

while her mother, Anastasia Rogowski, stands. During college, the representative 'worshipped' her hard-working grandparents, who emigrated from Ukraine in the early 1900s.

The realignment of Miss Kaptur's 9th Congressional District in 2012 to snake along Lake Erie all the way from Toledo to Cleveland has been widely decried as gerrymandering designed to achieve Republican goals of squeezing as many Democrats into as few districts as possible.

But one upshot has been the linkage of one of Congress's most Eastern European-focused lawmakers with communities that have a lot of Eastern European immigrants and their descendants.

The district now contains the Cuyahoga County city of Parma, which has a large Ukrainian-American population. Miss Kaptur is also a founder and co-chairman of the Polish and Hungarian congressional caucuses.

Her mother's family was Polish living in modern-day Ukraine.

Miss Kaptur's grandmother Teofila Swiecicki Rogowski and Grandfather John Rogowski emigrated from Ukraine early in the 1900s.

"Then it was czarist Russia. They were not allowed to graze their one cow on the open field and could not feed themselves," Miss Kaptur said.

Over the years, as their homeland was devastated by political and military rivalries, including a famine brought on by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and invasion by the Nazis, they lost all contact with family members in Ukraine. Her grandmother took in wash, and worked in the Commodore Perry and Willard hotels to earn money, while her grandfather, a carpenter, struggled to find work.

"When I was in college I worshipped her and her husband," Miss Kaptur said. She wanted to take her grandmother back to Ukraine and find the town they came from, Burtyn, but her grandmother was afraid, she said. Teofila died in 1970.

In 1973, Miss Kaptur—then a planner for the city of Toledo—and her mother, the former Anastasia Rogowski, drove into Soviet Ukraine, where they found her grandmother's brother, a former inmate of Stalin's gulag political prison system for 20 years.

"He was not allowed to travel out of his area because he was viewed as an enemy of the state," Miss Kaptur said. He was released from the gulag in 1952, but lost his brother to the camps. Her great-uncle's crime: He had offered aid to a wounded Kulak, a member of the property-owning farming class that was being driven into extinction by Stalin. They had the only car in the dusty town, and were the only guests in the hotel, which had no curtains but a listening device. They had sent word to relatives that they would be at the hotel if anyone wanted to meet them. They were on their third day with no visitors when they heard activity in the lobby.

Miss Kaptur's great-uncle Casmierz Swiecicki was a former inmate in Joseph Stalin's prison system for 20 years. "We learned the desk clerk had been denying to the woman visitor that any foreigners were staying in the hotel, despite her repeated attempts to contact us," Miss Kaptur said.

She said the moment that she finally met her grandmother's brother, Casmierz Swiecicki, was an emotional one. "There stood this tall man and I looked at him and gasped because he held his hands the same way that our grandmother did. He looked at my mother and said, 'are you my sister?' We just wept," Miss Kaptur said. They gave him an orange. "That began the moment when we began to unlock the history of what hap-

pened," she said. They met more family members in a return trip two years later.

Andy Fedynsky, resident scholar at the Ukrainian Museum and Archives in Cleveland, said Miss Kaptur has actively supported Ukraine since her first term in 1983. He said that year she played a leadership role in passing a bill to create a commission on the Ukraine famine, which was widely denied.

"This commission was set up and did a thorough job establishing there was a famine, it was planned, 7 million people were deliberately starved to death," Mr. Fedynsky said. He said Miss Kaptur testified that the victims included her own family.

"She said, 'Don't tell me this never happened. I know it happened because my ancestors endured it,'" Mr. Fedynsky said. The commission "made a huge difference in Ukraine historiography."

Miss Kaptur and others worked to get President Obama to include a Ukraine reference in his State of the Union speech last week, which he did. The President said, "In Ukraine, we stand for the principle that all people have the right to express themselves freely and peacefully and to have a say in their country's future."

"I have been meeting with Ukrainians on a regular basis. We are planning a trade mission for farmers to bring them to Ohio in February," Miss Kaptur said.

She has a picture of herself meeting a year and a half ago with one of the opposition leaders when he was in Washington.

She said she was in Ukraine in 2013 while on her way to Poland to be awarded an honorary citizenship—her father's family was from Poland—when she feared that Ukraine was slipping backward. "I left very, very worried. I saw how much more difficult their life had become. I was deeply worried about what I saw—greater poverty among older women, farmers that I've known."

Ironically to the girl whose grandmother had only wanted to raise money in order to buy a piece of land on which to graze their cow, Ukrainian farmland is being bought up by oligarchs.

"There was a real sense that democracy was slipping away. Then all of this has happened. The people of Ukraine have stood up, and we should stand with them," Miss Kaptur said.

#### HONORING JACOB E. LEE

#### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jacob E. Lee. Jacob 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 444, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jacob has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jacob has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jacob has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jacob replaced a gate at Harvester's Community Garden in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jacob E. Lee for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for

his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF MASTER SERGEANT SHAWN EDWARDS

#### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize Master Sergeant Shawn Edwards, a constituent of mine from Opelika, Alabama. MSgt Edwards is retiring June 1st from the United States Air Force after over 20 years of service.

MSgt Edwards began his career as a Security Forces member. He was responsible for guarding our nation's highest priority weapons. He spent ten years in this position with assignments in Grand Forks Air Force Base, Izmir Air Station in Turkey; and Kirtland Air Force Base. In 2003, he re-trained into the contracting career field. He has been responsible for the purchase and acquisition of supplies, services and construction to support the needs of the installation at which he is serving. As a contractor, he has served at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ramstein Air Base and Hurlburt Field. MSgt Edwards has also served his country in deployments to Camp Victory, Iraq, Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan and Thumrait, Oman.

MSgt Edwards has served his country with honors for over 20 years. Some of these awards include: the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with four devices, the Air Force Achievement Medal with two devices, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Medal with one device, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with one device, the Iraq Campaign Medal with one device, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal with one device and the NATO Medal.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Master Sergeant Shawn Edwards for his tireless dedication to serving America. His service to our state and country is an inspiration. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

#### RECOGNIZING POLK STATE COLLEGE

#### HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Polk State College on the occasion of its 50 year anniversary.

Polk State College, the first higher education institution in Polk County, was established in 1964. The college enjoyed early success, enrolling 1,200 students in its first semester. Its continued growth necessitated construction of a larger, permanent campus. Ground was broken in 1966 on the shores of

Lake Elbert, and within a decade, the campus had expanded to accommodate the growing student population and academic program offerings.

Today, Polk State College serves more than 20,000 students of which 95% are Polk County residents. It is a multi-campus institution offering four-year degrees, including a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management. Further expansions are planned for Polk State in 2014, including the Polk State Center for Public Safety in Winter Haven.

I applaud Polk State College for their commitment to education and invaluable contributions to our community. Go Eagles! As their motto declares, Polk State College is "the perfect place to soar."

#### HONORING SIX OUTSTANDING GRADUATES TO RECEIVE FULBRIGHT AWARDS

##### HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor six outstanding graduates in Florida's 22nd District who have been selected to receive prestigious Fulbright awards to study, lecture, teach, or conduct research abroad during the 2013–2014 academic year. All of them were selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields.

The awardees are the following: Asma Aftab of the University of Miami, Jack Armstrong of Broward Community College, Anne Fertig of Rollins College, Debra Reyes-Brannon, also of Rollins College, Alicia Richardson of Florida State University, and Usar Suragarn of Florida Atlantic University.

These individuals are continuing a tradition of international exchange and mutual understanding that began in 1946, when Congress established the Fulbright Program. I would like to congratulate them on such a remarkable accomplishment and wish them the best of luck in their endeavors abroad.

#### THE SENSIBLE ESTATE TAX ACT OF 2014

##### HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Sensible Estate Tax Act of 2014. This legislation offers a thoughtful, comprehensive approach to reforming our estate tax system that is supported by voters across all income levels. As America comes out of one of the worst recessions in its history, this Congress must carefully consider all sources of revenue that are not only effective, but fair and equitable. This estate tax embodies those values.

The past decade of failed tax policies have killed jobs and resulted in significant income and wealth disparity in this country. The promise and strength of America lies in a system

that benefits everyone. These tax policies have steered us away from this promise and crippled the American economy. The middle class continues to shrink as more and more wealth flows to the top—and this country's current tax system makes this unfairness worse. The current estate tax policy is the poster child for the unfairness we all see.

That is why I am introducing this legislation. This bill will bring the estate tax back to the rates and exemptions from before the Bush tax cuts—a time when this country experienced continued prosperity and budget surpluses.

Specifically, the Sensible Estate Tax Act of 2014 will return the top marginal rate to 55% and lower the exemption for individuals to \$1 million. Estate tax loopholes are also addressed, including a 10-year minimum on grantor retained annuity trusts, limitations on the generation skipping transfer trust exemption, and rules for consistent basis reporting.

Succeeding financially in life is a wonderful American right and the families of wealthy people should benefit from that good fortune. But no one gets wealthy on their own. Financial success for any American is achieved by using the roads, schools, and public services that all Americans pay for. It is only fair that they reinvest in the country that provided them with so much opportunity.

#### RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF LAKE COUNTY RISING TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

##### HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because Lake County, Illinois is rising. Lake County has joined One Billion Rising around the world to stand up for justice, equality and women's rights.

This initiative started two years ago because the United Nations reported that one-in-three women will be victims of rape or other gender-based violence in their lifetimes.

That tragic statistic is simply unacceptable. That is why the global community has joined together to rise up to end this violence and work towards equality and justice for all.

This February 14th, one billion, in more than 200 countries, will rise, and I am most proud that Lake County will join this historic effort and rise up for justice.

One Billion Rising celebrates the empowerment of women and girls around the world, bringing people together in a joyous expression of freedom and strength.

Around the world, one billion people stood up last year and danced in support of justice. And true justice must include all facets of life: at home; at work; before the law; and everywhere else in society.

Every woman and girl deserves the freedom and confidence to live free, absent of fear.

Perhaps the single most effective tool in this campaign for justice is education. Education is how we improve our lives, and how we help others improve theirs. Education allows women and girls throughout the world to rise up and achieve their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, these committed men and women of Lake County have shown an inspir-

ing dedication and resolve to stand for justice. I thank everyone involved in this year's celebration for their work and for showing that Lake County is strong, Lake County is committed, Lake County is rising!

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to have my votes recorded on the House floor on Monday, February 10, 2014. Winter weather in the Midwest delayed my flight out of Minneapolis. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of H.R. 2431 (rollcall No. 55), in favor of H. Res. 447 (rollcall No. 56), and in favor of the Journal Vote (rollcall No. 57).

#### HONORING SCOTT DANIEL BYBEE

##### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Scott Daniel Bybee. Scott 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 177, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Scott has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Scott has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Scott has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Scott planned and led his troop in a tree-planting project in conjunction with the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Scott Daniel Bybee for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

#### RECOGNIZING VFW POST 7327 AND THE 2014 AWARD RECIPIENTS

##### HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2014*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Springfield Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7327 and the recipients of its 2014 Annual Awards.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW, traces its beginnings to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish American War established local organizations to bring awareness to their service and to advocate for veterans' retirement benefits and improved medical care. Annually, the nearly 2 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliaries contribute more than 8.6 million hours of volunteerism in the community, including participation in Make A Difference Day and National Volunteer Week.