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LEE VELA RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS
 PUBLIC RELATIONS LEGACY
 AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lee Vela of Sugar Land, TX, for receiving the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Houston Legacy Award.

PRSA awarded Lee this prestigious honor at its annual Excalibur Awards program. The Legacy Award is given to individuals who have 25 years of experience in public relations and demonstrate a strong sense of leadership and expertise in the field, showcasing a lifetime of achievement in public relations. Lee serves as Vice President of Public Affairs for the Houston region of Clear Channel Outdoor. He previously served as Chief Communications Officer for Houston Independent School district and the Port of Houston Authority. Lee's leadership at Clear Channel Outdoor was critical to the development of the "Gulf Coast Emergency Communications Network," which helped save lives during Hurricane Harvey by displaying emergency messages on company billboards. He is the chairman of the Fire Fighters Foundation of Houston and President of the Outdoor Advertising Association of Texas. Lee has also been a PRSA member since 1986 and is the past president of the Houston PRSA chapter.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Lee Vela on receiving the PRSA Houston Legacy Award. His work brings great pride to TX-22. I thank him.

HONORING MOVING FORWARDS
 TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 20th anniversary of the founding of Moving Forward Towards Independence, an organization that provides adults with intellectual disabilities the skills needed to live and work independently.

Moving Forward Towards Independence was founded in 1998 by a group of parents. This group created a unique transitional housing program that assists young adults with intellectual and high functioning Autism Spectrum Disabilities. Moving Forward Towards Independence offers structured on-campus group housing, apartment living near campus and off-campus community living. Moving Forward Towards Independence provides classes, social activities and individual case management services to its clients to assist them in maintaining friendships, relationships and employment.

Moving Forward Towards Independence has had hundreds of adults, ages 18 to 37, partici-

pate in its program. Residents are from all over the country and come to Moving Forward Towards Independence with the goal of eventually being able to live independently with minimal support.

Moving Forward Towards Independence is an integral part of our community. It is active in the Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership and is a member of the Napa Chamber of Commerce. The organization regularly meets with the Napa Valley Community Organizations Active in Disaster for disaster relief preparedness. Moving Forward Towards Independence is a strong supporter of the Napa Special Olympics and partners with the Napa College Disability Services Unit. The organization is also an active member of the Disability Committee to the Napa Nonprofits Coalition.

Mr. Speaker, Moving Forward Towards Independence is a great contributor to our Napa Valley community. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor Moving Forward Towards Independence here today.

TRIBUTE TO GLADYS AND
 DERALD BLOIS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Gladys and Derald Blois of Council Bluffs, Iowa on the very special occasion of their 70th wedding anniversary. They were married on June 27, 1948 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Honey Creek, Iowa.

Gladys and Derald's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 70th anniversary, I hope it is filled with happy memories. May their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 70th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR.
 ROBERT FRANKLIN PASERO

HON. DOUG LAMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker I rise today to honor the life of a local community leader and retired Chief of Police, Robert Franklin Pasero.

Bob Pasero was always an active member in the community of Orland. I had the privilege of meeting Bob when he was serving as the Orland Chief of Police from 2004 to 2010, and upon his retirement celebration. Bob was a role model for many in the City of Orland because of his interactions and care for the people around him and the good humor he brought with it. As the Chief of Police, he always led people in the right direction with his fatherly attitude and compassion. Bob was respected and loved by the people around him.

You would also find Bob doing the announcing at the local Glenn County Fair parade each year, having something encouraging to say about each entry as he knew just about each one personally.

After Bob retired as Chief of Police, he did not let that stop him from serving his town. He wanted to honor those who served our country so he assisted in facilitating the Motor-Icicle Run in honor of Orland's veterans.

As a minister of his church, Victory in Christ Community Church, Bob mentored and married many young couples. Bob also organized events for his church such as the Annual Soup Bowl where once a year he and his church would make and serve food to the homeless in the community. Bob also had a passion for music and used his talent to serve God as the leader of the Victory in Christ Community Church worship band. Bob counted himself as a "prayer warrior" constantly asking for prayer through social media and personally for people he knew of in need, touching many lives with his strong faith.

Bob Pasero passed away on July 25, 2018 after a hard fought battle with cancer. He will always be remembered by his family and neighbors for his contagious love for life and for others that he so gladly served.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Robert Franklin Pasero for his commitment and service to the community of Orland.

ALEXIS PAGET RECEIVES LEUKEMIA AND LYMPHOMA SOCIETY HERO AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Alexis Paget of Missouri City, TX, for receiving the Hero Award from the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Alexis, a 16 year old student at Ridge Point High School, won the national award for her fundraising efforts during the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Texas Gulf Coast Chapter's 2018 Students of the Year campaign. Alexis raised over \$61,000 with her fundraising team and her class brought in over \$350,000 to fight blood cancer. This funding is then distributed by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to over 1.3 million blood cancer patients in the U.S. Paget ran her campaign in honor of her grandfather, who lost his battle to Acute Myeloid Leukemia.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Alexis Paget for receiving the Hero Award from the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. I thank her for her dedication to creating a world without blood cancer.

IN RECOGNITION OF CONNIE JACKSON

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Connie Jackson, an extraordinary public serv-

ant and tireless advocate for residents for her 15 years as the City Manager for the City of San Bruno, California. She has left her mark on just about every square inch of this Peninsula city of 43,000 people. I have had the great honor to work with Connie during the best and the worst of times. Her moral compass guides her and she is never afraid to take on challenges. I am proud to call Connie Jackson a colleague and good friend.

Under Connie's capable leadership, San Bruno has not only survived the Great Recession of 2008, it came out stronger on the other side. All city programs and services were intact, the city was financially stronger, and it earned an AA+ credit rating. Connie oversaw San Bruno's completion of an updated General Plan and helped create a long-term vision for a city friendly to residents and businesses. She is particularly proud of the redevelopment of a former Navy site into a housing complex called Village at the Crossing, which provides over 1,000 apartments for individuals and families, including affordable units for senior citizens. She was also instrumental in the redevelopment of The Shops at Tanforan, a large shopping mall frequented by shoppers and diners from all over the Bay Area.

For over a decade, Connie worked on the planning, design and construction of the CalTrain grade separation and station, offering commuters access to convenient public transportation. Connie oversaw the rebuilding of the entire aging water and wastewater infrastructure, and the building of mixed-use residential and commercial projects downtown and along El Camino Real. One of the elements to her success is her talent to connect the dots and collaborate with other individuals and agencies.

The ultimate test of her leadership came on September 9, 2010. At 6:11 p.m. that evening, a Pacific Gas and Electric Company natural gas transmission line exploded and tore a giant crater into one of the residential streets. The horrendous explosion and fire killed eight residents, destroyed 38 homes and devastated a neighborhood. Connie, along with other city leaders, fought with everything she had to heal the physical and psychological trauma her community suffered. I closely worked with Connie in the years following the explosion and she never wavered or was afraid to speak truth to power. She demonstrated strong leadership in the initial emergency response, community and recovery efforts, and pipeline safety advocacy. She led the city's work with the National Transportation Safety Board investigation and the proceedings before the California Public Utilities Commission. Connie and her colleagues were instrumental in exposing regulatory failures and corruption and in forcing corrections. Due to that work, cities all across the country have safer, improved gas utility infrastructure.

Connie was also a consoler throughout the crisis. She offered her shoulder to cry on, her hugs to comfort, her smile to reassure, and her wisdom to move forward. To this day, she has regular contact with survivors.

While nothing will bring back the eight victims of the San Bruno explosion, PG&E was forced to give \$120 million to the city for community restoration, recovery and restitution. Being the community-loving and resilient city that San Bruno is, the residents decided they wanted to spend the money benefitting all residents. The city will build a new recreation

center and aquatics center for everyone in San Bruno to enjoy.

Connie's talents and achievements have been recognized on many occasions. For example, she received the 2012 League of California Cities City Manager of Distinction award, the California Women Leading Government Leadership Award, and the 2006 International City/County Management Association program innovation award. She is a life member of the Municipal Management Assistants of Northern California and a member of ICMA.

Before serving San Bruno, Connie was the city manager of the City of Hercules and the City of Fort Bragg for a combined 18 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to recognize Connie Jackson, a woman and leader I hold in high esteem, for her vision, strength and perseverance fighting for the interests of the residents of three California cities. She can enter her well-deserved retirement knowing that she has improved the lives of tens of thousands of people. San Bruno residents are lucky to count themselves among them. Connie leaves behind giant shoes to fill. Many will lead San Bruno through the next decades, but no one will leave a legacy that echoes across the generations. This will be the unique contribution of Connie Jackson.

TRIBUTE TO HOPE AND BILL PRATT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Hope and Bill Pratt of New Market, Iowa on the very special occasion of their 70th wedding anniversary. They were married on June 27, 1948.

Hope and Bill's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 70th anniversary, I hope it is filled with happy memories. May their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 70th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF DR. RUSSELL PLATT

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of Dr. Russell Platt, age 91, who passed away on August 2, 2018 in Akron, Ohio. Dr. Platt was the first African-American doctor to finish his residency at Akron City Hospital, and he was one of the first African-American doctors in Akron to have an integrated medical practice. His story is truly inspiring.

Dr. Platt was born on July 10, 1927 in Latta, South Carolina to Francis and Carlie Platt. He