

China, in India, in Mexico, in Greece. While Hitler almost murdered all the Jews of Europe, he did not entirely succeed.

Because of the moral values of this country we put our entire nation into the fight against the Nazi's in World War II. What is so remarkable about the fact that the United States fought so fiercely and so bravely in World War II is that they did so to save the world. That desire arose from the nation's character, which is an amalgam of the religious heritage of its people—including its Jewish people.

Today I think about the Jewish soldiers in World War II who fought in the WWII not even knowing of the death camps and the ovens. I think of the men who risked their lives every day in the mud of France and the fields of Belgium because they knew what was spreading and taking over Europe was immoral. When Eisenhower's troops first came upon a death camp, he made the camp guards and the German villagers who had lived in the green fields and gardens around the camp come to view the bodies and to bury them. The message was clear: Americans find what you have done here and you villagers have tolerated here to be an immense crime, an unimaginable crime.

The greatness of our people is their character. Jewish people have brought a lot to the making of that character. Jews have known that the values in the Five Books of Moses are universal and throughout two thousand years of Diaspora brought their values with them to the shores of all the countries where they settled including America.

Judaism is a religion and a value system. No one who is not a Jew is considered less a person by a Jew. No stranger can be left without shelter, no hungry man without bread.

I could not help but notice in the Save Darfur Coalition and other grass roots organizations working so hard to stop the genocide in Darfur that many Jewish organizations are involved in the grass roots efforts. Among them are the American World Jewish Congress, The American Jewish Committee, Jews against Genocide Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism. I have received letters from children in Jewish schools asking me to help the people of Darfur. Jewish people have a special understanding about genocide. The parents of these children who write to me may have lost grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins. But they also know they can write to their congressman and their children can write and ask for help for these people so far away who are in desperate trouble as their relatives once were.

One of the characteristics I most admire is the activism many of the Jewish people engage in. That activism has meant a great deal to the Civil Rights movement. I also admire the way Jews have contributed to the "personality" of New York. As a New Yorker, I feel especially lucky because I have learned some Yiddish, some great jokes and have met some truly amazing people who love books, culture, art and life. I'm glad for the Jewish heritage I experience in my district every day I am at home.

I say to Jewish Americans today: Congratulations and Mazol Tov!

IN HONOR OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SANTA CRUZ SURFING MUSEUM

### HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 25, 2006*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the great role that the Santa Cruz County coastline and its surfers have played in the history of the great sport of surfing.

In 1885, three Hawaiian princes visited the city of Santa Cruz and rode the waves at the mouth of the San Lorenzo River on redwood surfboards shaped at a nearby lumber yard.

This was the first recorded instance of surfing on the U.S. mainland in modern history. By 1936, Santa Cruz had its own surfing club, one of the first outside of Hawaii. With the development of new surfboard technologies in the 1950s and 1960s and the wetsuit by Santa Cruz's own Jack O'Neill, the sport spread across the U.S. and the globe. Surfing is now deeply embedded in American popular culture.

Enjoyed by millions of people around the world, surfing is perhaps the most widespread American sporting export. Surfing is hugely popular in such far flung places as Australia, Brazil, Europe, and even Israel. While the birthplace of surfing is Hawaii, the spread of the sport began through its popularity in Santa Cruz. Outside of Hawaii, no place on earth has a deeper history in the modern revival of surfing than our little coastal community of Santa Cruz.

Due to this rich history, Santa Cruz established the world's first surfing museum in May of 1986. Over the past 20 years, the museum has become a symbol of the local and the worldwide surfing community. Just as the Monterey Peninsula is home to the Steamer Lane of Golf, Pebble Beach, so Santa Cruz is home to the Pebble Beach of surfing, Steamer Lane. Though it should be noted that the only 'greens fees' at Steamer Lane are cold water and heavy crowds.

Though another California town recently secured the trademark rights to "Surf City", the long history of surfing in Santa Cruz is proof enough that Santa Cruz is the heart and soul of surfing, and the foundation upon which it continues to ride.

### TRIBUTE TO AMERICAN SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

### HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 25, 2006*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the tremendous sacrifice and bravery of the countless men and women who have fallen in service to this great country. This Memorial Day, let us stop to remember all of the American service men and women who have answered the call to defend our nation, many making that ultimate sacrifice for the peace and preservation of our union.

Since our country's founding, each generation has met the challenge of protecting our freedoms and way of life. Through the centuries, over 1.2 million brave men and women have given their lives for our nation. This final

sacrifice was not only borne by those brave Americans who died, but also by their families and loved ones who personally suffered the loss of these heroes. Our hearts go out to those who have lost loved ones in the service of America.

Today, our country is again engaged in battle. Fighting to maintain peace and security across the globe, American soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan and other places around the world continue to make the ultimate sacrifice to ensure freedom and democracy. As the war on terror continues, Americans must honor the brave men and women who gave their lives for the protection of this nation and the hope of peace.

This Memorial Day I pay tribute to all of the soldiers who have fallen in service to our great nation and the immeasurable sacrifices they have made defending freedom and democracy throughout the world. It is with a humble heart and proud spirit that I honor the lives of America's fallen soldiers and remember with admiration their patriotism and dedication to our country in the face of adversity. Let us never forget their sacrifices.

### TRIBUTE TO JUDITH BOBBITT

### HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 25, 2006*

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding community leader, Mrs. Judith Bobbitt, Somerton Elementary School District's Superintendent. She will retire this year from a lifetime commitment to education as a school administrator.

Mrs. Bobbitt's dedication to serving students and encouraging them to become contributing citizens of the State of Arizona and our great nation is remarkable. She has worked in public education for more than 40 years and has served as an instructional leader and role model to hundreds of teachers and school administrators. Her leadership style is admired by many. She has led efforts to reform public education so every child has an equal opportunity and equal environment to maximize learning.

Mrs. Bobbitt led Somerton Elementary School District through an explosive growth in a diverse district where 95 percent of students are first generation Americans of Mexican descent and three percent are members of the Cocopah Nation. Her efforts to improve the State's funding of school construction frequently found her testifying at the Arizona State Legislature addressing equity issues.

She established and founded the South Yuma County Adult Education Consortium and made the Somerton District a leader in Adult Literacy. Under her leadership, she developed the Migrant Even Start Program in Somerton and worked with numerous community-based agencies to promote lifelong learning.

Mrs. Bobbitt was appointed the 2000 National Chair of the Interstate Migrant Council and was recognized as All Arizona Superintendent of the Year for Mid-Sized Districts in 1998.

The integrity with which she leads was acknowledged by her appointments as a Public Board Member for the Arizona Bar Foundation, Puentes de Amistad, and Somerton Boys

and Girls Club. In addition, she was elected President of the Yuma County Education Foundation, Somerton's Rotary Club, and Yuma County's School District Association.

Mrs. Bobbitt has demonstrated great leadership and thousands of students are now beneficiaries of her vision of equality and personal best.

I would like to personally commend Mrs. Judith Bobbitt for her tireless commitment to our community. Her life and work is an inspiration to us all.

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TRIBUTE TO DENNIS E. NIXON

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 25, 2006*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dennis E. Nixon, Chairman of International Bancshares Corporation (IBC), on his being selected as an inductee into the 2006 Texas Business Hall of Fame on October 26, 2006.

Mr. Nixon is widely recognized as one of the nation's leading banking authorities. Since joining IBC in 1975, he has been instrumental in the ranking of the bank as the largest minority-owned bank organization in the United States with assets of \$10.3 billion with over 200 full service branches throughout Texas and Oklahoma in over eighty communities. IBC is headquartered in the City of Laredo and employs over three thousand in the South Texas region and in Oklahoma.

Mr. Nixon's approach to banking is based at the community level in which all customers large and small retain the same value, and this approach has been achieved through the involvement of IBC in community service. Mr. Nixon believes in the importance of corporate social responsibility, and has encouraged his employees to be active volunteers in community service with various non-profit organizations. As a result, IBC was the winner of the 2001 Governor's Volunteer Award in the corporate business category.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to honor Dennis E. Nixon, Chairman of International Bancshares Corporation, in recognition of his selection as an inductee into the 2006 Texas Business Hall of Fame.

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TRIBUTE TO CITY OF  
GAITHERSBURG

**HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 25, 2006*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the City of Gaithersburg on its tenth anniversary as a "CHARACTER COUNTS! City."

Gaithersburg exemplifies the six pillars of a "CHARACTER COUNTS! City"—trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Today, Gaithersburg celebrates its continued success in serving its citizens and teaching its children the importance of good character.

The CHARACTER COUNTS! program in Gaithersburg began in a meeting room filled

with parents and children eager to learn the pillars of the program. In just over 10 years, the ideals of CHARACTER COUNTS! have spread through businesses and schools. Today, Gaithersburg has experienced the benefits of ethical education and has grounded the goals of the City in the ethical framework of the CHARACTER COUNTS! program.

Through learning and focusing on customer needs, Gaithersburg seeks to continue the honest and open communication that has helped it become a nationally renowned city. Gaithersburg utilizes creativity and fiscal responsibility to promote its health and excellence. All of the people of Gaithersburg—city officials, employees, neighborhood and governmental agencies—strive to continuously improve the City through cooperation and an increased emphasis on customer service, which allows community needs to be identified and met.

By maintaining the best aspects of a small town while implementing the most advanced new technologies, Gaithersburg has a diverse array of wonderful characteristics. The residents of Gaithersburg benefit from safe neighborhoods and diverse transportation options. Elected officials have united to create a favorable business environment and to preserve beautiful parks and public places. Gaithersburg is justifiably proud of its family-friendly environment and a citizenry that possesses a strong sense of community and individual responsibility.

I am pleased to honor the City of Gaithersburg for its outstanding commitment to values in its governance and daily life. Gaithersburg is a great place to live, work, learn and play, and I congratulate it on its tenth anniversary as a CHARACTER COUNTS! City.

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INTRODUCTION OF SEEDS FOR  
SOLDIERS ACT

**HON. TOM UDALL**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 25, 2006*

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to introduce the Seeds for Soldiers Act. As a nation currently welcoming home new veterans, we must do all we can do to assist them upon their return. One way to do that is to help them jumpstart their new small businesses.

This bill does this by creating a specialized loan program for veterans through the Small Business Administration, which provides veterans with loans up to \$3 million, allows for debt refinancing, and permits borrowers to defer payments for up to one year without any accumulation of interest. To encourage lenders to provide capital, the program will carry reduced costs and a higher government loan guarantee.

The bill also establishes a vocational rehabilitation program for veterans specifically designed to assist in the transition out of service. The program, which will be established by existing Small Business Development Centers, will provide technical, vocational, and entrepreneurial assistance to veterans to help them use their skills learned in the military to open, maintain, and expand their own business. The bill authorizes \$25 million in funding to provide \$500,000 grants to the SBDCs to open this program.

As a member of both the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and the Small Business Committee, I am well acquainted with the difficulties many vets face in establishing and sustaining small businesses. At a time when thousands of veterans are returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan, we must act in every way possible to assist them when they return. This bill provides the seeds for veteran-owned businesses, so that they may grow into sustainable entities.

I am pleased to introduce this legislation today and wish to thank original cosponsors Representatives EMERSON, KELLY, and MICHAUD for their support. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting both our veterans, and the benefits that small businesses contribute to our economy, by cosponsoring this bill.

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30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
WILLOWS THEATRE COMPANY

**HON. GEORGE MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 25, 2006*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 30th anniversary of the Willows Theatre Company in Concord (Contra Costa County), California and the major, positive impact it has had—and continues to have—in the cultural life of the San Francisco Bay Area.

For three decades, the Willows has developed and produced dramas, comedies and musicals—more than 210 in all—drawn from contemporary American playwrights, composers and lyricists for a mix of world or area premieres and revivals of classic American shows. Six productions a year, for a total of 244 performances, attract thousands of loyal patrons each year. The current patron base has grown to more than 4,500 subscribers, with renewals at an enviable 87 percent. The company is training theater artists, and creating viable relationships with playwrights, designers, actors and students whose work will impact current and future audiences and artists.

Over the past 4 years alone, the Willows has earned 17 awards from the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle. The Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County honored Richard Elliott, artistic director, in 2000 and Andrew Holtz, managing director, in 2004 with Arts Recognition Awards. In 2002, the San Francisco Business Arts Council presented its Cyril Award for Non-Profit Arts Excellence to the Willows.

Aside from its renowned artistic successes, the Willows also is an economic force in the community. With an annual budget approaching \$2 million, the company maintains facilities, employs administrative support staff, and affords the first opportunity for professional employment for many developing theater artists. The company was the first theater in Contra Costa County to operate under a seasonal contract with Actors Equity Association, with as many as 200 or more professional and non-union Bay Area artists employed during a season.

In support of other non-profit arts organizations throughout the region, the Willows operates a Community Box Office service that has