

"Well I don't know who put my name there but I have done my part," said Pierre, who was putting together this weekend's edition when the representative of the National Hero's Commission made the announcement to the thousands who were attending Independence Day celebrations at the National Stadium.

The other awardees announced by the Committee include former teachers Eleanor Pilgrim and Lorraine Ramdhanny who received the Spice Isle Award. This award is awarded to two people who have rendered valuable service to Grenada in any field of human endeavour or for other humane action.

Joel Mark and Veronica Alexis received the Camerhogne Award, which is awarded to two citizens who rendered meritorious service in the furtherance of national prestige or for gallantry. Mark was the first Grenadian Sailor to cross the Atlantic on a solo voyage while Alexis is a retired nurse.

The Medal of Honour was presented to Commissioner of Police Winston James; former Principal Ursula Antoine and well known mas player Evelyn Mark.

Honorary awards, which are presented to non Grenadians whose work has impacted on the development of Grenada, went to USA citizen Rev. Melville Schaper and Formula One racer Lewis Hamilton, whose parents are from Grenada.

Schaper is the founder of the St. John Christian Secondary School which was opened here 42 years ago in one of the most rural villages in the country.

Governor General Sir Daniel Williams was honoured with the first Companion of the Order of Grenada award.

In his address Prime Minister Mitchell indicated that the later in the year a number of streets and buildings will be named after some prominent Grenadians who have made significant contributions towards the island since gaining independence 34th years ago.

"This Government is of the view that after 34 years of independence, it was time to develop a system that recognized Grenadians from every background all of whom have done many different types of work in building our nation and shaping our society.

"There are those who have made genuine contributions to our industrial development as a whole and who have headed up major initiatives in the corporate sector or who have given outstanding service to the community. Our new system of national awards sought to recognise them all," the Prime Minister said.

On the eve of independence the main opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) called on the Mitchell administration to commit to naming the country's international airport after former leftist prime minister Maurice Bishop.

"We believe that the time has come, as this whole nation is moving towards genuine reconciliation and an understanding of its history, that the airport be named after the leader who perhaps did the most for its coming into being," NDC Deputy political leader, George Prime said.

The Point Salines International Airport was constructed under Bishop's administration with Cuban aid.

HONORING LEONA SASSAMAN

HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2008

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Leona

Sassaman, longtime Tinicum Township resident. Ms. Sassaman is being recognized by the Tinicum Democrats on April 6th for her hard work and exceptional achievements in working to better her community.

Born in Uhlertown, PA in 1925, Leona Sassaman has a long history of service to her community. Beginning her community involvement, Ms. Sassaman worked for 25 years making parts for RCA. During this time, Ms. Sassaman was an active member of the International Glass, Plastic, Pottery, and Allied Workers Union, Local 173A. Ms. Sassaman served as chief shop steward, union treasurer, secretary and president, laboring to make the workplace safer for she and her colleagues.

Ms. Sassaman has also worked for years to improve the safety of her community through her involvement with the Delaware County firehouse. A member of the firehouse for over 50 years, Ms. Sassaman was involved in the firehouse's construction in 1958. Throughout the years, Mr. Sassaman has contributed to countless fundraising events and activities for the firehouse, such as bake sales, Friday night spaghetti dinners, and rummage sales.

Adding to her distinguished work, Ms. Sassaman is an active member of the political process within her community. A member of the Board of Elections for 30 years, Ms. Sassaman was elected and served as minority clerk to the board until 2006. Ms. Sassaman has been an active member of the Democratic Party for many years, while also serving as a reliable political resource for those in her community of any political party.

As her outstanding efforts show, Leona Sassaman has pledged her life to helping those in her community. Through her tireless work, Ms. Sassaman has clearly bettered the lives of those around her. Madam Speaker, I am proud to recognize Ms. Sassaman for her extraordinary accomplishments and extremely honored to serve as her Congressman.

RECOGNIZING JAMES HARRIS,
VETERAN OF THE YEAR FOR
THE CITY OF DIXON, CALI-
FORNIA

HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2008

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to James Harris, who received the Veteran of the Year award for the city of Dixon, California, on March 15, 2008.

James Harris, known as "Jim" by his friends, began his military career in 1961. Harris, now 72, served in the Air Force for 28 years, starting his illustrious career in the Air Force fire protection rescue unit. He retired from active duty in 1989, as a chief master sergeant, but to this day continues his service to those in uniform as an advocate for veterans affairs.

Harris is one of the original members for the Tuskegee Airmen, out of Travis Air Force Base. Additionally, he serves as the chairman of the committee that supports the new national cemetery in Dixon, CA.

In the wake of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a large number of veterans are returning to a nation that is grateful for their service. However, it is men like Harris that ensure vet-

erans past and present receive needed care and are never forgotten.

Jim Harris' selfless service and dedication to duty makes him a valuable asset to active duty personnel serving overseas and also veterans of past wars. Jim once said "[i]n]o one really understands war until you've been in one. I feel it is my obligation to support them." He uses this as his motivation to continue serving past and present members of the military.

Veterans like Jim Harris were not asked to spend their time supporting the military. He does not do his job to win awards or to be recognized. He does it because of his past service in the military, for his family, and for all of the citizens in this great Nation. He feels obligated to continue to serve and we as a nation take his actions to heart—we will continue to honor those that serve in the military, now and forever.

I am also grateful of Mr. Harris' service as a member of my Veterans Advisory Board, where he provides great counsel on issues of import to all veterans.

Congratulations to Jim Harris on a job well done. We are grateful for your service in the past, present, and in the future. You are a true American hero.

IN HONOR OF ASKOUHY JALLYAN-
VASSILIAN

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2008

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Askouhy Jallyan-Vassilian and her dedication to her community and the Armenian people. Mrs. Jallyan-Vassilian was a survivor of the genocide inflicted upon the Armenian people. She was the embodiment of the enduring human spirit.

Mrs. Jallyan-Vassilian was born Askouhy Jallyan on February 12, 1914, in Orfa, Turkey. Her mother, Khanem, had married in 1913 and was 18 years old when she gave birth to her only daughter. Khanem was widowed in 1915 when her husband, Nazaret, was murdered. Mrs. Jallyan-Vassilian was able to flee the horrors of genocide when she escaped with her mother to neighboring Syria.

Later, Mrs. Jallyan-Vassilian married her husband Missak Vassilian at the age of 19. Together they raised three sons and a daughter. She was also the proud grandmother of 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Her son, Asbed Vassilian, is currently a professor of chemistry at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and is the head of that school's Armenian studies program.

On October 10, 2007, Mrs. Jallyan-Vassilian attended a markup session of the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs as it worked on a resolution recognizing the deplorable deprivation of human rights that occurred during the Armenian genocide. She had waited 92 years for the United States Congress to recognize the genocide and suffering that her people had endured at the hands of hate and intolerance.

Mrs. Jallyan-Vassilian passed away on February 27, 2008. She will be remembered for her devotion to her Armenian heritage and her commitment to the cause of those Armenians who suffered wanton violence and cruelty.

Madam Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in celebrating the life of Askouhy Jallyan-Vassilian. Her legacy will continue to serve as a reminder of the audacity of human resilience.

IN HONOR OF SPIKE LEE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of distinguished producer, writer-director, educator and actor, Spike Lee, whose insightful, intelligent films have had a significant impact not only on the film industry but also on American political discourse.

The son of a jazz musician and teacher, Shelton Lee was born in 1957 in Atlanta, Georgia and later moved to Brooklyn, New York, the setting for many of his films and home of his production company, 40 Acres and a Mule Filmworks. Mr. Lee learned the value of film as a tool of social commentary and developed his film making skills while attending Morehouse College, where he made his first student film. He also took film courses at Clark Atlanta University and later earned a degree from Tish School of Arts graduate film program at New York University. Through his films and ability to capture the attention of audiences everywhere, Mr. Lee's films such as "Do the Right Thing" and "Malcolm X" have been used as vehicles to significantly raise levels of social awareness about a variety of important social and political issues that continue to plague American culture and society.

He has revolutionized the role of Black talent in cinema. Widely regarded as one of today's premier American filmmakers, Mr. Lee is a frontrunner in the "do it yourself school" of independent films. His most recent work, "When the Levees Broke," a ground breaking documentary focusing on the plight of Americans stranded in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, has garnered rave reviews and is considered by many to be the definitive account of that catastrophic event.

Mr. Lee's trend-setting filmmaking, acting, and groundbreaking producing are just a few of the contributions he has made to greater American culture throughout his career. He has not only paved the way for numerous filmmakers, but has also positively changed public conversations on many social issues.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the talented and inspirational producer and director, Spike Lee, whose genius will continue to touch the lives of generations to come.

HONORING DERICK RAY BONNER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Derick Ray Bonner of Kearney, Missouri. Derick is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of Amer-

ica, Troop 1397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Derick has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Derick has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Derick Ray Bonner for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

COMMENDING THE IMMIGRANT
AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO NEW
YORK CITY'S VIBRANCY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my delight that immigrants have carved out a sacrosanct place in the American story and accordingly introduce a New York Daily News piece showcasing that contribution. The vivacity and freshness that come with a heavy immigrant population has been a defining characteristic of New York City—and we have been the better for it. We define ourselves as a city of immigrants and recognize the importance of the Statue of Liberty as a symbol of what has helped make our city great. We live immersed in a potpourri of culture, all components distinctly American but each with flair and a kaleidoscopic beauty.

Our children have benefitted most from this variety, learning not just from their teachers, but from a diverse cast of neighbors and peers. The February 14 article—"Immigrants' Stories Not Foreign to Kids"—narrates the story of a New York classroom filled with Americans, through and through, all with ancestral ties to foreign nations. This newest generation will inherit this country far better equipped to be citizens of the world than generations before them. They are bound by a fervid love and allegiance to America, their home, married with a sensitivity and respect for our global neighbors.

It is a good day in America when our commonalities bind us, and our differences bring us that much closer.

IMMIGRANTS' STORIES NOT FOREIGN TO KIDS

It's a wonder immigrants in the U.S. haven't been blamed for global warming. After all, from the crumbling economy to increases in crime, they've been accused of just about every other of society's ills.

Which is why walking on Tuesday into teachers Joe Briscat and Kristen Grolimund's fourth-grade class at Public School 199 in Long Island City was so uplifting. Their students are lively, smart, curious and diverse, everything you would expect from New York kids. And as it can happen only in this city, particularly in Queens, they—or their parents—come from 11 different countries.

"Raise your hand if your parents came from a foreign country," the group of 24 9- and 10-year-olds was asked. All the students did.

There was Anita, a self-assured 9-year-old with big green eyes who wants to be a doctor. A Muslim, she was wearing a beautiful gold head scarf.

"My parents are from Yugoslavia, but I was born here. I am a citizen," she said proudly.

And there was Ángel, also 9, with a ready smile and mischievous eyes, who wants to grow up to be a pilot. He came from Mexico with his parents, as did Maura, who is tall for her 9 years and very shy.

"I want to be a teacher," she said.

Tenzin, 9, was born in Tibet and was not shy at all. And Shrabonti, 10, arrived in New York from Bangladesh and is proud of her good grades.

"I love school," she said.

That's why "A City of Immigrants—Dreams and Realities of Life in New York, 1840-2007," the history course Briscat and Grolimund are teaching, is so appropriate. For these kids, history is more than learning about events that took place many years before they were born.

For them, the history of New York is their own and that of their parents; it is the struggle and the hopes and dreams of people like themselves who make our city vibrant and alive and unique.

"Immigration has defined the history of New York City," reads the introduction to the curriculum of "A City of Immigrants," which was developed by the LaGuardia and Wagner Archives of LaGuardia Community College.

This became even more evident for the students on Tuesday, when three of the people they had been studying in class—all of whom have their immigrant experiences chronicled in the fourth-grade curriculum of "A City of Immigrants"—came to visit them.

Esther Levine, born in 1919, was the daughter of Morris Levine, one of millions of Eastern European Jews who fled religious persecution from the 1880s through the 1920s.

She told the children about her father, who became a traveling salesman, about Dora, her mother, and their life on Essex St. on a very different lower East Side of Manhattan.

Juan Rodriguez, a graphic designer at LaGuardia, a Dominican immigrant in his mid-30s, dreamed of being a baseball player. The kids were fascinated by his tale of playing pelota with a glove made from cardboard in his native country when he was about their age.

Fern Kahn, a former associate dean at LaGuardia, told the children about her life in New York in the 1950s, when she arrived from Jamaica to study at NYU. But it was when she spoke about her native country, and how she kept close ties with its culture, that the children could not stop asking questions.

"Many fourth- and fifth-graders, especially those in public schools in Queens, are members of these ethnic groups," said Richard Lieberman, the archives director. "By inviting Fern, Juan and Esther to speak to the class, the children will gain an understanding of their own place in history and the important role they play in American society."

They, these diverse New York children, will be the doctors, pilots and teachers of the future. And they will keep writing the history of our vibrant and unique city, which is, after all is said and done, their own story.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2008

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, March 12, I was unable to vote on roll No. 126