

I am most impressed by this effort because it is student driven. Not only do Sun Valley students raise the money, but on December 14th, a group of students will actually pick up the children at school and take them to Monroe Mall where they will purchase them new clothes, shoes, and coats. They take the children to visit Santa, have lunch at Chick-Fil-A, and end their visit by taking the kids to get ice cream. Later, Sun Valley students will shop for essential items, food, and new school supplies for the children, as well as toys and gifts for their brothers and sisters. Then on December 16th, the students will deliver all the gifts to the family as well as food for a Christmas feast.

Leading this student driven program are the co-chairs of the Children's Christmas Party, Student Council President Alexandra Knight Efrid, and Student Council Vice-President Paige Lillia Donham. Their hard work has not gone unnoticed. Likewise, the Student Council faculty advisors, James P. Wall IV and Christopher Martin, have also worked countless hours to help the students in their effort. I would like to recognize the efforts of students in the classes of Mr. Wall, Mr. Reynolds, and Mr. Faulkner. They raised the most money out of all the classes at Sun Valley, and Mr. Reynolds class alone raised over \$2,000 for this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to say that I represent Sun Valley High School. In a day and age where people tend to think only of themselves, here is a shining example of a group of young people who know what Christmas is really all about. I commend them for their efforts to make their community a better place by helping the less fortunate during this holiday season. I hope that this wonderful effort will continue at Sun Valley for many years to come.

THANKING CINDY FOX VON GOGH  
FOR HER SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

**HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 8, 2006*

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of her retirement on January 2, 2007, we rise to thank Ms. Cindy Fox von Gogh for over thirty-two years of distinguished service to the United States House of Representatives.

Cindy began serving the U.S. House of Representatives in 1974 as the office Manager for John Dent (D-PA), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Labor Standards. In 1978 she embraced the role of Committee Archivist for Carl D. Perkins (D-KY), Chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor. While serving in this capacity Cindy was instrumental in expanding the use of computers in Committee office operations.

Milestones during her career at the House include; managing a Micro VAX computer system supporting the Full Committee and eight Subcommittees, implementation of a Novell Network and authoring a Personal Computer Reference Guide for staff. Cindy also created one of the first web sites in the House and was recognized by the Congressional Management Foundation with an award for one of the best web sites on Capitol Hill setting the standard of excellence in web design.

Cindy's contributions to Committee operations were achieved while she maintained her commitment to publish into the archives the Committee Legislative Calendar chronicling Committee proceedings as an official historical document of the House.

Kindhearted, professional and dedicated are words used by her colleagues to describe Cindy. She is known throughout the House as a person you can rely on to do what's right. She has earned the reputation as a person with a calm demeanor and respect for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, Cindy is truly an inspiration in nonpartisan service to the Committee and the House. She served six Chairmen irrespective of which party was the majority. We are grateful for all Cindy has done during the past thirty-two years serving the Committee, this institution and the citizens of our country. Her service to the House is respected by the Chairmen, Members and staff that have benefited from her expertise, institutional knowledge and unwavering disposition.

On behalf of the Committee and the entire House community, we extend congratulations to Cindy for her many years of dedication and outstanding service to the U.S. House of Representatives. We wish Cindy many wonderful years fulfilling her retirement dreams.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JO ANN DAVIS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 8, 2006*

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, due to a medical treatment, I was unable to attend votes on Friday, December 8, 2006. Had I been present, I would have voted the following:

H.R. 6406—"Nay". To modify temporarily certain rates of duty and make other technical amendments to the trade laws, to extend certain trade preference programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6111—"Yea". Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006. I was particularly interested in a provision of this bill that provides an increase in payments to Medicare physician payments. I am concerned with the reimbursement rates and the Gross Domestic Product-based formula known as the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) used to calculate healthcare services rendered. Using the SGR formula, without this fix, Medicare was scheduled to cut physician payments by nearly 5 percent effective January 1, 2007. I believe that we need to reform our reimbursement structure to keep physicians participating in both Medicare and TRICARE. The constituents in my district, both the doctors and patients, have called my office to let me know this is particularly important to them, especially as the number of enrollees in both programs is increasing. I was very pleased this provision was included in H.R. 6111.

REMEMBERING THE SACRIFICE OF  
FIVE FEDERAL FIREFIGHTERS

**HON. JERRY LEWIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 8, 2006*

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to memorialize the heroism and devotion to duty of five U.S. Forest Service firefighters, who gave their lives in the line of duty protecting families and homes from the ravages of a ferocious wildfire that overwhelmed their truck.

The 41st Congressional District includes a series of rugged mountain ranges with thousands of acres of national forest, but also thousands of homes and families. They include some of the most beautiful scenery in Southern California, but they are also home to some of the most dangerous wind-driven wildfires during our annual season of Santa Ana Winds.

I have come to know and deeply respect the firefighters who protect these homes and fight these fires. They are among the most professional and resourceful in the nation. Their heroism and tenacity have made the mountains a safer place to live.

So it is with the deepest sorrow that I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning the loss of five of these brave federal firefighters during the Esperanza Fire in the mountains east of San Bernardino. Those who gave their lives in the line of duty were Engine Captain Mark Loutzenhiser, Fire Engine Operator Jess McLean, Assistant Fire Engine Operator Jason McKay, Firefighter Daniel Hoover-Najera, and Firefighter Pablo Cerda.

Mark Loutzenhiser, a father of three, was a vital member of his hometown of Idyllwild, California. He coached youth sports and was considered a friend by nearly everyone in town. He had 21 years of firefighting service and was a certified emergency management technician. He had previously worked as a hotshot crewman for the Vista Grande Hot Shots and also as a volunteer firefighter for Riverside County. He is survived by his children and his wife Maria Loutzenhiser, a Forest Service employee who joined Mark on the firelines until the birth of their children.

Jess McLean had seven years of firefighting service and had been a hotshot for three years with the Vista Grande Hot Shots. He was a hometown hero—graduating from Banning High School in 1997 and attending fire science classes at Crafton Hills College. He was a resident of Beaumont, CA. He is survived by his wife Karen McLean and his mother Cecelia McLean.

Jason McKay spent four years as a volunteer firefighter in the High Desert town of Adelanto before joining the Forest Service five years ago. He also served on the Mojave Greens Type II crew. He was a certified EMT and earned an associate's degree in fire science. He was a resident of Phelan, also in the High Desert. He is survived by his mother Bonnie J. McKay and his father Robert McKay.

Daniel Hoover-Najera began his firefighting career with the Tahquitz Type II crew in 2005 and was serving as a seasonal Forest Service employee this year. He worked on the Tahquitz Type II crew in 2005 and was a seasonal employee in 2006. Just 20 years old, he

graduated from San Jacinto Mountain View High School in 2004. He is survived by his mother Gloria Ayala and his father Timothy Hoover.

Pablo Cerda was also in his second season with the Forest Service. He graduated from Los Amigos High School in Santa Ana in 2001 and attended Fire Academy of Riverside Community College. He is survived by his father Pablo Cerda, Sr.

These five U.S. Forest Service firefighters on Engine Crew 57 on the San Jacinto Ranger District were dispatched early on the morning of Thursday, October 26 to fight the Esperanza fire. Taking a stand atop a ridge to protect a home, the crew and their engine were overcome when the fire raced up the slope.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a little more than a month since the loss of these brave firefighters, and their neighbors have overwhelmingly shown their support through donations and help for their families. They are sorely missed by their communities, and by the greater community of federal firefighters. I ask my colleagues to please join in sending their families our condolences, as well as our sense of deep pride for those who dedicate themselves to such selfless public service.

ON THE INTRODUCTION OF "THE NORTHWESTERN NEW MEXICO RURAL WATER PROJECTS ACT"

**HON. TOM UDALL**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 8, 2006*

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce The Northwestern New Mexico Rural Water Projects Act. This legislation, which was also introduced in the Senate by my colleague from New Mexico Senator Bingaman, will ratify the historic San Juan River Settlement Agreement. This agreement, signed by the Navajo Nation and the State of New Mexico, will provide for the development of a rural water system to address the water needs of numerous New Mexicans, many of them members of the Navajo Nation.

The settlement agreement, once ratified, will resolve the Navajo Nation's water rights without litigation. It will also provide a water supply for Gallup, New Mexico, and recognize authorized and existing uses of San Juan River basin water. In exchange for relinquishing some of their claims to water from the San Juan River basin, the Navajo Nation will benefit from water development projects which include the Navajo-Gallup project and the Navajo Nation Municipal pipeline. The pipeline will convey water from the Animas-La Plata project from the city of Farmington, New Mexico, to numerous Navajo communities and the city of Shiprock.

The Navajo Nation, the State of New Mexico and many other residents of northwestern New Mexico put a tremendous amount of work into reaching an agreement that will provide a more secure future for many vulnerable communities. I am proud to be able to contribute today to their efforts by introducing the House companion bill and starting it down the path of

Congressional approval. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation to move these important water projects forward.

REMEMBERING BILLY EARL HIBBS

**HON. RALPH M. HALL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 8, 2006*

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, today it is my privilege to honor the life of a dear friend, Billy Earl Hibbs, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 67. Billy was a native Texan, born on September 25th, 1938, in Quitman. He graduated from Quitman High School and married his high school sweetheart, Eugenia Stroud in 1957. Eugenia and Billy had one child, Billy Earl Hibbs, Jr.

Starting with a small, three-person insurance agency, Billy grew his business into Heartland Security Insurance Group, one of the largest insurance holding companies in the Southwest. Heartland is one of the largest providers of claims services to the Federal government, including all branches of the military as well as non-military personnel injured in Afghanistan and Iraq. Despite its size, Heartland maintains its Texas roots with its headquarters in Tyler and continues to serve almost half the school districts in Texas.

The Texas Legislature recognized Billy's accomplishments in 1981 for his success in handling the John Tyler High School fire loss. In 1990, he led the passage of a bond measure to provide upgrades to the City of Tyler's infrastructure. A patron of the arts, Billy served as President of the East Texas Symphony Association and worked to relocate performances to the Cowan Center at U.T. Tyler. Billy also served as President of the Tyler Civic Theatre where he oversaw construction of the Braithwaite Theater and the opening of the Rogers Children's Theatre. As President of the Tyler Rotary Club he became a Paul Harris Fellow. Billy was a member of the Henry Bell Masonic Lodge, and a founding board member of the Better Business Bureau of Central East Texas. He served as a board member for Leadership Tyler, the Tyler Independent School District Foundation, and the Tyler Chamber of Commerce and was a member of the Order of the Rose. He was a member of the Pairs and Parents Sunday School class, an usher, and a past trustee of Marvin United Methodist Church. Billy also remained active in the Independent Insurance Agents at local, state, and national levels throughout his life.

In 2004, Billy was inducted into the Junior Achievement "Business Hall of Fame," and made a member of the honor business fraternity, Beta Gamma Sigma, at the University of Texas at Tyler. In 2005, Hibbs-Hallmark & Company was honored with the Better Business Bureau's "Torch Award" for demonstrating a commendable ethical record over the years, and recently, the Tyler Rotary Club honored Hibbs by distinguishing all present and future donors of \$1,000 as "Billy Hibbs Fellows."

Billy is survived by his loving wife of 48 years, Eugenia "Jeannie" Hibbs, his son Billy E. Hibbs, Jr., and daughter-in law Tisa Weiss

Hibbs, two grandchildren Stratton Weiss Hibbs and London Elizabeth Hibbs, and two sisters Dorma Shields and Betty Cassels of Quitman, as well as other relatives.

Billy was always generous with his time and leadership, and he shared his many blessings with his community and his country. Mr. Speaker, Billy Hibbs was a valuable member of the community whose years of service will provide a legacy for many years to come.

"THE JOURNEY FOR HUMANITY"  
MARCH IN WASHINGTON

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 8, 2006*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor a group of young individuals from Journey for Humanity, of which I, along with my Armenian Caucus Co-Chair, the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, had the opportunity to meet with last month. Their goal is to raise awareness and recognition of the Armenian Genocide, as well as other human rights atrocities occurring around the world today.

Last month the group arrived in Washington, having walked across the country. The 3,000-mile Journey for Humanity walk began approximately 5 months ago in Los Angeles, CA with the support of the Armenian Assembly of America. Since then, the marchers have crossed a dozen states and held rallies in eleven major U.S. cities to honor the victims and survivors of all genocidal acts and advance the cause of genocide prevention.

The group marched twenty miles a day until it reached the Nation's capital. Although the walk officially concluded, the Journey continues with hopes for a documentary and a book to archive their efforts at genocide awareness and prevention. They also have plans for a series of lectures across college campuses to promote this important human rights message.

For decades we've all heard the words "never again," yet we continue to see the same type of horrors happening today. With the death toll in the Darfur region of the Sudan nearing 400,000, these young people hope to show the importance of learning from the past and to prevent future genocides.

As descendants of genocide survivors, these young men and women carry the memory and live in the reality of the consequences of genocide. As Americans, it is our collective responsibility to inform our country about atrocious crimes against humanity, in an attempt to prevent future episodes.

I commend their courage and passion, as well as the Armenian Assembly, for their efforts in raising public awareness and affirmation of these crimes against humanity. I heartily support their endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, next Congress I, along with my Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Joe Knollenberg and my fellow Caucus colleagues ADAM SCHIFF and GEORGE RADANOVICH, plan to reintroduce a resolution affirming the Armenian Genocide. The truth of the past must be told and acknowledged as a first step to genocide prevention. I encourage all Members of this body to cosponsor this important resolution.