank all of the people involved in bringing this tribute to our community, especially Joseph A. Magaddino, MacDill Air Force Base, the Florida National Guard, the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, Vietnam Veterans Inc., U.S. Postal Service Military Veterans, Pasco County Veterans Services, Suncoast Vietnam Veterans, Marine Corps League #567, Navy Seabees Island X-17, and all of the churches, schools, and scout groups that have contributed so much.

Of course, the greatest thanks goes to those who served our nation in Vietnam. We members of Congress have a special obligation to remember the service of Vietnam veterans and provide decent health care, prescription drug benefits, educational assistance, and survivor benefits for their families. We must make every effort to fight for them just as they fought for us.

U.S.-INDIA RELATIONS

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, as we move toward the conclusion of the 107th Congress,