

HONORING COMMANDER PAUL B.
SPOHN, USN

HON. LARRY BUCSHON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 27, 2012

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my most heartfelt congratulations to Commander Paul B. Spohn, United States Navy, for a distinguished career. Commander Spohn recently retired as the Commanding Officer, Naval Support Activity Crane, one of the many command posts throughout his career. I would like to especially recognize Commander Spohn for his leadership at NSA Crane, the world's third largest Naval Installation, based in Indiana's 8th Congressional District.

Commander Spohn began his 35 year career by enlisting in the Navy as a Boiler Technician in January 1977 and received his commission in June 1990 through the Limited Duty Officer Program.

His many achievements in academics and the Navy have made him an officer that all sailors and citizens should emulate. His dedication to our nation has spanned many decades and many posts and for that I would like to thank Commander Spohn.

HONORING THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE USO CENTER AT THE
TAMPA INTERNATIONAL AIR-
PORT

HON. RICHARD B. NUGENT

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 27, 2012

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, on January 18th, 2012 the USO Board of Governors voted to approve the establishment of the USO Center at the Tampa International Airport.

This has been a long process, but thanks to a hardworking team of volunteers, the USO in Tampa is excited about serving the roughly 40,000 active military and their families living in the Tampa Bay area that may use Tampa International Airport as well as the approximately 300,000 that fly in and out of the Tampa International Airport on a yearly basis.

As both a Congressman and a father of three sons in the U.S. Army, I know how important the USO services are to our men and women in uniform. When I visit with the veterans in my district, I hear their stories of watching Bob Hope in the USO Concerts and receiving packages with urgent supplies from the USO on Christmas. Today's USO centers give our active duty heroes a place to relax, if only for a few minutes.

The new facility in the Tampa International Airport will allow members of our local communities the opportunity to recognize the service and sacrifice of this Nation's proud active duty servicemembers and their families.

I am a proud supporter of this outstanding institution and welcome its arrival in the Tampa International Airport.

AZERBAIJAN

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 27, 2012

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, since declaring its independence from the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan has been a valuable ally to the United States in a turbulent region. In the true spirit of friendship, it seems appropriate for Congress to note the 20th anniversaries of two important events in their country's history which take place in late-February.

February 26 marked the 20th anniversary of the Khojaly Tragedy which is the largest of Azerbaijani civilians in the country's history.

The town of Khojaly is located in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and was then home to some 7,000 Azerbaijani citizens. On February 25–26, 1992, in a period of less than 12 hours, 613 citizens were slain at the hands of Armenian forces.

In the wake of these atrocities, Human Rights Watch described the advancing forces as committing "unconscionable acts of violence against civilians as they fled." Given our deepening ties with Azerbaijan it is important for American citizens to remember this event.

February 28 is the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Azerbaijani-American diplomatic relations, which is an event forming a partnership which of importance to both countries.

The initial focus of these relations was on trade between the two countries and, in particular, Azerbaijan's abundant natural resources. Today, Azerbaijan is a full partner to the United States, working with us and our allies to safeguard our combined security and prosperity.

One of the most telling examples of their commitment to this partnership came in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when Azerbaijan pledged to stand by the United States as in our efforts to secure the homeland and bring justice to the perpetrators of this tragedy.

True to its word, Azerbaijan has supported allied efforts in the War on Terror by allowing unrestricted access to its territory for American aircraft, troops and supplies, as well as committing its own troops to fight alongside our own.

As these two important anniversaries come to pass, I join Azerbaijan in mourning those who died in Khojaly, celebrating 20 years of shared diplomatic relations, and hoping for the continued security and prosperity of our nations in an ever-more dangerous world.

HONORING DWIGHT AND SHARON
POAGE AND THE MAYAN FAMI-
LIES

HON. STEVE STIVERS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 27, 2012

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and thank Dwight and Sharon Poage and the Mayan Families for their extraordinary passion for causes that have made enduring positive differences in people's lives in the Lake Atitlan region of Guatemala.

This record recognizes the Mayan Families' strong partnership with the Upper Arlington Rotary Club in jointly creating sustainable humanitarian focused projects that provide opportunities, hope and a future for the indigenous and impoverished people in Guatemala.

Your commitment to potable water, children and adult nutrition, education and improving basic essential living conditions in the underserved communities has had a profound impact. On behalf of the citizens of Ohio's 15th Congressional District I commend your dedicated efforts for the families of Guatemala.

HONORING THE LIVES OF CAPTAIN
RYAN P. HALL OF COLORADO
SPRINGS, COLORADO; CAPTAIN
NICHOLAS S. WHITLOCK OF
NEWNAN, GEORGIA; FIRST LIEU-
TENANT JUSTIN J. WILKENS, OF
BEND, OREGON; AND SENIOR
AIRMAN JULIAN S. SCHOLTEN
OF UPPER MARLBORO, MARY-
LAND

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 27, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sympathy and solemn gratitude that I rise to pay tribute to four of our nation's fallen heroes: Captain Ryan P. Hall of Colorado Springs, Colorado; Captain Nicholas S. Whitlock of Newnan, Georgia; First Lieutenant Justin J. Wilkens, of Bend, Oregon; and Senior Airman Julian S. Scholten of Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

These four brave, young men paid the ultimate price in defense of our nation's freedom when their U-28 aircraft went down near Djibouti, Africa on Saturday, February 18, 2012. They were members of the United States Air Force Special Operations Command. Of their dedication to duty, courage of heart, and commitment to their nation, there can be no doubt. They were living examples of the Airman's Creed, "I am an American Airman, guardian of freedom and justice, my nation's sword and shield, its sentry and avenger. I defend my Country with my life." Upon the altar of freedom, they have fulfilled their vow to defend their country and paid the ultimate price.

The report of this tragic incident pierced the hearts of their families, friends, and the AFSOC community. It reminds us that there is no greater sacrifice than that in which one gives his life for others.

While there are no words that we can say here on the floor today that will bring back Ryan, Nicholas, Justin, and Julian to those who love them and know them best, we can and will honor their service and sacrifice. We have heard many times and know in our hearts the truth that Freedom often demands of us a heavy and at times unbearable price. It is a burden of loss that rests heavily upon those who love them.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a grateful United States Congress, I stand here today to honor these four men and all of the heroes we have lost. My wife, Vicki joins me in offering our deepest, most sincere condolences and prayers to their families and friends. May God continue to bless them, the AFSOC community, and the United States Armed Forces.