

TRIBUTE TO THE FREDONIA
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the accomplishments of the Fredonia American Legion Auxiliary. The members of this organization have loyally served the Fredonia area and its veteran community for many years and their good deeds deserve to be acknowledged.

All of the Legion's activities work toward its mission to improve the quality of life for Fredonia's veterans and their families.

To raise money for veteran family events, such as their annual Children's Christmas Party, the Legion has held various events throughout the year including a Chinese auction, craft show, bingo night and several basket raffles.

As part of their community service efforts, members collected donations to give to local needy families during the holiday season.

The Legion hosted an "Americanism" Essay Contest at local grade schools to promote patriotism among the country's youth. The winners included third-grader Olivea Wright from Oakview Elementary and sixth-grader Kelsey Greathouse from Commodore Perry Elementary.

On Veterans Day and Memorial Day, members held honorary services with special guest speakers to pay tribute to U.S. veterans in the Fredonia area.

From September 2006 to June 2007, the Fredonia American Legion donated an impressive \$18,700 in coupons to 37 commissaries around the world.

The officers of the Legion include: Mary Ellen Flynn, President; Sandy Lurtz, 1st Vice President; Ruth Foust, 2nd Vice President; Dorthy Young, Secretary/Treasurer; Shirley Kirsch, Chaplain; Darlene Hoffman, Historian and Sergeant-at-Arms; Mary Jane Lockcock, Sergeant-at-Arms.

I hope my colleagues will join me at this time in recognizing the service of the Fredonia American Legion and in congratulating its efforts.

MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT
AT ATLANTA VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEDICAL CENTER

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, today, almost last, but certainly not least, Congress takes action on a bill to authorize a major medical facility project that will create modern inpatient wards at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Atlanta, Georgia. This is an investment of \$20.5 million to provide a standard of care our Nation guarantees for veterans across America. This is a relatively small bill but it is part of keeping a very big promise. We should always keep that promise.

This project will renovate 3 inpatient floors to meet ADA accessibility requirements. Our

handicapped veterans should have bathrooms, showers and toilet facilities they can actually use. This project will also meet needs of a growing group of women veterans. It will provide patient privacy where it has been inadequate. And it will make the staff work more efficiently by simply making the layout of the building better for work. In addition, an enclosed connecting bridge will be built between the Medical Center and VA Regional Office buildings so there will be more fluid access between what goes on at the hospital and what goes on at the benefits administration.

The Atlanta VA Medical Center has an active affiliation with the University of Emory Medical School. This project will keep this relationship on sound footing. Hundreds of medical doctors and students with Emory make contributions at the hospital and see firsthand the result of sacrifices made from generation to generation. Unfortunately, with the number of our boys and girls coming home from war growing as we speak, these physicians are going to be caring for so many more people with so many more health problems.

I want to applaud the efforts of my colleague from Georgia, Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON, for working to pass this bill through the Senate. I know on this issue, the issue of caring for our veterans, all of us from Georgia and on a bipartisan basis in the House and Senate can agree that no expense should be spared in order to ensure the best care modern medicine can provide.

We have more work to do on this and so many other issues. It is my hope we can come together on more bills in the coming year, much larger bills, which benefit those who wear the uniform, as well as kids and seniors who need better health care.

TRIBUTE TO HUGHSTON
ORTHOPEDIC HOSPITAL

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, the city of Columbus in Georgia's 3rd Congressional District boasts a stellar health care community that enriches the well-being and quality of life for Muscogee and surrounding counties.

This year, Georgia Trend magazine singled out one of those health care facilities, Hughston Orthopedic Hospital, for its Honor Roll, naming it one of the 15 best places to work in the state.

Long known for its excellent patient care, Hughston's secret is now out: It also provides excellent employee care.

One of the founders of the hospital summed up the organization's ethos by saying, "It's not bricks, mortar and equipment that makes a hospital—it's people."

Employee input helps the hospital keep its edge in providing the best possible care. Every month, the President's Council convenes to allow employees to voice suggestions or concerns directly to the CEO, Don Avery.

Hughston employees receive 100 percent tuition reimbursement, flexible working schedules, day care discounts and a special HOPE fund to aid employees suffering hardships.

Employees who go above and beyond the normal call of duty receive special recognition, such as the Spirit of Caring award for nurses dedicated to excellent care and the First Humanitarian Award for workers who engage in community service and extraordinary acts of kindness.

In 1984, Dr. Jack Hughston, known as the "father of sports medicine," and Dr. Thomas Frist Sr. founded the hospital. Today, the hospital famed for its sports medicine is a 100-bed orthopedic facility performing spinal surgeries and joint replacements.

Madam Speaker, I want to call special attention to the special people providing visionary leadership and top-notch medical care to the patients in the Greater Columbus area. They embody the spirit of hard work and compassion that keep America great.

On behalf of the 3rd Congressional District of Georgia and this House, I congratulate Hughston Orthopedic Hospital on this well-deserved recognition.

SUPPORT FOR RECOGNITION OF
PLUTO AS A PLANET

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the renewed recognition of Pluto as a planet.

The planet Pluto was discovered on January 23, 1930, by Clyde Tombaugh. Although just 24 years of age with no formal education beyond high school, Mr. Tombaugh discovered this new planet by painstakingly and systematically examining and comparing photographic plates he had made of the night skies over New Mexico. For this achievement, Mr. Tombaugh received a prestigious award from the Royal Astronomical Society along with a scholarship to the University of Kansas, which allowed him to continue his formal education.

Clyde Tombaugh went on to make a large number of additional contributions to our knowledge of the universe and to receive many more awards and honors before his death on January 17, 1997. I am proud to note that Mr. Tombaugh was born on February 4, 1906, on a farm near Streator, IL, in LaSalle County—a community which I am privileged to represent in the Congress of the United States.

Unfortunately, on August 26, 2006, the International Astronomical Union, IAU, meeting in Prague and relying on the votes of only a handful of its approximately 10,000 members, made the decision to downgrade the status of Pluto.

This decision was met with protests from eminent scientists and astronomers all over the world. Perhaps foremost among those in the international scientific community strongly disagreeing with the IAU decision was Dr. S. Alan Stern. Named earlier this year by Time magazine as one of the "One Hundred Most Influential People in the World", Dr. Stern is also one of the lead consultants for the New Horizons Mission.

The New Horizons Mission is an unmanned spacecraft launched in January of 2006, which is projected to reach Pluto and the outer edge of our solar system in the year 2015. This