

Thank you for everything, Joshua. You're worth it. Rest in peace.

IN MEMORY OF OFFICER GREGG BENNER

(Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Gregg Benner of the Rio Rancho Police Department, who was killed in the line of duty on March 25.

I offer my heartfelt condolences to the family and loved ones of Officer Benner as they mourn the loss of a husband, a father, grandfather, and friend who was taken from them far too soon.

Officer Benner dedicated his life to protecting his community and his country. From his career in the Air Force to the Rio Rancho Police Department, Officer Benner put his health and safety on the line to make us safer, and he leaves behind a legacy of valor and service.

The loss of any police officer is a painful reminder of the dangers they face. While we are shaken by Officer Benner's loss, we can take comfort in the memories he has left behind for all those who knew him and the example that he set.

While a tragedy such as this is unexpected and shocking, the response has brought out the best of the residents of Rio Rancho who have displayed an outpouring of support and sympathy.

My thoughts and prayers are with Officer Benner's family, fellow officers, and the entire Rio Rancho community. I hope they find peace in the most difficult time.

Officer Benner, may God bless you, and may you rest in peace.

HONORING DR. JUAN M. ORTIZ

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to wish a happy and healthy 90th birthday to Dr. Juan Ortiz.

As one of the oldest full-time practicing M.D.'s in the U.S., Dr. Ortiz has provided exemplary care to his family, friends, and patients in our south Florida community. Dr. Ortiz has always shown impeccable leadership in both his professional and charitable endeavors, and his reputation for excellence is widely known.

When he is not treating his patients locally, you will find Dr. Ortiz volunteering his medical services during catastrophes in remote locations throughout Central America, the Caribbean, and Africa.

Not only is Dr. Ortiz a seasoned medical professional, but he is also a poet, a writer, and an avid traveler, with destinations extending as far as Antarctica.

Dr. Ortiz, once again, I would like to express my appreciation for your contributions and your service to south Florida. I wish you a happy and healthy 90th birthday.

URGING SUPPORT OF H.R. 2615 AND H. RES. 291

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 2615 and H. Res. 291, both of which I introduced earlier this week.

Nearly a century ago, the United States purchased the Virgin Islands from Denmark for its geopolitical importance. The citizens of the Virgin Islands of the United States commemorate the events of that date, March 31, 1917, each year.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 291 asks the United States Postal Service to create a commemorative stamp in honor of the centennial.

The purpose of H.R. 2615 will form a bipartisan congressional commission to research, plan, develop, and carry out activities the commission considers appropriate to commemorate the 100th anniversary.

The commission will bring a national awareness to the events commemorating the centennial, engage lawmakers here in Congress, as well as the administration, and a new national discussion around the relationship and place of the Virgin Islands with the United States.

The coming centennial anniversary of the inclusions of the Virgin Islands in America affords us an opportunity to revisit this history and our ongoing relationship. It is also an opportunity to highlight the enormous contributions to the United States by Virgin Islanders and the richness of our Virgin Islands heritage.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF ERIK HITE

(Ms. MCSALLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the life of Erik Hite, a Tucson police officer and former Air Force member who was killed in the line of duty 7 years ago this week, as well as the great work of his wife, Nohemy, following his tragic death.

Erik was a model public servant and an exemplary cop. To honor his memory and his commitment to family, Nohemy founded the Erik Hite Foundation in 2009 to support construction of a daycare facility for the children of police officers, firefighters, military personnel, and other emergency responders. The foundation also runs enrichment and outreach programs that offer a safe and positive environment for these children.

Today, the facility cares for up to 45 children a day in a flexible setting that matches the around-the-clock hours that men and women of law enforcement are assigned. It has become a lifeline for many families who sacrifice to protect and to serve our community, just like Erik did.

Though nothing can make up for Erik's tragic death, Nohemy has kept his spirit and the ideals he lived for alive through her amazing efforts. She has shown tremendous courage and perseverance, and I commend this incredible woman for the difference she continues to make in southern Arizona.

REMEMBERING THE APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT AND LIEUTENANT GENERAL TOM STAFFORD

(Mr. LUCAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a momentous event in this Nation's history and honor the men and women who worked so diligently to make it happen.

The Apollo-Soyuz test project, which took place in July of 1975, was the first international human spaceflight, a joint operation between two rivaling superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union. The Apollo-Soyuz test project was so successful, many historians attribute the handshake in space between Apollo Commander Tom Stafford and Soyuz Commander Aleksey Leonov to be the beginning of the end of the cold war.

Lieutenant General Tom Stafford was born in Weatherford, Oklahoma, in 1930. After graduating from the Naval Academy, earning his wings from the Air Force in 1953, and graduating from the Air Force Experimental Flight Test Pilot School, Stafford went on to serve as a pilot on Gemini 6, a commander of Gemini 9, commander of Apollo 10, and, finally, commander of the Apollo-Soyuz test project.

Thomas Stafford is a true patriot, a man who served this country in inspiring ways for over 60 years. I want to congratulate him on his accomplished service and his distinguished career.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA LADY GATORS SOFTBALL TEAM

(Mr. YOHO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Florida, in Gainesville, Florida, the Lady Gators softball team. The Lady Gators won the Women's College World Series in Oklahoma City last night, defeating Michigan 4-1. This is the Lady Gators' second national championship in 2 years. It is a back-to-back national championship.