

economic engines in the world, Intel. Sergey Brin, another innovative Jewish leader, came to America with his family to escape anti-Semitism. Through hard work and diligent studies, he founded one of the most innovative companies in the world: Google.

Examples abound of other Jewish Americans who lead our community in innovation and philanthropy, including Jeffrey Skoll, Ken Levy, Eli Reinhard and Eic Benhamou. America's ethnic diversity is a source of our country's strength, and the Jewish American community stands as a bedrock for our nation.

IN SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. JOHN J.H. "JOE" SCHWARZ

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in support of President Bush's proclamation declaring May 2006 as Jewish American Heritage Month.

Jewish American Heritage Month recognized the wonderful cultural heritage of the Jewish people in America. It will be a time to honor all of the benefits and successes that Jewish Americans have experienced as well as recognizing the achievements and the diversity their culture has provided to the United States.

Jewish American Heritage Month will also provide a venue for education of the Jewish American culture. It allows an opportunity to further educate and ultimately end anti-Semitism for future generations.

Today, I join my colleagues as well as President Bush to establish the month of May to observe and celebrate the rich history of the Jewish people in America and honor the great contributions they have made to our country.

TRIBUTE TO DISABLED VETERANS

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, next Monday we will honor all that have made the ultimate sacrifice serving and protecting our country. I rise today to honor our disabled veterans still with us that have sacrificed so much.

On the last Monday of May every year, Members of this body celebrate Memorial Day by walking in parades, making speeches, and talking to active and retired military men and women. We tell them how much we appreciate their efforts and thank them for their services. We do this proudly as they deserve our respect and admiration for serving this great country.

Currently, American troops defend our freedom on many different fronts and veterans are at the forefront of our legislative priorities. The number of veterans coming home from Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas increases daily and it is our responsibility to ensure their needs are met. While our veterans may be out of harm's way, our responsibility to them remains.

I am introducing legislation to further our commitment to our disabled veterans that have served our country with valor. Currently, every year Congress enacts a cost-of-living adjustment for veterans' disability benefits. We have done this every year since 1978. In fact, both Congress and the President assume this COLA will be enacted every year.

My legislation, the Veterans Disability Compensation Automatic COLA Act, would simply make the COLAs for veterans' disability benefits automatic each year. Veterans should not have to depend on Congress adjusting their disability benefits every year. Social Security and Medicare have automatic COLA adjustments. Our veterans deserve to have that same security. Furthermore, because Congress and the President assume this increase in their budget every year, my bill has no budgetary effect.

I am also pleased to enter into the RECORD letters of support from the Disabled American Veterans as well as American Veterans (AMVETS). These veterans service organizations support this bill to assure veterans the COLA they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot and should not assume future Congresses will act to adjust veterans' disability COLAs every year. I ask my colleagues to join me to ensure our veterans get the benefits they deserve without having to rely on a superfluous yearly act by Congress.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
Washington, DC, May 22, 2006.

Hon. JOE KNOLLENBERG,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KNOLLENBERG: On behalf of the 1.5 million members of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and its Auxiliary, I write in support of the measure you are introducing today, the Veterans' Disability Compensation Automatic COLA Act.

Your bill would protect the benefits of sick and disabled veterans and their dependents by preserving its intent and beneficial purpose. Specifically, the bill would automatically increase the rates of disability compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), and the annual clothing allowance by the percentage of increase in the cost of living as measured by the Consumer Price Index without precluding any other increases deemed necessary in the future.

Other benefits such as automobile and housing grants, and burial and plot allowances, for which Congress has regularly enacted legislation to adjust these benefits have had their value seriously eroded. Unless the amounts of disability compensation, DIC, and clothing allowance are periodically adjusted, inflation diminishes the significance and effectiveness of these benefits.

Again, I want to thank you for your continued effort to protect and enhance the benefits and services of veterans who are disabled by virtue of their selfless sacrifice and service to our nation, and their dependents.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH A. VIOLANTE,
National Legislative Director.

AMVETS,
Lanham, MD, May 22, 2006.

Hon. JOE KNOLLENBERG,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KNOLLENBERG: On behalf of AMVETS (American Veterans), I want to thank you for your legislation that will provide a timely and guaranteed cost-of-living adjustment for our nation's disabled veterans.

AMVETS endorses your legislation to automatically increase veterans' disability benefits by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) each year, without an act of Congress. It is important VA benefits keep pace with society and the cost of living. Your bill will see that veterans' benefits are increased proportionately and will sustain the same buying power as in previous years.

AMVETS supports our nation's commitment to care for the men and women who have served in our military service. I strongly encourage the House Veterans' Affairs Committee to act favorably on this legislation.

Sincerely,

JAMES B. KING,
National Executive Director.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, May 19, 2006, I was absent for votes as I was honored to give the commencement address to the 2006 graduating class at Monroe Academy in Monroeville, Alabama. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcalls 173, 174, and 176. I would have voted "nay" on rollcall 175.

TRIBUTE TO "WE THE PEOPLE" AND EAST KENTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the "We the People" program. From April 29 to May 1, 2006, approximately 1,200 students from across the country participated in the national finals competition of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. I am pleased to announce that East Kentwood High School from Kentwood, Michigan, received the Unit 3 Award in the competition. The "We the People" program is administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education by act of Congress.

The "We the People" national finals is a 3-day academic competition that simulates a congressional hearing in which the students "testify" before a panel of judges on constitutional topics. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles as they evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. Among the questions students responded to in this year's competition were: "How would you distinguish a federal system from a unitary government and from a confederation?" and "What did the Framers hope to achieve by establishing a federal system of government?"

The following outstanding students represented East Kentwood High School: Mark Alonso, Sefik Arapovic, Tyler Boyd, Michelle

Burns, Aaron Dame, Karl DeVries, Kelsey Duinkerken, Branden Graf, Jessica Hoag, Jessica Hulbert, J.J. Jang, Jamie Overbeek, Alexa Schlosser, Paige Stevens, Peter Vu Tran, and Laura Vlieg.

I also wish to commend the teacher of the class, Deborah Snow, who was responsible for preparing the students for the national finals competition. Also worthy of special recognition are Linda Start and Jim Troost, the state coordinators, and Susan Laninga, the district coordinator, who are among those responsible for implementing the "We the People" program in my district.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues in the House, please join me in congratulating these young constitutional experts for their outstanding achievement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I had a leave of absence on Friday, May 19, for family business. If I had been present, I would have voted: "yes" on rollcall vote 173, "yes" on rollcall vote 174, "no" on rollcall vote 175, and "yes" on rollcall vote 176.

IN HONOR OF ROCKFORD, IL,
BURPEE MUSEUM FOR RECEIVING
TWO AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF MUSEUM AWARDS

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Burpee Museum of Natural History of Winnebago County—Burpee, IL, in the district I am proud to represent. The Burpee Museum is a remarkable cultural institution that has received two prestigious American Association of Museum—AAM—Awards. Both of these awards are for the Jane: Diary of a Dinosaur exhibit at the museum, which opened to outstanding reviews in June 2005.

The museum submitted entries in two categories: Overall Exhibit Excellence and the MUSE Award for the use of media and technology in the Jane exhibit. Burpee received the Exhibit Excellence Award, which is considered the museum profession's highest honor. It also received an Honorable Mention MUSE award for Jane's interactive Meet the Researcher video.

Lew Crampton, Burpee president and CEO, accepted the awards at the AAM's 100th International Conference in Boston in the company of 7,000 other museum profession delegates from around the world. Judges who presented the awards to Mr. Crampton praised Burpee, stating the "whole project was so solid . . . and you just did everything right . . . your work could and should serve as a model to other institutions (including much larger ones) as a way to create an excellent exhibit."

Jane's exhibit is a reflection of the dedication and professional excellence that is demonstrated by the personnel at Burpee.

Burpee's personnel overcame three daunting tasks in order to successfully create the exhibit. First, after transporting Jane from Montana to the museum lab, Jane's 66 million year old bones were carefully removed from the rocks in which they were embedded. Second, identifying Jane's place in the dinosaur family tree presented a unique challenge because many scientists consulted in the process disagreed on this matter. Finally, in the midst of the first two tasks, Burpee's personnel had to consider how to create an exhibit that would be able to bridge the gap between science education and family enjoyment.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my recognition and support of the Burpee Museum of Natural History in Rockford, IL. Since its founding in May of 1942 as a part of the Works Progress Administration, the mission of Burpee has been to inspire all people to engage in a lifetime of learning about the natural world, and they have been very successful in doing so. To this day, Burpee reaches out to the public through its creative event programming and excellent educational offerings for educators, families, and other members of the local community. Burpee is a prime example for other cultural institutions across the country, and I am honored to recognize the museum and its personnel here today.

IN MEMORY OF KATHERINE
DUNHAM

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to my dear friend, Katherine Dunham, who passed away Monday, May 21, 2006. Katherine may have become famous for her extraordinary dancing capabilities, but it was her humanitarian activities that truly made her a legendary American.

Born in Chicago, Illinois on June 22, 1909, Dunham was once described as "the hottest thing to hit Chicago since Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked the bucket." From a very young age, her talent for dance was obvious. However, she decided to heed her parent's wishes and began studies in social anthropology at the University of Chicago during the 1930's. It was during these formative years that she was awarded a Rosenwald Travel Fellowship to study anthropology and native dance in West Indies. Forced by her advisors to choose between the two, she went with dance and the rest, as they say, is history.

Dunham's extensive knowledge of anthropology became instrumental in the style of dance, now referred to as the Dunham technique, which she invented and popularized. She brought African and Caribbean dance and ritual influences to a dance world dominated by a European style, thus beginning the anthropological dance movement, which made use of ethnic and folk choreography. To Dunham, her methods were "more than just dance or bodily executions." Instead, her style was "about movement, forms, love, hate, death, life, all human emotions." She made her Broadway debut in the late 1930's sporting an unorthodox costume, which included a bird cage on her head and a cigar in her mouth.

Her reasoning: such accessories were typical of the women whom she saw while in the Caribbean during her anthropological studies.

From the 1930's to the 1960's, Dunham revolutionized the worlds of dance, theater, music and education, touring the world, visiting over 60 countries on 6 continents with dance companies and touring productions. She introduced the art form of black dance to Europe and was the first person to expose elements of American modern dance to a foreign country. James Dean, Marlon Brando and Eartha Kitt all became disciples of her technique as they sought Katherine out as a teacher. With the permission of King Hassan II, she first introduced the dancers of Morocco to an American audience with her 1962 production of Bamboche. She formed the first all Black dance company, Ballet Negre, which became the famous Katherine Dunham Dance Company.

Even during her years dancing, Katherine's interest in culture and anthropology never faltered. In 1965, she decided to disband the Katherine Dunham Dance Company to act as advisor to the cultural ministry of Senegal. She also wrote eight books, numerous articles and short stories and several essays touching on her cultural interests ranging from experiences from her world travels to the Myal dance, a secret rite native to Jamaicans.

Following her retirement from dancing in 1967, Dunham continued to choreograph shows; however, humanitarian leanings became the focal point of her efforts. She moved to East St. Louis, Illinois, a predominantly black area, to work with inter-city youth. Her concept was to infuse a spirit of the arts with these children in an attempt to keep them out of trouble. To do so, she founded the Performing Arts Training Center and the Katherine Dunham Museum and Children's school, which brought in artists like Harry Belafonte, to teach subjects as diverse as African hairbraiding, conversational Creole, martial arts, and aesthetics. She would continue to carry out these programs for the rest of her life, despite cuts in government and private funding.

This would not be her first or last activist effort. While touring the United States in the 1940's through the 1960's, Dunham refused to have her dance troupe perform in segregated theatres in an attempt to fight discrimination. In fact, she once refused to perform after finding out that African Americans had been prohibited from buying tickets to one of her shows. Her promotion of African and Caribbean values during the peak of the Civil Rights movement helped to infuse a positive image of black culture in the public consciousness.

Later on, in 1992, she would once again make a political message, as she went on a 47 day hunger strike to protest the government policy that repatriated Haitian refugees. Her involvement with Haiti did not stop there. Dunham was a big supporter of democracy in the country and in particular of the exiled President Aristide. In 1991, when Aristide was ousted in a military coup, Dunham petitioned the United States government to aid in his restoration as president. She also made several civilian trips to Haiti, eventually purchasing a house there. On each trip, she did her best to help stimulate the country economically and to provide humanitarian aid to the poverty-stricken people of Haiti.

Throughout her life, Katherine Dunham was many things to many people. To her surviving