

transmitted vital information during some of the most dangerous battles, including every assault the Marines conducted in the Pacific from 1942 to 1945. Major Howard Connor, 5th Marine Division signal officer, had six code talkers working around-the-clock during the first two days of the Battle of Iwo Jima. He said if it weren't for the Code Talkers, "the Marines would never have taken Iwo Jima." Without the Code Talkers, the World Wars would have lasted longer and America would have suffered many more casualties.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that the Pueblo of Acoma and the other Code Talker tribes are officially getting the thanks and recognition they deserve from a very grateful nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF PEDRO
GONZALEZ

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Pedro Gonzalez, the mayor of South San Francisco, for his twelve years of service on the city council. Pedro has been a tireless advocate to improve the quality of life for all residents of South San Francisco where he has lived for 43 years. I am honored to call him a colleague and dear friend.

His proudest accomplishment during his tenure on the city council was to help establish ferry service to South San Francisco. The modern, state of the art terminal opened the doors to faster and scenic commutes for Bay Area residents and visitors. Additionally, Pedro played an active role in long list of projects, including the BART Linear Park master plan, the expansions of the Community Learning Center and the pre-school program in Westborough Park, the implementation of the loan art program at Orange Memorial Park, the development of a 100 space child care facility, the Oyster Point overcrossing and hook ramp project, the Terrabay sound wall design project, the Lindenville-Colma Creek rehabilitation project, the adoption of a green food packaging ordinance, and the implementations of a neighborhood response team and a BLS ambulance service.

From this incomplete list of accomplishments you can see Pedro's love for the outdoors and parks. He started his public service on the Parks and Recreation Commission in 1987. He served as the chairman in 1992 and continued to be on the commission until 1995. He was instrumental in the expansion and renovation of Bur i Bur i Park, the development of a master plan for all recreational facilities in South City and the renovation and improvements of Orange Memorial Park.

Pedro came to the United States from Mexico in 1954. While living in Los Angeles, he became a U.S. citizen in 1967. Three years later he moved to South San Francisco. He worked in the meat business and managed a music store in San Francisco until he retired in 1996.

Pedro is deeply woven into the fabric of South San Francisco. You will see him at every official or social function, be it the ribbon cutting for the ferry terminal, the grand opening of the South San Francisco BART station or the Chestnut Creek senior housing facility,

the ground breaking of the Gateway YMCA child care facility, Concert in the Park, Bay Trail Clean Up or the Centennial celebrations in 2008. No matter where he goes, he listens to residents looking for ways to help—always with a soft smile and a twinkle in his eyes. You will be hard pressed to find an elected official who takes his responsibilities as seriously as Pedro does.

He has supported countless local programs such as the Grand Avenue Library Leery Appender, a Spanish-language story time, League of Women Voter Spanish language ballot workshops, Youth Government Day, the 50th anniversary of the Boys and Girls Club of North San Mateo County, and the South San Francisco School District Positive Attendance Campaign. He even hosted his own show on PEN TV titled El Mundo Latino de Pedro Gonzalez.

Pedro has been married to his wife Eldie for 55 years. They raised their three children, Prudencia, Silverio and Sara, in South San Francisco.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Pedro Gonzalez for his outstanding service and his lasting contributions to the city of South San Francisco. In his well deserved retirement, I have no doubt that residents will continue to see him at many official and social events, and to hold him closely in their hearts.

ON THE PASSING OF CHRIS
BATTLE

HON. TIM GRIFFIN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great sadness to remember my good friend Chris Battle, who passed away on August 8, 2013, at the age of 45 after a four-year battle with kidney cancer.

Chris received both his bachelor's degree and his master's degree from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. After a short stint as a reporter for the Northwest Arkansas Times, he served as Deputy Chief of Staff and Communications Director for then-Representative Asa Hutchinson for nearly four years. He went on to manage the editorial page of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, our state's most-read newspaper. During the George W. Bush Administration, he held public affairs and management positions at the Drug Enforcement Administration and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. He returned to Arkansas to manage a gubernatorial campaign, and then became a Partner at Adfero Group in Washington, DC, where he continued to work after being diagnosed with cancer.

I first met Chris and his wife, Dena, when I was working as staff on Capitol Hill. Chris was a funny, brilliant, thoughtful and caring friend who impacted the lives of many for the better.

I have fond memories of spending time with Chris and Dena in both Washington, DC, and Little Rock. Chris is missed. Rest in peace, Chris.

Along with Dena, Chris wrote about his struggle with cancer on a blog called "The Kidney Cancer Chronicles." Chris was funny and reflective, and he wrote about his love for his family, Dena and daughters, Kate and Josie.

Those that knew Chris or read his blogs will tell you he was an intelligent and thoughtful human being. An incredible writer, he turned some of his darkest hours into encouragement for others also suffering from this deadly disease.

In February, Chris recounted how his situation had taken a turn for the better, all things considered, writing: "Never give up, never lose faith. I can't know whether this reprieve will last, but, given this new life, I plan to embrace it while it does."

Chris embraced life with vigor, even as his faded. As our thoughts and prayers remain with the loved ones he left behind, let us always remember the example that he set and keep his words close in our hearts.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, on December 2, 2013, I missed rollcall votes No. 612–614. My flight to Washington was delayed due to mechanical difficulties. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

Rollcall No. 612: "aye";
Rollcall No. 613: "aye";
Rollcall No. 614: "nay."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, December 2, I missed a series of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on No. 612 and No. 613. I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote No. 614.

RECOGNIZING BOB DREWEL ON
THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Bob Drewel, long-time civic, community and education leader in the Puget Sound region, on his retirement after over 20 years of public service.

From his most recent tenure as Executive Director of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and his more than twelve years as Snohomish County Executive, Bob's leadership and reputation serve as a model for all those who wish to pursue a career in civic service.

During his time at the PSRC, Bob effectively worked to build partnerships between the private and public sectors and is well known for his leadership in promoting regional solutions to the many challenges facing western Washington. While at the helm of the PSRC, Bob

guided critical initiatives including regional transportation planning, growth management and economic development.

In his twelve years as Snohomish County Executive, Bob successfully strengthened partnerships among the county, local governments, and other public and private entities to create a shared vision for a prosperous community. Under Bob's leadership and prudent fiscal management, the county was able to plan, design and fund several important county facilities. In 2007, the county administration building was named "The Robert J. Drewel Building" in honor of Bob's integrity, leadership and ability to work across party lines as County Executive.

In addition to his leadership at the PSRC and as Snohomish County Executive, Bob is the past President and CEO of Everett Community College and the former Chairman of Sound Transit. Bob also helped build community partnerships as a board member of the Economic Development Council, Healthy Communities Initiative, and United Way of Snohomish County. Bob's civic involvements extend even further to include the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, Rotary, Everett Area Chamber of Commerce and numerous other community organizations.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize Bob Drewel. Bob personifies the ideal of public service to his fellow citizens. I wish him the best in his retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF BRANDT
GROTTE

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Brandt Grotte, who is retiring after eight years of service on the San Mateo City Council, two of them as mayor. Brandt has been a tireless advocate for environmental sustainability. He began his advocacy on the Planning Commission, where he served for five years, including one year each as chair and vice-chair.

Brandt has many uncommon characteristics. For example, his hand is always going up when the question is asked, "Would anyone like to . . ." During his years on the council, Brandt Grotte served on the sustainability advisory committee, the Measure C committee that resulted in strengthening police and fire services, and he was the city's representative to the City/County Association of Governments.

Brandt lives on the city's east side and knows the challenges that confront those neighborhoods. He took the lead in convincing his neighbors to assess themselves to fix serious flooding issues. He is passionate about his neighborhood, and thousands of homes were removed from the flood plain as a result of his leadership. Aside from homes no longer being threatened with flooding, these neighbors were relieved of the costs of paying for flood insurance.

Even before he joined the city council, Brandt was active in neighborhood issues, starting in 1989. He is a founding member of the Shoreview-Parkside Neighborhood Association and president of the San Mateo United Homeowners Association. He is also a mem-

ber of numerous committees, task forces and organizations, among them the Citizens Committee on Social Service Providers, the Bay Meadows Foundation, the City of San Mateo Citizens' Academy, and the Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Program. Clearly Brandt Grotte has a heart that is as big as the entire city of San Mateo, and he is universally viewed as a sincere, caring leader.

Brandt was born in 1956 and grew up in communities all over the United States and abroad because his father was in the Air Force. It was this early international experience that he credits with teaching him sensitivity to other cultures, a skill that has served him well when developing policies and obtaining consensus in the diverse communities of San Mateo.

Brandt attended Leland High School in San Jose and then earned his BA in Aquatic Biology from UC Santa Barbara in 1979. He received his Masters degree in Environmental Management from USF in 1996. He works as a global environmental safety and health manager in the electronics industry.

Brandt is married to Kathy Shields and has two stepsons, Aaron and Kyle. In his spare time he enjoys reading.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Brandt Grotte for his outstanding service to the residents of San Mateo. In Brandt we have the personification of the adage that still waters run deep. His strategic thinking and consensus-building skills will be missed, but his smile will always be present as he continues in other roles throughout our community.

OBAMA'S MORAL FAILURE IN
SUDAN

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD a compelling open letter that Eric Reeves, noted Sudan researcher and activist and a professor at Smith College, recently sent to President Obama expressing his dismay at the moral failure of the Obama administration in responding to "the continuing mass atrocities perpetrated by the current regime in Khartoum (Sudan). . ."

Reeves notes the contrast between Obama's outspoken rhetoric on Sudan as a senator and eventual presidential candidate versus the indefensible silence, appeasement and moral equivalency which has marked his administration's posture toward a genocidal regime.

In February 2012 I travelled to Yida refugee camp in South Sudan. I heard devastating firsthand accounts of the violence, terror and starvation being brought to bear against the Sudanese people by the regime in Khartoum. I recall speaking with one woman who described herself and her people as "forsaken." I specifically asked her if there was anything she wanted me to tell President Obama. She said the only thing she wanted was for Omar Bashir, an internationally indicted war criminal, to be arrested.

But rather than working to facilitate Bashir being brought to justice, this administration seems bent, in the words of Professor

Reeves, "on throwing a political and economic lifeline to the regime."

I can't help but wonder why the Obama Administration views the Sudanese people as any less deserving of a lifeline.

AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA ON THE BOMBING OF NORTH SHARAF, EAST JEBEL MARRA (DARFUR)

[From Eric Reeves, Nov. 30, 2013]

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA,
The White House, Washington, DC

DEAR PRESIDENT OBAMA: The moral failure of your administration to respond to the continuing mass atrocities perpetrated by the current regime in Khartoum (Sudan) grows daily, and has done so for the past five years. Your refusal to condemn, in the strongest terms, the continuing war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the National Islamic Front/National Congress Party tyranny stands in stark contrast to your urgent words as a Senator, as a presidential candidate, and as an elected President. As a senator in 2004, you called the atrocities in Darfur "genocide." You said so again as a presidential candidate in 2007 and chided the Bush administration for its accommodation of Khartoum. Invoking Rwanda and Bosnia as justification for humanitarian intervention in Darfur, you said, "The United States has a moral obligation anytime you see humanitarian catastrophes." You declared further,

"When you see a genocide in Rwanda, Bosnia or in Darfur, that is a stain on all of us, a stain on our souls. . . . We can't say 'never again' and then allow it to happen again, and as a president of the United States I don't intend to abandon people or turn a blind eye to slaughter." (Video recording available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEd583-fA8M#t=15>; all emphases have been added)

And as President you again characterized Darfur as the site of "genocide."

But despite such strong language, your administration has come to substitute words of appeasement, feigned ignorance of atrocity crimes, and a grotesque moral equivalence between Khartoum and its adversaries, one that would put in balance the regime's genocidal destruction and the actions by the various rebel groups that have emerged to resist Khartoum's tyranny. Your first special envoy to Sudan arrived declaring his strategy for confronting the regime's genocidaires in words that have become synonymous with diplomatic absurdity:

"We've got to think about giving out cookies," said [Scott] Gration, who was appointed in March. "Kids, countries—they react to gold stars, smiley faces, handshakes, agreements, talk, engagement." (Washington Post [el-Fasher, Darfur], September 29, 2009)

In March 2009 the Khartoum regime expelled from Darfur thirteen of the world's finest humanitarian organizations, then providing roughly half the total international humanitarian capacity for millions of people. Your surrogate diplomatic representative—then-Senator and now Secretary of State John Kerry—declared in the wake of Khartoum's ruthless expulsions:

"We have agreement [with Khartoum] that in the next weeks we will be back to 100 percent [humanitarian] capacity," said [Senator John] Kerry. (Reuters [el-Fasher], April 17, 2009)

This was a cruel lie, as Kerry and everyone within the humanitarian community working in Darfur well knew. Indeed, this was such transparent mendacity that even now it carries the stench of supreme expediency.

Your second special envoy, Princeton Lyman, declared in late June 2011 that there wasn't enough evidence to support reports of