

Robert joined the Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps and is a member of the Arnold Air Society. He plans to continue his education and training to be of service as a U.S. Air Force test pilot. On December 18, 2008, Robert successfully completed the Carl A. Spaatz Exam, the final stage of a long and grueling journey through 16 rigorous skill tests. Having overcome this final obstacle, he now joins the ranks of the Civil Air Patrol's best and brightest as a recipient of the General Carl A. Spaatz Award for outstanding cadets.

HONORING MARK THORNTON

### HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mark Thornton upon his retirement as Tuolumne County Supervisor, District IV. Supervisor Thornton was honored by the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors during a regularly scheduled board of supervisors meeting held on December 16, 2008.

Mark Thornton moved to Tuolumne County in 1976 after earning his bachelor's of arts degree in sociology from California State University, Fullerton. He spent many years as a historian and consultant, working with local, State and Federal agencies on various projects. He was an active participant in the public arena and served in several leadership positions including the Groveland Community Service District Board of Directors from 1979 through November 1983; Tuolumne County Historic Preservation Review Commission from September 1990 through January 1997; Tuolumne County Blue Ribbon Growth Management Committee from 1993 through 1995; Oak Grove Cemetery District from May 1995 through January 1997. In 1996 Mr. Thornton decided to run for a seat on the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors to represent District IV. His election was a close one; he beat the incumbent by less than 10 votes.

Over the last 12 years as a supervisor, Mr. Thornton has worked tirelessly to protect the rural quality of life in his district while allowing for cautious expansion. His passion has been the protection of the county's historic and cultural resources. Some of his biggest impacts have been in the areas of transportation, health care and airport and land use planning. He has supported economic growth by gaining an improved coach ordinance, providing an open forum for discussing the building permit process and encouraging reasonable changes to the county's long standing agricultural guidelines. In Supervisor Thornton's most recent term he was a strong advocate for the expansion of the telecommunication infrastructure in Tuolumne County.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Supervisor Mark Thornton upon his retirement from the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Supervisor Thornton many years of continued success.

TRIBUTE TO KAREN RICE, ASSISTANT IDAHO FALLS DISTRICT MANAGER, BLM

### HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an exceptional public land manager in my district, Karen Rice, the Assistant Idaho Falls District Manager of the Bureau of Land Management, who is being recognized this week as the Public Lands Foundation's Outstanding Public Lands Professional Technician for 2008.

Now in its 20th year, the Public Lands Foundation award is an important recognition for special achievement by professional public land technicians and managers. The Public Lands Foundation is the only national membership organization dedicated solely to the protection and perpetuation of the National System of Public Lands under the administration of the BLM. It is a national nonprofit conservation organization whose members are primarily active and retired BLM employees.

As a member of that organization, Ms. Rice has worked hard for over 10 years on projects that protect wildlife habitat and promote responsible recreational activities along the South Fork of the Snake River and in the Henry's Lake Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

I am honored to take part in recognizing Ms. Rice today. I commend her for her tremendous efforts and dedication to such a crucial and worthwhile effort. Her efforts are paving the way for a more beautiful state and a more conservation-minded world.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 8 and 9 I was absent from the House on official district business. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

#### REPORT ON THE IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY OF GEORGE W. BUSH

### HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, today I have received a report prepared by the majority staff of the House Judiciary Committee, Committee, detailing numerous abuses by the Bush administration over the past 8 years, and recommending a number of steps to restore an appropriate Constitutional balance of power between the executive and legislative branches.

The report, based largely on oversight activities of the Judiciary Committee, and other committees, over the course of the 110th Congress, is titled "Reining in the Imperial Presidency: Lessons and Recommendations Relating to the Presidency of George W. Bush."

Issues examined include: The politicization of the Department of Justice; assaults on individual liberty, including extreme interrogation, extraordinary rendition, and warrantless wiretapping of U.S. citizens; the misuse of executive branch regulatory authority and Presidential signing statements; misleading manipulation of pre-Iraq War intelligence; improper retaliation against Administration critics; and excessive secrecy, including non-compliance with congressional oversight.

The report examines how the Bush Administration's legal approach to presidential power has eroded the Constitutional system of checks and balances designed by the Framers to preserve our liberty. It also recommends specific steps that this Congress and the incoming Obama administration should take to restore those checks and balances.

I am having the report posted to the Judiciary Committee Web site, in order to make it available to other members of the committee, to the full House, and to the American public.

I believe this report will be of tremendous benefit helping inform the changes we must make going forward—to repair the damage to our democracy, and to prevent similar abuses from occurring in the future.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BRIAN BAIRD

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. BAIRD. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, due to record flooding in my congressional district and across Washington State, I was unable to be present on January 9, 2009 for votes. I take my voting responsibility very seriously. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on final passage of H.R. 11, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. I would also have voted "aye" on final passage of H.R. 12, the Paycheck Fairness Act. I am an original co-sponsor of both bills, voted for their passage in the 110th Congress, and have been a strong and consistent supporter of legislation to end gender-based wage discrimination. I strongly oppose all forms of discrimination and believe that we must act to restore the right for women to challenge wage discrimination.

I was also not able to cast a vote on H. Res. 34, Recognizing Israel's right to defend itself against attacks from Gaza, reaffirming the United States strong support for Israel, and supporting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. I have traveled to the region and met the families and individuals who are affected by the cycle of violence that continues to claim lives and wreak havoc on all sides of this conflict. As we continue to witness the humanitarian crisis spiral out of control in Gaza, and while rocket attacks persist against Israel, we are reminded that it is imperative for the United States to play a constructive role in pursuing a legitimate peace process that provides security and stability to the many innocent people trapped in the midst of this untenable status quo. Therefore, I would have voted present on this resolution.

CONGRATULATING SISTER ADRIAN BARRETT FOR A LIFETIME OF SERVICE TO THOSE IN NEED AND EXTENDING TO HER BEST WISHES FOR A WELL DESERVED RETIREMENT

**HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Sister Adrian Barrett, IHM, an extraordinary woman whose capacity for caring for the poor is exceeded only by her selflessness and humility.

Sister Adrian's remarkable career of service began in 1949 when she became a sister of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

After her early years teaching at schools in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York and working summers in Scranton ministering to poor children, Sister Adrian and an old acquaintance, Monsignor Joseph P. Kelly, created Project Hope, a summer camp for underprivileged youths, first at Pius X Seminary at Dalton and later at Camp St. Andrew in Tunkhannock.

Sister Adrian returned to Scranton permanently in 1976 to work full time with low income families at United Neighborhood Center's Progressive Center. She developed an annual Thanksgiving Dinner for the needy of the community, at first with 24 guests, now with more than 2,000.

In 1985, she established Friends of the Poor with the stated objective of bringing together "those who can give with those who have a need to receive."

Over the years, Sister Adrian has become a hero in the Scranton area, providing food, clothing, furniture and healthcare education and assistance to those in need and sponsoring an annual educational trip to Washington, DC, for underprivileged children.

Mrs. Mary Lou Burne, one who has worked with and knows Sister Adrian well, observed recently that "She's the heart of the poor in Scranton. She feels what they feel. She cries when they cry."

Retired local banking executive David Tressler, who has done volunteer work with Sister Adrian for more than 25 years, said she inspires with her unflinching, round-the-clock commitment to the poor and is not bashful about asking those with means to assist those without.

"She is a unique individual," Mr. Tressler said. "She has time for anybody and everybody."

Now, as she approaches the age of 80, she has decided it is time to retire and hand her incredible work to a successor, Sister Maryalice Jacquinet, IHM.

Sister Adrian once observed that the highest compliment anyone could pay her is to acknowledge that she tried to love and serve the poor and, in so doing, loved and served God.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Sister Adrian Barrett who truly has loved and served the poor and, in so doing, has improved the quality of life for countless souls and has inspired all of us to a heightened awareness of our calling to help our fellow man.

IN HONOR OF THE SOUTH COBB HIGH SCHOOL BLUE EAGLE MARCHING BAND

**HON. DAVID SCOTT**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor members of the South Cobb High School Blue Eagle Marching Band. Under the direction of Band Director Zachary Cogdill and with the support of Principal Dr. Grant Rivera, the faculty and students at South Cobb High School, these students were chosen to represent the great State of Georgia during the 56th Presidential Inaugural Parade next Tuesday. I am immensely proud of their dedication and diligent preparation for this occasion, as President-Elect Barack Obama is sworn in as the 44th President. Madam Speaker, I would like to submit for the record a copy of the official letter I submitted to the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee recommending South Cobb High School for participation in the parade:

To Members of the Committee:

I would like to recommend the South Cobb High School Blue Eagle Marching Band for participation in the 2009 Presidential Inaugural Parade.

South Cobb's marching band continues a long tradition of exemplary musical groups at the school. Under the outstanding leadership of Mr. Zachary Cogdill, the marching band program has increased to 60 students. This year, the Blue Eagle Marching Band has won 11 trophies at two competitions, including Best in Class and Grand Champion in Class.

This band also features a young man who suffers from leukodystrophy—a rare, progressive genetic disorder that affects the nervous system. Although he cannot march, he walks in front of the band and plays a single drum-beat throughout the band's entire performance. His special role is the basis for the band's theme—"Heartbeat."

Lastly, most students have never been to Washington, DC and this would be an excellent for them to visit our Nation's Capital. I look forward to meeting members of the marching band should they be selected for your events. I know they certainly have earned the opportunity to perform, and hope you will feel the same.

Again, I encourage you to grant the South Cobb High School Blue Eagle Marching Band the opportunity to perform in January. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

DAVID SCOTT

Member of Congress

This fall, the Blue Eagle Marching Band won 11 trophies at two competitions, including Best in Class and Grand Champion in Class. They also performed at the Georgia Dome in Downtown Atlanta. With the support of the Atlanta community, the high school was able to raise \$70,000 in five days for their trip. I am thankful for the generosity of my hometown and each individual who supported our students, financially and otherwise.

On Friday night, the Blue Eagle Marching Band will depart Austell, Georgia for Washington, DC. For many, this will be a first visit to our Nation's Capital. I wish them a safe journey and congratulations on this out-

standing achievement. I am honored to represent such talented constituents.

TRANS-ATLANTIC LEGISLATORS' DIALOGUE HOLDS 65TH MEETING UNDER LEADERSHIP OF THE HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

**HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues in the Congress to a successful meeting of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, TLD, that was held in Miami, FL from December 6–8, 2008. Chairwoman SHELLEY BERKLEY, the gentlelady from Nevada, has consistently provided dynamic and capable guidance to this important interparliamentary exchange. The TLD vice-chairmen, Representative JIM COSTA from California and Representative CLIFF STEARNS from Florida, should be commended for their leadership in helping to strengthen American relationships with our European colleagues. I also wish to thank the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for being a gracious hostess of this meeting in her sunny district and ably assisting the delegation.

Representatives BERKLEY, COSTA and STEARNS were joined by six other members at the Miami session. This bipartisan delegation—which also included Representative SHEILA JACKSON-LEE (D–TX), Representative LORETTA SANCHEZ (D–CA), Representative SUSAN DAVIS (D–CA), Representative PHIL GINGREY (R–GA), Representative VIRGINIA FOXX (R–NC), and Representative RON KLEIN (D–FL)—ensured an informed and productive exchange of views with members of the European Parliament.

The TLD serves as the formal response of the European Parliament and the U.S. Congress to the commitment in the New Transatlantic Agenda, NTA, of 1995 to enhance legislative ties between the European Union and the United States. Building on the existing interparliamentary relationship, the TLD involves bi-annual meetings between American and European legislators in order to discuss topics of mutual interest and foster transatlantic discourse.

During this time of transition in the United States Government, it is particularly important that legislators continue to collaborate on the many important issues facing citizens on both sides of the Atlantic. The TLD discussions in Miami addressed a wide range of foreign policy challenges, focusing on the recent terrorist attacks in Mumbai as well as international efforts to address the ongoing challenges in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Members also discussed the current status of diplomatic initiatives regarding the Iranian nuclear threat and the repercussions of the Georgia-Russia conflict. American members responded to European concerns about data protection and the complexity of application procedures as part of the visa waiver program. During the discussion of regulatory initiatives being undertaken by the Transatlantic Economic Council, TEC, American members encouraged their European counterparts to address the EU ban on