

and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING RAMSAY HIGH SCHOOL IN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA ON ITS FIRST STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the Ramsay High School Rams 2016 Football Team for winning the Alabama High School Athletic Association's Class 6A state football championship on Friday, December 2, 2016.

The Rams defeated the Opelika Bulldogs 21–16, which gave Ramsay its first state football championship ever and the first for a Birmingham City School since another area high school won back to back state titles in 1972 and 1973.

Mr. Speaker, what makes this victory even more special is that Ramsay discontinued its football program after the 1976 season, and didn't resume the sport for 36 years until hiring its current coach, Rueben Nelson Jr., in the Spring of 2011.

The Rams officially returned to the field in 2012, suffering through a one-win season and two wins the following season. The program is without football lockers, a football stadium, and many of the amenities that often lead to success. Yet, the players and coaches have persevered, and have now reached the pinnacle of success.

Speaking to their accomplishment following the game, Coach Nelson stated, "God allowed me to put my hands in His hands and He would lead the way. It's not like I'm the head coach. He's the head coach and I'm just the servant. He allows me to work with kids."

The Rams were 13–2 this season, and were led by their left-handed, Senior quarterback Baniko Harley, who rushed for 158 yards on 21 carries and completed 8 of 18 passes for 132 yards and two scores in the winning effort.

I want to extend heartfelt congratulations to these outstanding players and Coach Nelson. We are very proud of the team, and I am confident these young men have bright futures ahead for them, and will look back proudly on their achievement.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognition of this team's outstanding achievement. May their efforts continue to yield great success in the years ahead.

CONGRATULATIONS ATTORNEY GENERAL SCOTT PRUITT

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today, President-elect Donald Trump selected Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt to serve as administrator of the Environment Protection Agency—yet another positive choice for the American people.

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal notes, "As the chief legal officer of a major oil and natural-gas producing state, Mr. Pruitt, a

Republican, has led legal fights against some of President Barack Obama's most significant environmental rules, and one of his major roles as EPA administrator would likely be to roll back those regulations."

President-elect Trump stated that Attorney General Pruitt will, "restore the EPA's essential mission of keeping our air and our water clean and safe."

As the grateful father of South Carolina's Attorney General Alan Wilson, I know firsthand the tenacity and dedication to upholding the Constitution and protecting American families that state Attorneys General have. I look forward to Attorney General Pruitt's success in his new role, promoting limited government and expanded freedom.

In conclusion, God Bless Our Troops and may the President by his actions never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MAYWOOD SENIORS CLUB

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Village of Maywood and the 250 seniors who with the Honorable Mayor Edwina Perkins, Board of Trustees and the Honorable Village Clerk Viola Mims, and other dignitaries as they gather on Wednesday, December 14th at their 9th Annual Christmas Party and Dinner at Mariella's Banquet Hall. This event climaxes another year of engagement, fellowship, activities, information and healthy meals for the 250 members. During 2016, these 250 members had exercise sessions, visited Brookfield Zoo and the DuSable Museum of African American History, interacted with Promise East High School during Black History Month and benefitted from programs sponsored by the Secretary of State of Illinois and participated in a power of attorney workshop.

They also held weekly meetings, had a senior prom, outdoor jazz night and an R & B night.

I commend the Maywood Seniors Club and urge them to keep their spirits high.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ VALLE

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Rafael Rodriguez Valle, a World War II veteran, entrepreneur, pastor, and late grandfather of my staff member Jose Rafael Rodriguez.

Rafael was a product of America's greatest generation. He grew up during the Great Depression in Puerto Rico and moved to New York City after his service in the U.S. Army during World War II. There he married the love of his life, Josefa, with whom he spent the rest of his life. He eventually returned to his beloved Puerto Rico to raise his family and open a flower shop. On his time off, Rafael volunteered as a neighborhood watchman and

a pastor in his church. His hard work allowed him to provide a safe and happy home for his family, put his children through college, and enjoy a peaceful retirement with his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Before his passing in 2011, he would reflect on his life's work saying that he was grateful because God allowed him to spend his life working around roses.

Jose describes his grandfather as his best friend and role model. Rafael taught Jose the values of hard work and service to God, family, and community. These are the values that inspire Jose to dedicate his life to public service and are the legacy he passes on to his children.

I am honored to recognize Rafael Rodriguez Valle for dedication to his family and service to the country.

RECOGNIZING THE SOUTHERN LITERACY TOURISM INITIATIVE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to challenge my colleagues to help promote the local economy of their districts in a new way: through the power of a story set in a real place. Our greatest resource in this nation has always been our people and their ability to unleash their talents in innovative ways that promote progress and prosperity. I recently witnessed one such innovation when I was invited to present a tourism fiction award in my district through the Southeastern Literary Tourism Initiative.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with tourism fiction, the concept is simple: write stories set in real places, stories that capture the imaginations and hearts of readers, and then invite those same readers to visit the places.

As my colleagues may know from their own districts, tourism is an economic driver that attracts welcomed spending on local attractions, hotels, restaurants, and other places that help drive local economies and provide jobs. If writers are already producing books and short stories, then why not ask them to set those stories in real places that their readers would love to visit?

That is exactly what an innovative writing contest did in my home district. The Southeastern Literary Tourism Initiative or SELTI, teamed up with the Selma Chamber of Commerce to challenge writers to compose a short story aimed at encouraging readers to visit the area. The 2016 winner of the contest, Charisa Hagel, wrote a powerful story that brought a local historical attraction to life through her fictional characters. At the end of the story, readers were invited to visit the real place, Kenan's Mill in Selma, Alabama, and literally step into the setting of Charisa's story. While there, they can also visit the National Voting Rights Museum and many other unique local attractions.

I will soon be honored to present Ms. Charisa Hagel, a student at Faulkner University in Montgomery, Alabama, with the 2016