

Lavery, who for more than 50 years steadfastly served and protected the people of Williamsville, New York.

Even as a young boy growing up in Williamsville, Ed was drawn to fire engines. Often Ed would jump on his bike as soon as he heard the sound of fire engines to watch the firefighters battle the blaze. Due to his determination and perseverance Ed was forced to part with his bike after he joined the Fire Department when he crashed into a wall after his bikes brakes failed.

With his straight talk and hard work ethic, Ed quickly became captain of the Williamsville Fire Department. He served five years as assistant chief, and in 1974, was elected chief. He also served as president in 1985. Along with serving the Fire Department, Ed worked for the Amherst Engineering Department where he was the general foreman until he retired in 1999. Ed was also a part-time dispatcher at the Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office, which handles emergency calls for all companies protecting Amherst, Clarence and Newstead.

Known for his candor and dry wit, Ed continues to be involved with the department. He often will join the firefighters in responding to Fires and check to make sure the pumps are operating correctly. None of his family and friends foresee him quitting any time soon.

Thus, Madam Speaker, in recognition of his tremendous service for more than 50 years to the people of Williamsville, NY, for his leadership, his dedication and the lasting legacy he leaves, I ask this honorable body to join me in honoring Ed Lavery.

KAMILA HOSAJA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 14, 2008

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kamila Hosaja who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kamila Hosaja is a senior at Arvada High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kamila Hosaja is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Kamila Hosaja for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication she has shown in her high school career to her college career and future accomplishments.

HONORING ELLIOTT GEOFF
WATKINS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 14, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Elliott Geoff Watkins of

Trimble, Missouri. Elliott is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1008, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Elliott has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Elliott has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Elliott Geoff Watkins for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING THE REPUBLIC
OF CROATIA ON RECEIVING AN
INVITATION TO JOIN NATO

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 14, 2008

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleague and fellow co-chair of the Croatian Caucus, Congressman VISCLOSKY, to congratulate the Republic of Croatia on receiving an invitation to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, at the Alliance's recent summit in Bucharest.

The inclusion of Croatia into NATO has been the highest priority of the Congressional Croatian Caucus. I am excited to see a country that has demonstrated leadership in the region of southeast Europe in implementing comprehensive reforms under Euro-Atlantic integrations welcomed into NATO. My Congressional Croatian Caucus co-chair, Congressman PETER VISCLOSKY, and I sent letters to the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense last November encouraging the administration to express support for this goal.

This historic event serves as important recognition of Croatia's capability to assume responsibilities of NATO membership as well as be an effective contributor to collective defense and security. I am fully convinced that a vote of confidence by the U.S. through expeditious ratification of Croatia's membership into NATO will allow this country to be a more valuable ally to the United States and further enhance the strategic partnership between our two countries.

This partnership stems from deep historical and cultural links between the U.S. and Croatia, commencing with the recognition of America's Independence by the Republic of Dubrovnik in 1783. Since its independence, Croatia has made significant progress in achieving democracy and undertaking comprehensive political, economic and defense reforms on its path to Euro-Atlantic integrations.

Furthermore, the successful recent visit by President George W. Bush to Croatia on April 4-5, 2008, reaffirmed the importance of the U.S.-Croatian relationship and underscored the common values shared by our two countries. In this respect, I would like to enter into the RECORD highlights from the speeches delivered by President George W. Bush, Croatian President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Dr. Ivo Sanader in Zagreb, during the President's recent visit to Croatia on April 4 and 5, 2008.

Finally, many individuals have worked very hard to see this important invitation come to fruition. I would like to especially thank Congressman VISCLOSKY, the multitude of Croatian nationals and Croatian Americans for their steadfast commitment to this cause and to furthering the U.S.-Croatian partnership.

PRESIDENT BUSH AND PRESIDENT MESIC OF
CROATIA, APRIL 4, 2008

PRESIDENT MESIC: . . . Croatia is a small country with a tradition of statehood which can be traced back to the distant 10th century. However, it has appeared on the political map of the world as an independent country less than 20 years ago. The United States is indisputably the leading world power, and its history spans somewhat more than two centuries. However, in such a relatively short time the United States has given, in two global conflicts, an incalculable contribution to the fight against evil and tyranny, and to the victory of freedom and democracy.

I shall not spend too many words in reminding you of the many historic ties between our two countries—from the Croatian community in America and Croatian immigrants like the brilliant inventor Nikola Tesla, through the fact that Dubrovnik, the jewel of the Croatian Adriatic, then an independent republic, was among the first to recognize the young United States, all the way to our alliance in the war against Nazism and fascism and the cooperation we had in the times when Croatia was part of Yugoslavia. That, as I said, is the past, but a past which must be known and on the foundations of which we must continue to build.

And what we have to build, however different we may be—in terms of size, strength and potential, occasionally also in terms of views regarding a particular issue—is a world of peace, security and stability, a world of progress and prosperity for all. We have to build mutual trust and appreciation regardless of differences, even in spite of differences. Constructive talk is possible only in conditions of mutual trust, and the idea that all outstanding issues can and must be resolved by negotiation can become reality only on such terms.

We live in a world encumbered by many problems, and we are faced by many challenges. We can only withstand them together, in a harmonized way, by proceeding from the awareness that problems like global terrorism, regional crises, poverty, global warming and destruction of the environment are problems affecting all of us, perhaps not to the same extent or at the same time; these are indisputably problems affecting every state and we can deal with them, let me repeat, only jointly. Having said that, I certainly have in mind the role which the United Nations can and must play.

I can note with pleasure that the relations between Croatia and the United States are on the upswing. Let me reiterate a point I have made many times: Croatia offers the hand of friendship to everyone wishing to cooperate with it in conditions of equality and satisfaction of mutual interests.

I have already mentioned that Croatia is a small country. We need and seek allies and friends throughout the world—allies and friends who will wish to cooperate with us while respecting our identity and our special qualities, taking due account of their and our national interests, and proceeding from the fact that a policy based on meeting interests is not inconsistent with a policy relying on certain firm principles. I believe that Croatia can have precisely such an ally and friend in the United States.

Let me use this opportunity to thank you for the support given by the United States in