

community quality of life, providing for fitness, recreation, libraries, sports and athletic programs. DoD considers MWR programs as critical to mission readiness and productivity—these programs contribute to physical fitness and recruitment and retention of personnel.

In addition, civilian employees and their families are allowed access as a perk of their employee benefit package. Other groups, such as the Scouts of America, can also utilize the lands by getting special permission. In contrast, most of the over 2 million disabled veterans (rated 0% to 90% disabled) are currently deemed not disabled enough to be considered a patron of MWR. My bill, H.R. 1917, would fix that!

A third bill, H.R. 1918, would extend commissary and exchange store privileges to service-disabled veterans with a rating of 30% or more and their families. Congress must do all we reasonably can for the men and women in uniform who have become disabled in service to our nation. Our disabled veterans are important members of a greater military family, and they should be treated as such with every available opportunity.

I believe that changing these policies—use of military recreational lands, transportation on military aircraft, and commissary privileges—are the right steps to take for our disabled veterans! They have sacrificed their health and well-being for their country, and I believe that they have earned the right to these privileges. Please join with me by co-sponsoring these three bills and working for their passage.

A TRIBUTE TO ROBESON COUNTY CELEBRATION OF FLIGHT

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to salute the Robeson County Celebration of Flight celebration from May 14–May 18, 2003. The Lumberton Municipal Airport will host this special event that acknowledges and honors the 100-year celebration of the feat of Wilbur and Orville Wright.

Charles F. Kettering once said, “The Wright Brothers flew right through the smoke screen of impossibility.” On December 17, 1903, at Kill Devil Hills near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, the Wright Brothers manned the first-ever controlled, powered flight, and their optimism of achieving the impossible became our reality. And this reality has truly opened the world for all to see.

In honor of this historical event, The Robeson Aeronautical Foundation, Inc. and the Lumberton Municipal Airport have organized special events to celebrate this monumental feat. For three days, the Lumberton Municipal Airport will host school children from throughout the region. These children will be able to view a variety of exhibits highlighting the importance of sport aviation, the role of aviation in the military, and the history of aviation in the region. The celebration will culminate with a two-day air show featuring some of the best displays of aeronautical skill in the world.

My fellow colleagues please join me in saluting the Robeson County Celebration of Flight organizers for their time, energy, and re-

sources in planning for this event. May God's blessings shine upon them and all that they have done, and may God bless this special celebration.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE BURRELL MERRITT

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the accomplishments and character of a great American, a great friend and a constituent of mine, Judge Burrell Merritt. Burrell celebrated his 61st birthday this weekend and I was pleased to be a part of the celebration honoring him.

A lifelong resident of Brooksville, a graduate of Hernando High School, and a lawyer educated at the University of Florida, Burrell is a true Floridian and an outstanding lawyer and community leader.

In 1968 he joined the Richard E. McGee law firm as an associate and later that year he became a municipal judge for the City of Brooksville. In 1970 he became a partner in his own law firm, McGee and Merritt. In 1985, he was named a partner of a new firm, Merritt, High, Underwood & Eppley and in 1985 he was made senior partner in the Merritt and Mason firm.

In 1998 after thirty years practicing law, Burrell became a Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit serving Hernando County. He currently works with civil, family law, probate and child support enforcement cases.

He is a member of the Hernando County Bar Association, the Florida Bar Association and the American Bar Association and numerous other civic and social organizations, serving a leadership role in many of them. His skills and talent as a law professional have been recognized by numerous groups and associations. He has received a plethora of awards and accolades for his diligent work both as an attorney, judge and community member.

Aside from his accomplishments in his legal profession, Judge Merritt is also a Cattle Rancher. He operated the very successful Merritt Farm and Livestock Company in Brooksville.

Mr. Speaker it is easy to see why I am so proud of his accomplishments and why they are worthy of recognition on the floor of this body.

RICHARD JANULEWICZ ON HIS 20TH ANNIVERSARY WITH THE CLAY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Richard Janulewicz, Director of Clay County Public Health Center in Clay County, Missouri. Richard has exemplified the finest qualities of leadership and service and is being honored for his 20-year commitment

to the health center and the citizens of Clay County.

Richard is well known among his staff and the citizens of Clay County for taking the initiative to make positive change in their community. He interacts on many levels with the people he comes in contact with and maintains the highest degree of professionalism and honesty. He prides himself on the hard work and dedication he has displayed over the past two decades.

During his years at the health center, Richard has designed and implemented new programs that have made Clay County one of the healthiest in the state. He has undoubtedly been one of the most influential people in Clay County's history. His colleagues and friends describe him as honest, dependable, helpful, trustworthy and professional. It is people like Richard that make me proud to call myself a Missourian.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending the career of Richard Janulewicz, who exemplifies qualities of dedication and service as both an employee and a citizen of Clay County, Missouri.

ROBERT KANTER HONORED BY THE GREATER CINCINNATI CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR COMMUNITY AND JUSTICE

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a distinguished constituent, Robert Kanter, who will be honored by the Greater Cincinnati Chapter of the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ), formerly the National Conference of Christians and Jews, at NCCJ's 75th Anniversary Awards Dinner on May 22, 2003. NCCJ, founded in 1927 as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism through understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures.

Bob's motivation for getting involved is simple—he enjoys it. He once said, “I found out you can get much personal satisfaction by giving your time and talent.” Robert has given enormously to organizations in our area over the years. Currently, he is president of the Plum Street Temple Historic Preservation Foundation; chairman of the Jewish Foundation; chairman of Jewish Health Systems, Inc.; a trustee of the Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati; a board member of the Lower Price Hill Community School; and founder of the Man to Man Prostate Cancer Support Group at Wellness Community.

In the past, Bob served as chairman of the Health Alliance of Cincinnati; president of the Isaac M. Wise Foundation; chairman of the Jewish Hospital; co-chair of the Jewish Federation campaign; trustee of the Emery Center; board member at the Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion.

Bob is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati and began his career with a public accounting firm. In 1966, Bob formed Rookwood Properties, a company that acquires and manages investment real estate. Bob and his wife,

Lynne, have three sons and seven grandchildren, all in the Cincinnati area.

A noted individual has said, "Robert is the conscience of the Jewish community in Cincinnati." All of us in Cincinnati thank Robert for his service to our area, and we congratulate him for being honored by NCCJ.

SENIOR CITIZENS NEED OUR HELP

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to urge support for two bills that I have just introduced to provide financial relief to our Nation's senior citizens. Both men and women will receive assistance with this legislation, but because older women are often with less financial resources, they will particularly benefit.

My first bill is H.R. 1922, the Fair Taxes for Seniors Act. This bill would provide a one-time increase in the capital gains tax exemption on the sale of a home for citizens who are 50 or older. Passing this bill would give many seniors the additional money they need for nursing home care, medical costs, and other retirement expenses.

The current capital gains tax exemption works well for younger people who often move from job to job, selling their homes. The current exemption works well for people who live in areas where housing prices are below average. But it is not working for individuals who have lived in one home for 20 to 50 years and have a capital gain that is much larger than the present exemption. In other words, it is not working for seniors who live in areas with higher housing prices.

A senior citizen named Eleanor lives in Glen Ellyn, IL and bought her home with her husband 45 years ago. The value of her home at the time of her husband's death was \$32,000. Eleanor is now 78 years old and needs to move into a nursing care facility. Her house is worth \$579,000, and the combined Federal and State taxes after the current capital gains exemption are \$68,000. Her only income is from Social Security and a small pension, and she needs the money from the sale of her house in order to move into the nursing home. Eleanor would like to stay in the Chicago area because her friends are there, but the price of nursing care is high there as well. Should a 78-year-old woman have to move away from the city where she has lived all her life because, as a widow, she is considered single and has to pay higher taxes? The tax of \$68,000 is money she should be able to use for medicine, living expenses, and her nursing home.

Marilyn is a single, professional woman who lives in Mission Hills, CA—near my Congressional District. She purchased her home over 30 years ago for \$65,000. She chose to become involved in her community and has stayed in the same house throughout her lifetime. Marilyn is now 60 years old and would like to sell her home and move to a smaller condo in the same area. The selling price of her home is now \$895,000, and her combined Federal and State taxes are \$169,940 after the current exemption. Should singles who remain in one house for many years be taxed

for their stability and their long-term commitment to their community—and essentially for being single? A one-time exemption on capital gains would allow Marilyn to downsize her life for her retirement years in a way that is financially sensible.

Sally, a divorced, single mother in Seattle, WA is 57 years old. She chose to stay in one home for 37 years so her children could stay in the same school system, and so she could live near her work and her church. One of her adult children has developed severe health problems and has had to pay medical bills not covered by insurance. Sally needs to help with these medical expenses and has decided to sell her home to pay some of the doctor's bills. Her home that she purchased for \$55,000 is now worth \$629,000, and the combined Federal and State taxes are \$64,000. This tax money is money that Sally should be able to use to pay off medical bills as well as to get ready for her own retirement.

My bill would provide a one-time increase of \$500,000 for a single person and \$1 million for a couple in the amount excludable from the sale of a principal residence for taxpayers who have reached the age of 50. Let us help our citizens over age 50 who have lived in one home for many years. Let them keep the proceeds from the sale of their homes for retirement and health care costs. An added benefit is that family members and perhaps the government will be relieved of the burden of caring for these individuals as they grow older.

My second bill is H.R. 1923, the Social Security Survivors Fairness Act, legislation to provide Social Security widows' benefits for women under the age of 60. Maria is a 58-year-old widow who lives in San Ysidro, CA in my Congressional District. Throughout her lifetime, she worked in the home, raising her children and supporting her husband. Now her husband, who received Social Security benefits, has passed away. There currently is a provision for Maria to receive Social Security widows' benefits, but to qualify she must be 60 years old.

Social Security is telling Maria that she must find a way to support herself for 2 years before they are going to help with widows' benefits. It will be very difficult for her to find a job at her age, when she has never worked outside of her home. Women in their late 50s who are dependent on their husband's Social Security are left with no means of support if their spouse dies.

My bill would amend the Social Security Act to reduce from 60 to 55 the age at which an individual who is otherwise eligible may be paid widows' or widowers' insurance benefits.

I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 1922 and H.R. 1923 to provide financial assistance to our country's most vulnerable citizens.

A TRIBUTE TO THOMAS AND MARY GREYARD

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Thomas and Mary Greyard who celebrate the 50th anniversary of their wedding on May 25, 2003. Natives of south-

eastern North Carolina, they have spent their 50 years of matrimony in McDonald, in my home county of Robeson.

The French author, Andre Maurois, once said, "A successful marriage is an edifice that must be rebuilt every day." With dedication, determination, and devotion, Thomas and Mary have followed their hearts and built their lives together for half a century.

Thomas and Mary are people of dedication. Dedication not only to each other, but to their two sons, their family, their church, and their community. Having both served as Mayor of the Town of McDonald, as elders and teachers at Iona Presbyterian Church, and as members of various local volunteer organizations, the Greyards have provided a positive example for all to follow.

The devotion that the Greyards have shown is a testament to their love and respect for each other. It is this same devotion to those things we hold most dear in our lives that has served as an example to those around them.

Thomas and Mary, thank you for your dedication and your devotion. We wish you continued success, and may God's strength, peace and joy be with you always!

TRIBUTE TO THE WALL-RIVES AMERICAN LEGION POST 58

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to commend the Wall-Rives American Legion Post 58. They are celebrating 75 years of dedicated service to the honorable veterans residing in Dunnellon, Florida.

On March 3, 1927, the American Legion Post 58 was issued a temporary charter from Department Headquarters in Palatka, Florida. They started out in 1927 with 15 members. Since then they have grown to . . . members through the hard work and dedication of their committed members.

American Legion Post 58 was christened "Wall-Rives Post 58" on May 26, 1947 in honor of Winchester Wall and Hugh Rives, two brave soldiers and residents of the area, who lost their lives during WWII, in the Bataan Death March.

The memory of these dedicated servicemen has been honored throughout the years by the members of the Legion as they continue the legacy of service to their community.

Mr. speaker, I am proud of the service that members of Wall-Rives Post 58 have rendered to our great nation in their 75 year history and I ask you to join with me in thanking them for their service.

RECOGNIZING FORD MOTOR COMPANY ON THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Ford