

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