

Our regional parks' success is the result of eight decades of hard work by innumerable citizen activists, elected district directors, general managers, district employees, environmental organizations, public officials, volunteers, and taxpayers who have collaborated to ensure local access to a majestic regional park system. Many park sites also contain protected species of plants and animals, as well as Native American historical sites containing rock art, and burial or village locations. Above all, EBRPD's top priority remains aligned with our park founders' original mission: to preserve the natural beauty of the land and protect wildlife habitats.

The future of East Bay Regional Park District is marked by growth and stability thanks to last year's passage of Measure WW, the largest local park bond measure to pass on record.

Seventy-five years ago, Bay Area park advocates demonstrated a pioneering and progressive local spirit, which endures to this day. The rich history of our regional parks has undoubtedly helped lay the framework for the Bay Area's famed conservation movement. It is this continued passion for open spaces and preservation that inspires communities, on a national and global level, to protect and preserve both the environment—and our future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, on October 14, 2009, I missed the following Rollcall Votes due to a longstanding commitment away from Washington:

1. Rollcall vote No. 775, H. Res. 768, Expressing support for the designation of the Month of October as "National Work and Family Month".

2. Rollcall vote No. 776, H.R. 1327, the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act.

3. Rollcall Vote 777, H. Res. 816, Mourning the loss of life caused by the earthquakes and tsunamis that occurred on September 29, 2009.

4. Rollcall Vote 778, H.R. 3371, Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009.

5. Rollcall Vote 779, H. Res. 786, Commemorating the canonization of Father Damien de Veuster, SS.CC. to sainthood.

If present, I would have voted "yea" on all matters.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ART VAN FURNITURE

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Art Van Furniture, an iconic fixture in the retail world of Michigan that was founded by Art Van Elslander, a much admired and prominent figure in the metro-Detroit community.

The story of Art Van Elslander and the rise of Art Van Furniture to its dominant position in

the retail furniture world is the American Dream fully realized. As a son of Belgian immigrants and growing up on Detroit's east side, Archie "Art" Van Elslander's entrepreneurial spirit shone brightly even as a youngster when he hawked newspapers up and down Detroit's Gratiot Avenue. After high school, military service and working at a local furniture store, Mr. Van Elslander entered the world of entrepreneurs. Heeding his father's advice to "control your own destiny," Mr. Van Elslander mortgaged his home and borrowed against insurance policies to finance his first store.

Through times both flourishing and faltering in the subsequent years, the fortunes of Art Van Furniture ebbed and flowed with the economic cycles of the Michigan economy. Ultimately, it grew to more than 30 locations across Michigan and employing more than 2500. Over the years, Art Van Furniture has adapted to the changing environment, and quite literally so. Art Van has been named a "GreenTailor" by the Michigan Retailers Association after adopting a variety of Earth-friendly practices ranging from the installation of Energy Management Systems to recycling tons of waste. It has been continually named as one of West Michigan's Best and Brightest places to work.

Over the past 50 years, Art Van has grown to be Michigan's largest furniture retailer. And during those years, Art Van Elslander became renowned and admired as a pillar of the philanthropic community and a stalwart business leader committed to Michigan and its citizens. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my salute today to Art Van Elslander on 50 years of vision, perseverance and "giving back" to our community; and to Art Van Furniture and each of its thousands of employees over the years, on 50 years of business growth and success.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GEORGE BUSH INTERCONTINENTAL AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 138, which honors the George Bush Intercontinental Airport for its 40 years of outstanding service to the residents of Houston, TX, and to travelers from around the world.

Since it first opened in 1969, Bush Intercontinental Airport has transported over 700,000,000 passengers to more than 170 U.S. and international destinations, making it one of the largest airports in the world. This, in turn, has generated tremendous economic benefits for the greater Houston area. Travelers to the region account for more than \$20 billion in annual sales. The airport also employs over 30,000 Houston-area residents and has created over 120,000 additional jobs in local industries. Many of these employees live in our district.

Bush Intercontinental Airport has likewise served as a hub for cargo shipments to the U.S. and Latin America. For four years in a

row, the airport has received Air Cargo World's "Air Cargo Excellence Award" for its facilities. It now handles more than 300,000 tons of freight annually, and this figure continues to grow. In November, the airport plans to open a new import facility for perishable freight, which will expand business in temperature and time-sensitive products.

Together with the Port of Houston, Bush Intercontinental Airport has helped to make Houston a truly international city and one of the leading ports of entry and export in the country. It serves as a model of success in international travel and shipping, and this level of accomplishment should be acknowledged.

I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 138 recognizing the 40th anniversary of George Bush Intercontinental Airport.

PASTOR CHARLES T. SEMBLY AND
FIRST LADY PAMELA J. SEMBLY

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Reverend Charles T. Sembly and First Lady Pamela J. Sembly for their 25 years of faithful, dedicated service to Union Bethel A.M.E. Church.

Following in the footsteps of his father, the late Rev. Edgar L. James, Pastor Sembly earned his license to preach on March 17, 1971, and was ordained an African Methodist Episcopal Itinerant Deacon in 1978 and an Itinerant Elder in 1979. In 1982, Pastor Sembly was appointed Pastor of Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church in Knoxville, Maryland. During the mid-year Conference on October 24, 1984, Pastor Sembly was appointed to Union Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Pastor Sembly and Mrs. Sembly have provided noteworthy spiritual leadership in fulfilling their vision of growth and development at Union Bethel A.M.E. Church. During Pastor Sembly's tenure, the church established over 40 ministries and outreach programs to enhance the Randallstown community. Under his leadership, the church created a nonprofit Community Development Corporation to increase its social outreach and opportunities for service to the greater Northwest Baltimore County community. As local President of the Lillian M. Dorsey Senior Missionary, Mrs. Sembly established several on-going outreach programs, which include the Good Samaritan Ministry, the Senior Outreach Ministry and provided additional support to three area shelters.

Pastor Sembly is currently a Trustee and Member of the Finance Committee of the Second Episcopal District Washington Conference, and an Instructor of the Second Episcopal District Washington Conference Board of Examiners. Pastor Sembly conceptualized and developed the Six-Week Lenten Services with seven A.M.E. Churches and is a former Recording Secretary for the Second Episcopal District Washington Conference.

Mrs. Sembly is very active in the Women's Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. She currently serves as the President of the Lillian M. Dorsey Senior Missionary Society of Union Bethel A.M.E.

Church. She has served for more than 8 years as the Recording Secretary and the Treasurer of the Matilda Monroe Area. She was also the Editor of the "Bridge," the Second Episcopal District WMS Newsletter, and was elected a Delegate to the 15th and 16th Quadrennial Conventions.

Married for 35 years, Pastor Sembly and First Lady Mrs. Pamela J. Sembly have three loving children and six grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to honor Reverend Charles T. Sembly and First Lady Pamela J. Sembly for their outstanding service to the Union Bethel A.M.E. Church and their continued commitment to enhancing lives in their community.

HONORING DEBORAH PEEPLES

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Deborah Peeples of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. Through Mrs. Peeples' public service and dedication to the community she inspires us all. In acknowledgement of her service and commitment to the advancement of the Democratic Party, Deborah has been selected to receive the Eleanor Roosevelt Humanitarian Award from the Shrewsbury Democratic Town Committee.

Deborah has done a tremendous amount of work for the Town of Shrewsbury. She has served as an elected Town Meeting Member and member of the Shrewsbury School Committee. During this time she played an active role in four school building projects. Currently, Mrs. Peeples serves as the Treasurer for the Board of Friends of the Shrewsbury Public Library. She founded and ran the Summer R.E.C.E.S.S. reading program which continues to this day. Deborah Peeples is dedicated to improving the community of Shrewsbury.

Deborah Peeples has been an active member and is the current Co-Vice Chair of the Town Democratic Committee. She has been involved in Democratic campaigns for a very long time, from leafleting for George McGovern in 1972 and more recently, campaigning for Hillary Clinton, Shannon O'Brien, Bill Clinton and Deval Patrick. I will be forever grateful to her for her friendship and hard work helping in my Congressional campaigns. Deborah is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis. Currently she serves as Executive Director of ELNA (Education and Leadership for a Non-violent Age) Collaborative, working with middle and high school students promoting leadership, civic participation and social activism.

Deborah's devotion to the betterment of our community and her commitment to public service enrich us all. In tribute to her outstanding service to the Town of Shrewsbury, I congratulate my friend, Deborah Peeples on receiving this award. I know all my colleagues will join me in paying tribute to her.

HONORING MRS. DEBRA JOHNSON

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize Mrs. Debra Johnson, Principal of Chamberlain Middle School and High School in Chamberlain, South Dakota. Mrs. Johnson was named South Dakota Middle School Principal of the Year by the MetLife/National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) National Principal of the Year Program. This award recognizes the achievements of secondary school principals like Mrs. Johnson who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession.

Mrs. Johnson has devoted 29 years to education, including more than 17 years as an administrator. One of her proudest achievements was combining separate buildings for grades 5-8 and grades 9-12 into a joint middle school and high school in Chamberlain, where staff can work together to address issues, implement effective teaching strategies, and design plans so that all students can achieve at their highest level. Mrs. Johnson recognizes the value of a well-rounded education beyond just the classroom and has been a strong supporter and advocate of quality afterschool activities. Her leadership, organization, and planning skills have served students, teachers, and fellow administrators well throughout her career.

I send best wishes and congratulations to Mrs. Johnson on this noteworthy recognition and thank her for her years of service as an educator in South Dakota.

RECOGNIZING HOLLAND CITY COUNCILMAN CRAIG RICH FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE ON THE HOLLAND CITY COUNCIL

HON. PETER HOEKSTRA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I rise here today to congratulate Councilman Craig Rich on many years serving on the Holland City Council.

Craig Rich grew up in Holland where his family has lived since 1910. He is a 1972 graduate of Holland High School and holds a business degree from Davenport College. He and his father operated radio station WZND in Zeeland from 1971 through 1986. Since then he has been with the Grand Rapids Business Journal, a weekly business-to-business newspaper in Grand Rapids, as advertising sales consultant and sales manager.

Craig was first appointed to the Holland City Council in 1982 at 28 years old and has since been elected in 1983 and re-elected in 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997, 2001 and 2005. Craig also served as Holland's Mayor ProTem from 1987 to 2007. His ward represents the true center of the city—bordered by 14th and 15th streets and Lake Macatawa on the north, 24th street on the south, River, Michigan and Central ave-

nues on the east and Graafschap Road on the west.

Craig is the Council's liaison to the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of Public Works. He is most proud of having decreased or maintained the general fund tax rate 17 times since being elected to office while, at the same time, maintaining or increasing the level of essential city services.

In addition to his service on the City Council, Craig is active at Christ Memorial Reformed Church. He is a founding member of Michigan Shipwreck Research Associates and a "master" level SCUBA diver.

He combines his love of local history and genealogy with scuba diving to research and document local area shipwrecks. He is the author of "For Those in Peril: Shipwrecks of Ottawa County" due to be published in 2009.

Craig and his wife Vickie have been married since 1975 and have two daughters; Allison, an English teacher in Florida, and Catherine, a student at Northern Michigan University.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAN BOREN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. BOREN. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 776 for the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act of 2009, if I had been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, On Wednesday October 14, 2009 I was unavoidably detained and missed one vote.

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on H. Res. 768, a resolution expressing support for the designation of the month of October as "National Work and Family Month (Rollcall 775).

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CITADEL

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, The U.S. News and World Report, in their publication titled "America's Best Colleges 2010", recently named The Citadel as the No. 1 best value among master's degree-granting colleges in the South. This is a tremendous recognition for the cadets, students, faculty, and administration of this esteemed South Carolina institution. In addition to being the best value, The Citadel was also named the No. 2 best public institution that offers a master's degree in the South and the No. 5 among all master's degree-granting colleges and universities in the South that offers a master's degree.