

Richie's next tour came in 2005, as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom where he was again asked to serve his country. Richie was activated in June of that year as a member of the 6th Civil Affairs Group (CAG), 2nd Marine Division of the United States Marine Corps. During this tour Richie was on a 137 "outside the wire mission," where he and his fellow members of the CAG Division worked on the streets of Fallujah, Amiriyah, and Zaidon protecting the citizens of Iraq from enemy insurgents.

Due to his exemplary service Richie was given Gunnery Sergeant responsibilities with E5 status, which any Marine knows is an amazing accomplishment and honor. Throughout his service in the United States Marine Corps, Richie Litto has been decorated with numerous awards. He has been awarded the Iraqi Campaign Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Medal, Good Conduct Ribbon, Combat Action Ribbon and the National Defense Ribbon on several occasions.

On a personal note, I have had the pleasure of counting Richie Litto among my dearest friends for most of my life. Recently, as part of a Congressional Delegation that visited Iraq and Afghanistan I had the opportunity to visit with Richie while he was stationed at Camp Mercury in Fallujah and tell him in person how proud we were of his service to our country.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House of Representatives today to join with Richie's wonderful family, friends, and brothers and sisters in the Marines and thank him for a job well done and welcome him home. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating Richie Litto's many accomplishments and all his future endeavors.

HONORING JERRY DEFEO

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2006

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor Mr. Jerry DeFeo and his work with the National Exchange Club. Mr. DeFeo joined the Noon Exchange Club of Garland, Texas as a charter member in 1982 and went on to serve in numerous offices at the club, district and national levels, culminating with his term as President of the National Exchange Club this past year.

Jerry DeFeo has devoted his time, talent and energy promoting the Exchange Club and its mission: to make our communities better places to live through programs of service in Americanism, community service, youth activities, and its national project, the prevention of child abuse.

Mr. DeFeo is an accomplished member of the Garland Noon Exchange Club and has served the National Exchange Club Foundation board of trustees from 1987–88 and is a volunteer field representative (VFR). He has received multiple recognitions throughout his involvement, including the first ever VFR of the Year Award in 1997. He was also awarded the National Master Recruiter Award and he has recruited more than 350 members and built 15 Exchange Clubs.

Mr. DeFeo received a bachelor's degree in engineering management from the University of Texas at Arlington, and is the founder and

president of DeFeo & Co. Enterprises, which specializes in a variety of architecture and construction. Jerry and his wife Mary DeFeo reside in Garland and have four grown children and five grandchildren.

Still active in his community, DeFeo is serving his 12th year on Garland's Board of Adjustments, a zoning appeals board. He has also been involved with the Stars for Children Child Abuse Prevention Center, the Garland Chamber of Commerce, YMCA Indian Guides, and Crimestoppers and Scouting.

Over the course of his career, Jerry DeFeo has demonstrated a unique commitment to the Exchange Club and his community. Today I would like to recognize his outstanding service to his dedication to the people of Texas and the mission of the Exchange Club.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2006

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, On April 5, 2006. I missed Rollcall vote No. 90 on H.R. 1127, the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act to impose sanctions against individuals responsible for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, to support measures for the protection of civilians and humanitarian operations, and to support peace efforts in the Darfur region of Sudan, and for other purposes. Had I been present and voting, I would have voted yes on the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT SAUDI ARABIA SHOULD FULLY LIVE UP TO WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION COMMITMENTS AND END BOYCOTT ON ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, the Arab boycott against Israel is one of the worst vestiges of the Arab League's campaign to isolate and destroy Israel.

Originating shortly after Israel's founding in 1948, the embargo's objective was to squeeze the fledgling Jewish state out of existence AND punish its allies. Israel's astonishing economic growth despite these constraints ultimately dulled the impact. Enforcement also declined after Egypt and Jordan signed peace treaties with Israel. However, the boycott continues to be a shameless exercise in blackmail. Support for the policy is unfortunately still widely popular in most Arab nations.

Saudi Arabia, for its part, has been among the most vocal instigators rallying support for the boycott's continuation. Despite agreeing to provide Most Favored Nation status to all member states, including Israel, upon joining the WTO in November, Saudi Arabia continues to be a hub of boycott activity. In December, a Saudi official emphatically stated that the boycott would be maintained, and in

March, the Saudi government hosted a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference aimed at continuing the embargo.

Unfortunately, Saudi Arabia's inconsistent track record is somewhat common among our Arab trading partners. In October 2005, just one month after Bahrain signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States, the Bahraini parliament voted to reject its government's decision to lift the anti-Israel embargo.

Likewise, the United Arab Emirates, which is currently negotiating an FTA with the United States, has kept the policy in place. The issue recently got attention when it was revealed that a Dubai company seeking to take over operations in six U.S. ports complied with the boycott. It was revealed that the Department of Commerce's Office of Antiboycott Compliance had fined several U.S. companies in the last year for abiding by UAE's boycott rules.

Oman, which has an FTA now pending before Congress, opened a trade mission with Israel in 1996, but closed the office several years later in response to anti-Israel demonstrations.

The international trading system is designed not only to promote prosperity but to foster peaceful relations between nations. The United States has invested a great deal of time and effort in negotiating new trade pacts in the Middle East to build stronger ties between our countries and among our regional partners. But it is not acceptable to continue along this path if Israel is to be left out.

Israel is a valuable economic partner of the United States and a strategic ally. It would be a tactical error, a moral blunder, and a departure from our own anti-boycott laws, to continue expanding our trade ties with countries like Saudi Arabia that refuse to abide by their commitments on this issue.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure and take a firm stand to put an end to Saudi Arabia's duplicitous actions.

HONORING THE MARTINS MILL GIRLS BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONS

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2006

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the Martins Mill Lady Mustangs basketball team who recently won the Texas University Interscholastic League 1A Division State Championship. On Friday March 3, 2006 the Lady Mustangs competed at the University of Texas in Austin's Frank Erwin Center (UTAFEC) for the Girls Basketball State Championship.

I would like to recognize teammates Cara Chaney, Courtney Gregory, Rebecca Hensley, Jordan Barncastle, Hayley Butler, Taylor Daniel, Brittney Perkins, Alexis Popelar, Ashley Tarrant, Jennifer Tindle, Christa Williams, Lynzi Williams, and Kim Wilson as well as team managers Carlee Alsobrook, Kati Clark, Joanna Daniel, Ashlee Milner, and Emily Williams.

The outstanding team performance of the Martins Mill Lady Mustangs earned them the number one ranking in the state from start to finish this season. At the State Championship game in Austin the Lady Mustangs defeated