

our young men and women in the military and their families make to the cause of freedom. For 75 years, the Airmen of the 3d Weather Squadron have exemplified this sacrifice as they stood alongside their Army brethren in support of a long list of military operations. In just the past 20 years, the 3d Weather Squadron has deployed for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operation Allied Force, Operation Unified Response, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn.

When activated on 1 July 1937, the 3d Weather Squadron was a part of the U.S. Army, as the Air Force had not yet been established. Today the squadron continues a proud history of faithfully providing Battlefield Weather support to the Army, both in garrison and in combat. The stated mission of 3d Weather Squadron is to “deliver superior weather capability when called upon to support any worldwide land component tasking.” True to this mission, the Airmen of the 3d Weather Squadron have sustained a continual, unbroken deployed presence in Southwest Asia dating back to 2003 alongside numerous Army units including III Corps, 1st Armored Division, 1st Infantry Division, 1st Cavalry Division, and 4th Infantry Division. On any given day, approximately 25 percent of the squadron is deployed with the Army.

Mr. Speaker, the 75th Birthday of 3d Weather Squadron also affords us the opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary life of the squadron’s first commander and a singularly heroic warrior, General Leon W. Johnson. Leon W. Johnson was born in Columbia, MO, in 1904. He spent his boyhood in Columbia and Moline, KS. He later graduated from the U.S. Military Academy and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in June 1926. Lieutenant Johnson decided he’d “have to know something about weather if he intended to be a leader in the Air Force,” so he enrolled at the California Institute of Technology and earned a Master’s Degree in Meteorology in 1936. The next year he became one of the Army Air Corps Weather Service’s first 22 weather officers and assumed command of the 3d Weather Squadron when it was activated on 1 July 1937. General Johnson subsequently took command of the 44th Bomb Group during World War II and earned the Medal of Honor for his role in the strategically crucial raid on the Ploesti oil fields in Rumania. General Johnson served in a wide variety of critical positions with both the Army and the Air Force throughout his 34 years of service.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by asking my colleagues to join me in recognizing the heroic Airmen of the 3d Weather Squadron as they mark the 3d Weather Squadron’s 75th birthday and that we also honor an American patriot and hero, Medal of Honor Recipient General Leon W. Johnson.

HONORING MIKE JONES

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2012

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of Mike Jones’ years of dedicated service to the Economic Council of Palm Beach County. Mike leaves behind a strong

legacy of working with business and community leaders to create progress in our community.

Founded 35 years ago, the Economic Council of Palm Beach County is a non-profit advocacy organization that works to help foster an environment where businesses can grow and thrive. As president of this vital organization, Mike has worked for over a decade in order to achieve that goal. He understood that pragmatic solutions come from bringing more people to the table. That is why he led a forum of 30 business groups to help discuss the development of a strategic plan for the county, and worked to create a regulatory climate more conducive to business practices.

Mike’s impact in South Florida extends beyond the business world. During his tenure, he worked with the entire community to help advocate for better schools and educational opportunities, and prioritized ethics reform by pushing the county to create an Office of the Inspector General and an Ethics Commission.

I congratulate Mike Jones, his wife Dee, and their son, as they celebrate Mike’s retirement. Mike’s dedicated leadership has made a positive impact on the South Florida community, and it is an honor to represent him here in Washington.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE HEROICS OF FOUR GREAT OAKS STUDENTS

HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2012

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of four Great Oaks Vocational School students: layie Viassy, Wade Aills, Brandon North, and Austin Salisbury. I am proud to recognize these four young men for their brave heroics in helping 53 Miami Trace elementary school children off an overturned bus on March 12, 2012.

At 4:16 p.m. on March 12, a school bus transporting children home from school veered off the road and rolled onto its right side into a ditch. With the passenger door pinned against the ground, Wade Aills made the decision to kick open the emergency rear door. The four boys then proceeded to aid the elementary children in exiting the bus and keeping everyone calm until emergency personnel could arrive. When EMS units arrived on the scene, all of the children had been evacuated safely, with only a few children that suffered minor injuries.

Recently, these young men were honored and recognized by the Fayette County Sheriff’s Office and the Miami Trace elementary school for their actions.

Thus, today I ask my colleagues to join me and the constituents of Ohio’s Seventh Congressional District in recognizing four true heroes: layie Viassy, Wade Aills, Brandon North, and Austin Salisbury.

LARRY DECKER TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2012

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Larry Decker of Pueblo, Colorado.

After earning his education and serving in the U.S. Navy Mr. Decker moved to Pueblo. Always a strong leader in the community, Mr. Decker was frequently involved in Veterans activities and organizations. He was a proud member of American Legion Post 207 and served a leadership role among his peers. As the senior vice commander of Post 207, Mr. Decker was highly respected not only in the American Legion but also in the Pueblo community.

As enthusiastic as he was with helping others in the community, his real passion was his family. He leaves behind his wife Joan who has been by his side since 1964. Together they raised a loving family that includes two daughters and three grandchildren. On April 5th, the city of Pueblo and the State of Colorado lost a great man.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Larry Decker. I rise today to thank him for his work on behalf of the citizens of Pueblo, and for his service to our nation. May he rest in peace.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY WILDCATS MEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2012 NCAA DIVISION I MEN’S CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2012

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to rise today to commend and congratulate the University of Kentucky Wildcats men’s basketball team on winning the 2012 NCAA Men’s Division I Basketball Championship.

By now, any basketball fan is familiar with the legacy of the Wildcats. The “Greatest Tradition in College Basketball,” Kentucky is the winningest program of all-time, both in total wins and total win percentage, and the first team to break the 2,000 win threshold. Kentucky has fifteen Final Four appearances, and now eight national championships, second only to UCLA.

Even measured against this pedigree and the impossibly high expectations of the Big Blue Nation, this batch of ‘Cats was something special. “The Undeniables,” as they are known, were ranked number one in the nation for most of the year, losing only two games on their way to setting the NCAA record of thirty-eight wins in a single season. During their remarkable NCAA tournament run they won each game by an astonishing average of ten points, never trailing in a second half. While the title was the ultimate goal, the Final Four victory over instate rival the University of Louisville may have been even sweeter, as the highest stakes game ever played in the historic rivalry and the most important single sporting event in the history of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

This team achieved greatness against extraordinary competition because of the players’ love and respect for one another. It is telling that a team led by three freshmen and two sophomores all forecast to be first round NBA draft picks, and all used to scoring 25 points a night in high school, were known first and foremost for their defense. Their willingness to