

School Boys Hockey team in the New York State Championship game on Sunday, March 15th. The Skaneateles Lakers defeated Williamsville East High School by a score of 5–2 for its first title in 26 years.

The Lakers fought back from a 2–0 deficit, working as a cohesive team to score 3 goals in under 6 minutes. Sophomore Raymond Falso received the tournament's Most Valuable Player Award, after having missed six weeks of the regular season due to an injury. Senior Captain Owen Kuhns, sophomores Raymond Falso, Reggie Buell, and Patrick Major were named to the All-Tournament team. The Lakers finished their season with a 22–3–1 record due to the hard work of seniors: Briggs Carter, Owen Kuhns, Jarrett McDonald, Cullen McGlynn, James Motyl, Brett Singler, and Trey Wirth; juniors: Karl Adams, Devin Callahan, Sam Clymer, Reece Eddy, Erik Huba, Bennett Morse, Kyle Ochsner, Jacob Patalino, and Benn Russell; sophomores: Matt Benson, Reggie Buell, Dimitris Christou, Ray Falso, Adam Lupo, Patrick Major, and Nick Rottger; freshmen: Matt Leveroni and Marc Welch; and eighth-grader: Luke Lynn. The team was coached by Mitch Major, a former captain of the 1989 Skaneateles Lakers team.

The Lakers have played with dedication and respect throughout the entire season. I commend the hard work, commitment, and teamwork these players have displayed throughout the season and the example they have set for youth throughout the 24th District. Excellence on the ice translates into excellence off the ice and the practice of sacrificing for the common goal, builds character in our children. I could not be more proud to congratulate these young men on their tremendous season.

CONGRATULATING NATHAN ECKERT ON RECEIVING THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RACHEL CARSON INDIVIDUAL AWARD

### HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Nathan Eckert, the recipient of the 2014 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Rachel Carson Individual Award. This award is bestowed upon employees of the Service whose outstanding contributions improve the Service's knowledge and management of fish and wildlife resources. Nathan is a mussel biologist at the Genoa National Fish Hatchery in Genoa, Wisconsin, and this recognition—considered one of the highest honorary awards in the Service—is well deserved for his extraordinary work in freshwater mussel conservation.

At the Genoa Fish Hatchery, Nathan has been researching and implementing new techniques and rearing systems for imperiled freshwater mussels. As an expert in mussel identification, Nathan has helped the Genoa facility produce nearly 15 million mussels of 17 species, and his endeavors have directly resulted in the release of more than 50,000 threatened or endangered mussels into waterways in the Upper Mississippi River Basin. Nathan's work also includes assisting various

mitigation efforts involving projects that impact freshwater mussel populations, providing rare mussel species to partners such as the U.S. Geological Survey and many toxicology labs to study the effects of pesticides and contaminants on mussel survival.

Nathan's dedication and leadership has proved critical to protecting and sustaining the rich biodiversity of the Mississippi River. It is with great pride today that I rise to congratulate Nathan for receiving the Rachel Carson Individual Award and to sincerely thank him and the Genoa Fish Hatchery for building a legacy of conservation for generations to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF EL CENTRO STUDENTS THIRD PLACE PRIZE IN C-SPAN'S VIDEO DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

### HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Andrea Vallejo, Shelbie Verbrugh, and Kennet Sandoval, seniors at Southwest High School in El Centro, California, for their outstanding achievement in winning Third Prize at C-SPAN's National 2015 StudentCam Competition. StudentCam offers students across the nation an opportunity to showcase their talents in a friendly national competition.

All aspects of the video production, including the research and planning in their documentary, "Salton Sea Restoration," demonstrated the highest level of critical thinking, initiative, and ingenuity. The "Salton Sea Restoration" placed third out of the 2,280 videos submitted, by more than 5,000 students around the country.

This competition is one of our nation's best platforms for our youth to express their opinions on national issues, provide eye-opening and inspiring views of the country, and contribute to the construction of a beloved community.

I want to congratulate these award recipients and encourage more youth involvement in the greater discourse about our communities.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 25TH PASTORAL ANNIVERSARY OF REV. DR. RONALD L. OWENS

### HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rev. Dr. Ronald L. Owens as he celebrates his 25th Pastoral Anniversary as Senior Pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Metuchen, New Jersey. Pastor Owens continues to provide outstanding spiritual leadership to the Metuchen community.

Dr. Owens attended New Hope Baptist Church as a child and in 1990 was called back to serve as its pastor. Under his leadership, the membership of New Hope Baptist Church has grown immensely. He has encouraged his congregants to practice faith in ac-

tion, serving the needs of people through several worship and outreach ministries.

In addition to his service to New Hope Baptist Church, Dr. Owens is also a leader in the Baptist church and an active member of the community. He has served as General Secretary of the General Baptist State Convention of New Jersey, Moderator of the Middlesex Central Baptist Association, Inc. and past president of the Metuchen/Edison Clergy Association. He is also the first Chaplain of the Metuchen Police and Fire Departments, where he continues to counsel, former Vice-Chairman of the Middlesex County Democratic Party and is a member of The Prince Hall Masons of New Jersey, among others.

Dr. Owens is married to Sister Cheryl Owens, formerly Cheryl Jones, and together they are blessed with two daughters and four grandsons. An active member of her faith, Sister Cheryl Owens is also celebrating her 25th anniversary of First Lady of New Hope Baptist Church and I would like to join with the church and community in thanking her for her service.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in celebrating the 25th Pastoral Anniversary of Rev. Dr. Ronald L. Owens. His leadership, service and dedication to the church and community are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

CONGRATULATING ELLIE CAMPBELL FOR HONOR ORCHESTRA OF AMERICA SELECTION

### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ellie Campbell from Richmond, Texas for her selection to the Honor Orchestra of America. She is one of only two Harpists who performed at the Orchestra America National Festival in Indianapolis.

Ellie performs with Virtuosi, a Houston-area orchestra, and the Region 13 Philharmonic Orchestra. With Virtuosi, she had the opportunity to perform the prelude music for Violinist Itzhak Perlman's performance with the Houston Symphony in Jones Hall. Music plays an important role in our lives and talented musicians like Ellie contribute to our ability to appreciate the beauty of classical music.

I commend Ellie for all of her musical accomplishments in Houston and beyond. On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again Ellie Campbell for her achievements.

HONORING MS. GAYE LEBARON, SONOMA COUNTY WOMAN OF THE YEAR

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gaye LeBaron as one of the Fifth District of California's Women of the Year as we celebrate Women's History Month. I regularly have the privilege to work with extraordinary women across our district, and I am proud to recognize Gaye as one of them.

Ms. LeBaron is a renowned columnist for the Press Democrat newspaper, the best known historian of Sonoma County, and has been prolifically telling the story of our county, with over eight thousand articles published. Ms. LeBaron possesses a rare gift: a genuine interest in people and their stories. In even the smallest stories, she saw the larger truth. Her influence and acclaim have grown over the years because of this focus and the level of trust she has built with the general public through her constancy.

As one of Ms. LeBaron's colleagues at the Press Democrat put it: "Readers trust her to tell them the truth about what is going on in their community. The depth of her commitment is palpable and readers respond to that."

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we honor and thank Ms. LeBaron not only for her commitment to telling the story of Sonoma County, but also for her commitment to our community. Ms. LeBaron's unyielding dedication to the people and places that make our region unique is greatly appreciated by our entire community and we wish her continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ADAM SMITH**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, March 4, 2015, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"no" on roll call vote No. 110 (on agreeing to the McClintock amendment to H.R. 749),

"yes" on roll call vote No. 111 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 749, with instructions), and

"yes" on roll call vote No. 112 (on passage of H.R. 749).

EXEMPLARY VOLUNTEERISM: PAM KLEINSCHMIDT AND JERRY LAWSON

**HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two citizen volunteers from the Lincoln Park neighborhood in Duluth. They have used their talents to give back to the community by assisting with policing efforts.

Pam Kleinschmidt regularly staffs the Lincoln Park and West Duluth police stations by answering phones and assisting with walk-in traffic. Pam, who is often referred to as the "Mayor of Lincoln Park," goes out of her way often at her own expense to take phone calls from concerned citizens at all hours of the day and night. In addition to helping the police build relationships with residents and small business owners in the neighborhood, she organizes monthly meetings for citizens and makes sure their concerns are addressed. Pam has been instrumental each week in keeping an eye on problem areas in the neighborhood and works with the police to help find solutions.

When the police department found itself needing help with managing seized cars used to commit crimes, they were fortunate to find a multi-faceted volunteer in Jerry Lawson. They needed a mechanic, an accountant and a customer service representative. He fulfills all these tasks and the police department frankly says they couldn't manage the impound lot without him. Jerry's volunteer efforts as he helped establish the "Vial of Life" program, which provides medical information to first responders as well as helping expand and improve the citizen patrol program.

They were recently honored by receiving the Police Chief's Citizen Partnerships Awards by Duluth's Police Chief Gordon Ramsay. I stand today to salute these exceptional volunteers who are making a true difference in their community.

DEMOCRACY RESTORATION ACT OF 2015

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Democracy Restoration Act of 2015. This legislation will serve to clarify and expand voting rights, as well as assist former felons with their reintegration into our democracy.

The Sentencing Project reports that, since 1997, 23 states have amended felony disenfranchisement policies in an effort to reduce their restrictiveness and expand voter eligibility. These reforms have resulted in an estimate of 800,000 citizens regaining their voting rights. Yet, despite these reforms, an estimated 5.85 million people continue to be ineligible to vote in Federal elections, including more than 4 million who reside in the 35 states that still prohibit some combination of persons on probation, parole, and/or people who have completed their sentence from voting.

I believe that there are three grave discrepancies in State laws regarding felony convictions that lead to unfairness in Federal elections. First, there is no uniform standard for voting in Federal elections, which leads to an egregious disparity and unequal participation in Federal elections based solely on where a person lives. Second, laws governing the restoration of voting rights after a felony conviction are unequal throughout the country and persons in some States can easily regain their voting rights while in other States persons effectively lose their right to vote permanently. Third, State disenfranchisement laws disproportionately impact ethnic minorities, thus adversely infringing upon citizens of these communities constitutional right to vote.

These concerns about ex-offender disenfranchisement are not rhetorical. In the past two election cycles, flawed voter purges have deprived thousands of legitimate voters of their rights. For example, an erroneous interpretation of state law by the Ohio Secretary of State deprived thousands of ex-felons in that state of even the right to register. Only Federal law can conclusively resolve the ambiguities in this area plaguing our voting system.

Like the States, Congress has recognized the need to address the barriers to full citizen-

ship faced by ex-offenders. This voting legislation is the next step in restoring the ex-felon community to full citizenship. Denying voting rights to ex-offenders robs them of the opportunity to fully participate and contribute to their society. Disenfranchisement laws isolate and alienate ex-offenders, and have been shown to serve as one more obstacle in their attempt to successfully reintegrate into society. Moreover, these obstacles adversely impact the voting participation of their families, further undermining the effectiveness of our voting system.

This legislation is a narrowly crafted effort to expand voting rights for ex-felons, while protecting State prerogatives to generally establish voting qualifications. This legislation would only apply to persons who have been released from prison, and it would only apply to federal elections. Consequently, the bill is fully consistent with Constitutional requirements established by the Supreme Court in a series of decisions upholding Federal voting rights laws.

In past Congresses, voting restoration legislation has been supported by a broad coalition of groups interested in voting and civil rights, including the NAACP, ACLU, the National Council of Churches (National and Washington Office), the National Urban League, the Human Rights Watch and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, among many others.

The practice of many states denying voting rights to former felons represents a vestige from a time when suffrage was denied to whole classes of our population based on race, gender, religion, national origin, and property. Ex-felons who have been lawfully released from prisons have paid their debts to society. To continue denying them the ability to reclaim rights as citizens resurrects historic unenlightened practices of our society. Ultimately, I believe that we fail not only ex-offenders by denying them the right to vote, but the rest of a society that has struggled throughout its history to be legitimate and inclusive. Just like poll taxes and literacy tests, it is long past time that these restrictions be relegated to unenlightened history.

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2015*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Rotary Club of Katy for receiving the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce Award for Exceptional Service. Formed in 1946, the Rotary Club has served Katy for nearly sixty years.

The Katy Area Chamber of Commerce selected the Rotary Club of Katy because of their dedication to our community. Every year they hold two large fundraisers. To date, they have raised and donated over \$110,000 to local schools and charities in Katy. I thank the Rotary Club of Katy for their selfless dedication and focus on giving back to our community. With an emphasis on community service, Rotary Clubs across America play a vital role in strengthening our local communities.

On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Rotary Club of Katy for being presented the Katy Area Chamber of