

who, because of segregation, were not able to enjoy most of America's beaches. This area of Florida's northeastern shore attracted African Americans from all over the country. While this nation struggled to find equality within its shores, American Beach provided a relaxing, culturally unique vacation spot for African Americans along the ocean's edge.

The significance of this site was recognized when the beach and 120 residential homes in the area were added to the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, in 1992, the Florida Legislature named American Beach the first site on the Florida Black Heritage Trail.

In his recently released budget, President Bush provides resources for a new "Preserve America" program through the National Park Service. This initiative is designed to encourage heritage tourism throughout the country. Today, this legislation answers the President's call without spending a single dime of taxpayer's money.

Last year, American Beach's neighbor, Amelia Island Plantation made arrangements to donate these 12.5 acres to the National Park Service. Unfortunately, the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve is not able to accept this generous gift because the acreage rests outside the boundaries of the Preserve.

This legislation allows the National Park Service to accept this historic site by simply modifying the boundaries of the Timucuan. I support this addition to the Timucuan—and others like it—where willing property owners and the National Park Service can work cooperatively as stewards of our national treasures.

Mr. Speaker, it is especially fitting this legislation comes to the floor of this House as we celebrate Black History Month to honor those individuals who worked to bring equality to all Americans.

THANKING COURTNEY AND CHLOE SMITH FOR REPRESENTING LOUISIANA DURING THE CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK CELEBRATION

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2004

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize 3-year-old twins, Courtney and Chloe Smith, of Alexandria, Louisiana. Courtney and Chloe have been selected to serve as ambassadors for the millions of kids treated this year at children's hospitals across the United States.

Born in March 2000, Courtney and Chloe are the smallest twins at birth ever to survive in the U.S. For over 3 months, they fought for their lives in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at CHRISTUS St. Francis Cabrini Hospital. Due to their miraculous show of strength, they will serve as representatives for Foresters Champions Across America, a national Children's Miracle Network program.

As representatives of Louisiana, Courtney and Chloe will visit Capitol Hill and the White House to meet with some of our Nation's leaders. They will also travel to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida to participate in the taping of the Children's Miracle Network celebration.

As the father of twin girls, I am able to comprehend the magnitude of such a situation.

Children are a gift, and any parent is twice as happy when two special children are brought into the world at one time.

I come to the floor of the House of Representatives today to personally commend, honor and thank Courtney and Chloe Smith for taking on the responsibility of representing Louisiana during such an important and meaningful event. It is rare that we as Members of the U.S. Congress are able to recognize people that are so young and yet so fierce in their fight for life. Courtney and Chloe can truly attest to the life-saving abilities and importance of the Children's Miracle Network. This nationwide system of hospitals deserves tremendous acknowledgement and appreciation for all the assistance they bring to families such as the Smiths.

Again, thank you to Courtney and Chloe Smith for so honorably representing the state of Louisiana.

HONORING GEORGE M. MOORE JR.

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2004

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor George M. Moore, Jr., a resident of my district, for his service and commitment to America's veterans. Mr. Moore has served as Director of the Veterans Administration Hospital in Martinsburg since 1998. In 1999, Moore became the Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service Line Director, making him responsible for the management of all prosthetic operations in Martinsburg, WV, Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, DC. Previously he has worked with the VA in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Jackson, MS.

Moore served our country on active duty as an Air Force fighter pilot in Vietnam. Recently, the Disabled Veterans of America recognized him as their 2003 Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year.

All of us in West Virginia and in Congress are proud of the service George Moore has given to our Nation. Both as a soldier himself, and later as a worker for disabled veterans, Moore has distinguished himself as a leader in our Nation's fight for freedom.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD W. POMBO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2004

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to apologize for my absence from the House floor this past week. My father, Ralph Pombo, Sr., underwent heart surgery last week and it was important that I be with him and my family in California during this trying time. As such, I was unable to attend votes last week. We all pray for his swift and full recovery.

HONORING ED CASEY, RECIPIENT OF THE "HEART O'GOLD AWARD"

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2004

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure today that I honor Ed Casey, an outstanding American who has dedicated himself to cultural exploration and community service, as the "Heart O'Gold Award" is bestowed upon him by the Quaboag Highlander Pipe Band of Monson, Massachusetts.

Ed Casey is an icon in the Pioneer Valley and western Massachusetts and is well known throughout the community for his commitment to bagpipes and Celtic culture. As a resident of Springfield and Belchertown, MA, Ed has played his pipes at parades, inaugurations, celebrations, and internments. He is loved by so many in our area.

Mr. Casey, who spent years as a public school teacher in Holyoke, MA, has taught the craft of playing the bagpipes to many others interested in learning to play. Yet, unlike most music teachers, Ed did not learn to play music through the traditional route of lessons and formal training. He learned to play the bagpipes, as he would say, "by ear" and "by heart."

Mr. Speaker, there are many families in western Massachusetts who have never met Ed Casey, but perhaps it is their lives that have been most directly impacted by his generosity. For years, in lieu of accepting any fee for performing at internments, Ed Casey has directed families to instead make donations to the Open Pantry, a food collection and distribution center in Springfield that feeds the hungry in western Massachusetts. In doing so, thousands of dollars have been collected to provide food for the poor and the needy.

It is my pleasure to honor Ed Casey today in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as someone whose selflessness and talent should be recognized and emulated by those around him. Congratulations Ed upon receiving this honor. Your good work has not gone unnoticed.

HONORING BENSON'S BATTALION

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2004

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to praise a valuable organization based within the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania which has made a significant improvement in the lives of western Pennsylvanians. I am proud to represent the congressional district which is the headquarters for Benson's Battalion, a charitable organization created to fight terror and provide financial support to Pennsylvania police, fire and other related public safety groups.

Kris Benson, a pitcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates, along with his wife Anna founded Benson's Battalion in October 2001 following the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Since the creation of the organization, Kris and his wife have donated a significant amount of time and money to benefit local firefighters and police agencies. Benson's Battalion has provided