

TRIBUTE TO MR. CHARLES
KREPLIN

HON. MICHAEL A. ARCURI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Charles Kreplin's extraordinary record of service to the Weedsport Volunteer Fire Department in my congressional district in upstate New York.

Mr. Kreplin was born in Cleveland, OH, on June 21, 1930. He and his wife Sandra, who were married in 1985, have five children. A Korean war Veteran, he has also served his community as a milk deliveryman, a school bus driver and a cemetery caretaker.

Charles will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his service to the Weedsport Volunteer Fire Department on July 2, 2007. Still one of the most active members of the department, Charles has twice been a recipient of the Fireman of the Year Award. He was also named an American Hero by the Red Cross in 2003. Mr. Kreplin is part of several county and State fire organizations, including the Cayuga County Association of Emergency Services and the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs. His 50 years as a firefighter are particularly notable given that the Weedsport Volunteer Fire Department, like many rural fire departments, has struggled to attract and retain volunteers.

Mr. Kreplin's exceptional dedication is to be commended. I am honored to have him protecting constituents in my district, and I would once again like to congratulate him on his 50 years of service. Thank you, Mr. Kreplin, for all you have contributed over your five decades of service to our community.

SALUTING SERVICE ACADEMY
STUDENTS

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is a tremendous honor to salute our soldiers, marines, sailors, and airmen of tomorrow—the service academy-bound students of the Third District of the Texas. This Congressional District is home to some of the best and the brightest young people. They are eager and ready to join the premier military force of the world. It is a privilege to send such fine young people on to our Nation's prestigious service academies.

We lift them and their families up in prayer for their future service and sacrifices. I am so very proud of them. God bless them and God bless America. I salute them. The name of each appointee and hometown follows:

United States Air Force Academy: Madison Schottleuther—McKinney; Taylor Soster—Allen; Grace St. Clair—Allen; Stephanie Stanford—Plano; Drew Warwick—Plano; Michael Willcox—McKinney; Evan Wise—Plano.

United States Merchant Marine Academy: Bryce Doganer—Plano; F. Wade (Fred) Wheeler—Plano.

United States Military Academy: Audrey Hansen—Plano; Kane Kimrey—Rowlett; Anne Nagy—McKinney; Ryan Schubert—Plano; Tianyi Xin—Plano.

United States Naval Academy: Erik DeSousa—Plano; Gregory Harrell—Plano; Philip Niche—McKinney; Melanie Pribich—Plano; Ryan Szymaniak—McKinney.

MR. TOM SKERRITT—PARTICIPANT
CITIZEN

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, one of the great strengths of this country is the willingness of its people to give back. We each find our own way to be "participant citizens." On the occasion of the honoring of his lifetime achievement by one of Seattle's great historic organizations, the Rainier Club, the people of the State of Washington would like to hold up as a national inspiration the special record of one of our State's most notable participant citizens, the distinguished and award-winning actor/director/writer and, just as proudly, teacher, Tom Skerritt.

Thanks to Tom Skerritt and great artists like him, Seattle has become a great cutting edge in the forward movement of the performing arts. Its stage innovation has been recognized with Tony Award celebration, including for work in which he participated. And now, in little over 3 years, Mr. Skerritt has created in Seattle a new approach to the teaching and doing of movie-making through his acclaimed the Film School.

To find the artist, to find the teacher, first you find the man.

Tom Skerritt's skills are matched by his unique and innate embodiment of the finest American traits of decency, humanity, strength, humor and integrity, as witness his starring performances in the deeply loved series "Picket Fences," for which he won the Emmy among other honors, "M.A.S.H.," "Alien," "Top Gun," "A River Runs Through It," "The Turning Point," "Steel Magnolias," "Contact," and the remake of "High Noon." Who other than Tom Skerritt could have complemented the portrayal of stand-up American heroism first conveyed by Gary Cooper.

Seattle and the State of Washington hold Tom Skerritt up to the Nation with pride because he is the kind of stand-up hero/humanist he so often and so powerfully portrays. This can best be illustrated by the last and least known of his hyphenated talents alluded to above: Tom Skerritt, teacher. His special brand of give-back to the country and people he loves is his unique ability to perpetuate and to inspire the study of that extraordinarily modern art form so influenced by its practice in America, motion pictures.

One of the significant developments in movie-making in recent decades is that the heart of movie-making, so long associated with and conducted in Hollywood, has now spread out to other parts of the country. The American art form is now an all America art form. And few cities have taken a more active and creative part in this transition, this creative development and envelopment, than the area of Seattle.

A key leader in this evolution has been that master of all movie trades, Tom Skerritt. He is most widely regarded as an actor par excellence, an Emmy winner and an artist of ac-

claim in film, on television, and on the stage. He has been active in passing his emotive skills to young performers. But it is his passion to teach motion picture creation innovatively that has won for his 3-year-old school, appropriately titled the Film School, a pre-eminence and a very special niche. Together with Oscar-winning writer Stuart Stem and such top-of-their-craft creative artists as John Jacobsen, Warren Etheredge, and Rick Stevenson, Skerritt has made the Film School an institution of learning that has broken the mold and has set exciting new high bars for the teaching of film-making as the art of communicated ideas.

The people of Seattle and the State of Washington celebrate Tom Skerritt as an example of how an artist or any person can devise his or her own special way to be a participant citizen. Tom Skerritt inspires each of us to find a personal way to pass along the fervor, dedication and skill that allows us to contribute to a better and more integrated society and to experience the joy of giving back to our country, our resident city and to the wisest application of our profession.

Seattle proudly lays claim to an artist who is at the top of the role model list. Not just his genuine human depth and caring, but the brilliance and natural belief he brings to every one of his acclaimed performances. Thanks to Tom Skerritt and his associates in the Film School, Seattle is becoming a major center for instilling the skills of film art and the joy of that great American spawned art form.

HONORING THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OF JOSEPHINE SANTA ANNA, RECIPIENT OF THE OLDER AMERICANS RECOGNITION AWARD FOR 2007

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend Josephine Santa Anna, an outstanding Californian, who has recently been honored by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Los Angeles County Commission on Aging with the Older Americans Recognition Award for 2007. This commendation is given for outstanding community service and recognizes Mrs. Santa Anna's service to the City of Santa Fe Springs, California, which has spanned over five decades.

Mrs. Santa Anna is probably one of the most active older adults residing in the city of Santa Fe Springs. Her daily life is primarily driven by the priorities of each of her volunteer commitments, which have included (in part) serving as a Traffic Commissioner, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Member and an active participant in the city's 50th Anniversary Community Planning Committee. Mrs. Santa Anna was one of a handful of people who volunteered every day for over 3 weeks to decorate the float that showcased the city's 50th anniversary in the 2007 Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California. It was only after becoming physically ill from the fumes of the glue that she finally agreed to stay home, returning a few days later to help organize the city's New Year's Eve party.

Mrs. Santa Anna has been recognized as the most reliable volunteer by two of the most active Senior Citizens' Clubs in the region, the Abraham Lincoln Club and John F. Kennedy Club. In 2006 she was elected by over four hundred seniors to serve in two of the most coveted positions on the Board of Directors for each Club. She has been recognized as the "voice of the seniors" by personally leading and shepherding voter registration drives and absentee ballot campaigns for the elderly.

Mrs. Santa Anna, as a Cuban-American, has a strong passion for social justice issues, which empowers her to advocate on behalf of the elderly and the disenfranchised within her community. She was recently appointed to represent the City's Senior Citizens Advisory Committee as a member of the Seniors Grievance Committee, which addresses difficult and contentious issues for five senior citizens clubs in Santa Fe Springs. According to Santa Fe Springs City Councilmember, Luis M. Gonzalez, "Her amazing mental agility and high physical energy combined with her passionate spirit provide for a truly engaged community gatekeeper who keeps our elected officials on the edge of their seats."

Most importantly, Mrs. Santa Anna (lovingly known as "Fina") embodies the characteristics of a highly respected community leader. She is humble, lovable, and spirited. She is a passionate engine that mobilizes seniors, families, and elected officials for the betterment of Santa Fe Springs.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me, her family, friends, and community in honoring Josephine Santa Anna for her service in and contributions to the City of Santa Fe Springs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I was on official leave of absence June 12 and 13, 2007, due to a health matter in my family. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 451, 452, 453, 456 and 457 and "no" on rollcall votes 454, 455, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, and 465.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HENDERSON NEVADA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Henderson, Nevada, Chamber of Commerce. The Henderson Nevada Chamber of Commerce has been serving the Henderson community as a private, non-profit voluntary organization since 1945. They are committed to the civic, commercial and industrial growth and development of Henderson. Much of the area's economic success is a direct result of the hard work and dedication of the Chamber.

The members of the Henderson Chamber of Commerce divided themselves into issue committees in order to prepare according to their predominant interests. The following are the committees and those who are leading those committees: Kristine Shattuck—Transportation; D.J. Allen and Francine Mayfield—Education; Scot Muelrath and Bob Unger—Water; David Chavez—Taxes; Ben Brown; and John Holman—Bureau of Land Management; Charles Perry—Homeland Security; Arnold Lopez and Rick Smith—Yucca Mountain; David Dahan—Health Care; and Laird Sanders—Small Business Administration. In addition, Karen Marshall, Alice Martz, Diane Holman, Gayle Rogers, and Richard are contributing to the weeklong event.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor The Henderson Chamber of Commerce. I would like to personally thank all of those participating for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet with Members of Congress as well as members of the Administration for the Inaugural Henderson on the Hill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TECHNICAL SERGEANT RYAN BALMER OF MISHAWAKA, INDIANA

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the sacrifice of Technical Sergeant Ryan Balmer, native son of Mishawaka, Indiana, who died on June 5, 2007 while proudly serving his nation in Kirkuk, Iraq. Ryan risked everything in service to America, and for that we are eternally grateful.

Ryan was stationed at Hill Air Force base in Utah where he lived with his wife, Danielle and their two children Anthony and Gabby. His family, including his mother, Patricia Balmer, was anticipating his scheduled arrival home five days later when they were informed of his death. Danielle had made posters, buttons and banners to welcome Ryan home and had planned to line the road to their home with American flags. She also made a shirt for Gabby that read, "My daddy's finally home."

However, when Danielle saw the uniformed Air Force officers, including Ryan's saddened commanding officer, arrive at her work, she learned he was not coming home. Danielle said, "He died doing what he loved."

Shortly after graduation from Mishawaka High School, Ryan joined the Air Force where he became part of the Office of Special Investigations. His mission was to help identify, investigate and neutralize criminal, terrorist and espionage threats, one of the most dangerous assignments in today's Air Force. At the time of his death, he was serving as a liaison between Iraqi police and U.S. military officials in Kirkuk.

Ryan was killed when the vehicle in which he was riding, the first of a three vehicle convoy, was hit by an improvised explosive device. His commander, General Dana Simmons, called him a "warrior" who made the ultimate sacrifice in his brave performance of duty.

It is my somber duty to honor and remember Ryan and a life cut tragically short. I am saddened by the loss to his family, our com-

munity and our country. We were all blessed by his presence and diminished by his passing.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. BARBARA CHRISTEN, DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR AND FOUNDER OF "FUTURES AND OPTIONS"

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Dr. Barbara L. Christen, an extraordinary leader and teacher. Her passionate commitment to excellence in education has inspired countless students and colleagues to realize their dreams. Dr. Christen's remarkable career is being celebrated this month at a reception hosted by Futures and Options, Inc., an outstanding program that provides New York City high schoolers worthwhile opportunities for paid, supervised internships in the business world.

Dr. Christen embarked upon her distinguished career by teaching English in New York City's public high schools. In 1970, she was named Assistant Principal for English at the High School of Art and Design on Manhattan's East Side. Five years later she became the founding Principal of the Murry Bergtraum High School for Business Careers in Lower Manhattan and launched its internationally acclaimed "magnet" program to prepare students for both college admission and entry into the workforce.

As the principal at Bergtraum over the course of a decade and a half, Dr. Christen oversaw the education of a student body of 3,000, one of the largest high schools in our Nation's biggest city. As the educational leader of the first American high school with a dual program preparing students both for college admission and for entry into the business world, Dr. Christen presided over Bergtraum's rapidly expanding application pool while managing a complex educational enterprise during New York City's dire fiscal crisis.

Working with the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association, Dr. Christen became a pioneer in establishing public-private partnerships, thereby immeasurably benefitting the school she led as well as its students and teachers. She established a highly successful educational model, introduced an innovative business curriculum, initiated the first high school computer science business program, and secured internships for all Bergtraum students. Dr. Christen thus forged a unique learning experience for her students, one that melded a rigorous and stimulating academic curriculum with exciting opportunities to gain invaluable experience in the business world by working in Lower Manhattan's world-famous business and financial districts.

Following her retirement from New York City's public school system, Dr. Christen continued to put her flair for innovation and enterprise to work helping others achieve their full potential. As the Vice President for Workforce Development at the Alliance for Downtown New York, she created the Futures and Options, Inc. (FAO) paid internship program that was subsequently cited by the U.S. Department of Labor as a model project. Since then,