

deter him from his struggle to build a truly free and democratic Poland. In 1989, he was a member of the historic "Round Table" that negotiated the peaceful transition of power. In fact, a delegation from the Helsinki Commission, that included my good friend, and now-House Majority Leader STENY HOYER, was in Poland in August 1989, and watched from the gallery of the Polish parliament when Tadeusz Mazowiecki was elected the first non-communist Prime Minister in more than four decades. Bronislaw Geremek played a singular role in bringing that democratic transition to Poland and the democratic transition in Poland helped bring democracy to all of Eastern Europe.

Bronislaw Geremek subsequently served his country in many ways: as a member of Parliament, not only as a Foreign Minister but the Foreign Minister who signed the treaty bringing Poland into NATO, and then as a member of the European Union Parliament.

As chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I would especially like to note the important role Bronislaw Geremek played when, as Foreign Minister, he served as chair-in-office of the OSCE in 1998. Few people understood as well the historical role of the Helsinki Accords and he brought to that mission an unmatched moral leadership.

Perhaps most of all, however, Bronislaw Geremek personified the best of Eastern Europe's intelligentsia intellectually curious and accomplished, outraged by injustice and impelled to resist it despite the risks, and possessed of a wry sense of humor that endeared him to his colleagues.

Bronislaw Geremek's time on this earth was not merely full, but profoundly consequential. The world is a better place for his having lived. We, in the postcommunist-era, are all the beneficiaries of his passion, labor and achievements.

Madam Speaker, may Bronislaw Geremek rest in peace, honored by his countrymen and women, remembered fondly and missed by those fortunate enough to have been his friends, and invoked as a role model wherever brains and courage are sorely needed to face down tyranny.

IN HONOR OF RACHEL FINKBEINER OF RAMSEY, MINNESOTA, ONE OF THIS YEAR'S LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE AWARDEES

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 21, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Miss Rachel Finkbeiner, a high school student from Ramsey, Minnesota, who has been recognized as a state-wide winner in the Library of Congress' 2008 Letters About Literature competition.

Letters About Literature is a reading and writing program sponsored by the Library of Congress Center for the Book in partnership with Target Stores. It challenges young readers to write a personal letter to an author detailing how that author's work changed the

reader's view of the world or view of him or herself. More than 59,000 children in grades 4 through 12 participated this year and only 150 were recognized as leaders on the state or national level.

Rachel wrote to noted American author F. Scott Fitzgerald about her experience in reading *The Great Gatsby*. A tenth-grader at Elk River High School, Rachel showed a great maturity in her writing. As she says in her letter:

Reading *The Great Gatsby* opened my eyes on what wealth really is. Even though rich people might see the scratches on their Porsche convertibles, and the flaws in their fancy hotels in Mexico, they seem to miss the real joy of living.

Money was the one thing I wanted in my perfect life. After reading *The Great Gatsby*, my view of perfect life has changed. My dream life would be having a loving family, being thankful I get to watch a T.V. show on a scratchy black and white television, being relieved of living right above my store without the stress of commuting to work and able to look forward to a sunny day tomorrow so I could dry my laundry outside. While I may never know what the perfect life really is, I'd like to thank you Mr. Fitzgerald for showing me that in my perfect life—money should come last.

Rachel is one of Elk River's star volleyball players and clearly has a strong academic career ahead of her as well. We in Minnesota's Sixth District are proud of her accomplishments and look forward to many great things from Rachel in years to come.

HONORING T.E. BECK ON HIS 50TH YEAR SERVING CENTRAL TEXAS AT UNION STATE BANK

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 21, 2008

Mr. EDWARDS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a lifelong friend of Central Texas, Thomas Elisha Beck, known as T.E. to his friends and family. This week, we celebrate his 50th year in banking at Union State Bank, where he has served the people of Texas with pride and integrity.

In 1958, T.E. was first hired at Union State Bank in Florence. He worked just about every job possible at the bank including running the teller window, bookkeeping, posting and filing checks, and balancing the general ledger. T.E. knows the business inside and out and is widely respected for developing personal relationships with customers over the years. He is a man of his word, which is always sealed with a firm handshake.

T.E. has seen Union State Bank grow from one small community bank to six branch operations across central Texas. Currently, T.E. is Senior Executive Vice President of Union State Bank and the branch manager and loan officer at the main branch in Florence, Texas. His hard work, dedication and dependability over the past 50 years, make him an important part of Union State Bank's current and future success. If I had to say what the secret of T.E.'s success all these years has been, I would say that it comes down to one word: re-

spect. T.E. Beck respects others, and treats them accordingly. That is one of many reasons I am honored to call him my friend.

T.E.'s single most important accomplishment is his love for and dedication to his family. As a family man, T.E. loves spending time with his family, especially his four grandchildren: Shanda, Bailey, Cade and Beau. We also rise to honor the Beck family for the supportive role they have played in T.E.'s life and success.

T.E. has also devoted much of his time to his community and numerous causes over the years. He has been a member his entire life of the Youngsport Church of Christ and treasurer since 1978. In 1992, he was president of the Florence Chamber of Commerce and received the honor of the Florence Chamber of Commerce citizen of the year. Since 1993, he has been a board member and past president of the Central Texas Children's Center in Temple, Texas. He is currently on the board of directors and treasurer of the Texas Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame headquartered in Belton, Texas.

T.E. has always loved the ranching lifestyle and has continued his father's ambitions on the ranch. Today he raises cattle, Boer goats, Great Pyrenees dogs and has several roping horses. Besides being a rancher his entire life, T.E. has been roping since he was 17 years old, when he started calf roping and later began team roping. He is a member of the Senior Pro Rodeo Association and continues to travel all over Texas to rodeos with his son Steve.

I want to personally thank T.E. for his friendship and lifetime of service to our community. He is an example of one person who has truly made a positive difference in the life of others, and we would all do well to follow his example.

T.E., thank you for your fine example and congratulations on your 50th year at Union State Bank. We wish you all the best in the years ahead.

A TRIBUTE IN RECOGNITION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY AND HISTORIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF TWO COMMERCE ATHLETES, BRENDA VILLA AND PATTY CARDENAS, TO THE SPORT OF U.S. WOMEN'S WATER POLO

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 21, 2008

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend two extraordinary athletes who are members of the United States Women's Water Polo Team competing in the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing, China. In addition to being first-generation Mexican American Latina trailblazers in the world of competitive water polo, both of these exceptional women call the City of Commerce, in the 34th Congressional District, their home.

As children, Brenda Villa and Patty Cardenas learned to play water polo and hone their skills at the local swimming club, Commerce Aquatics. Looking back on their introduction to the sport, Brenda, now 28, and

Patty, 23, credit the City of Commerce and the club's dedicated coaches for encouraging and developing their interest in water polo.

Today, in a \$20 million facility built to Olympic specifications, the city continues to encourage young people—the future Brendas and Pattys—to participate and excel in water polo. In addition to employing two full-time and three part-time youth water polo coaches and allocating more than \$250,000 a year on its programs, the City of Commerce also covers participants' competition-related expenses. These expenses might otherwise prevent the community's economically disadvantaged youth from participating in tournaments.

After Commerce Aquatics, Brenda and Patty continued to play water polo at Bell Gardens High School.

When Brenda entered high school in the fall of 1994, the school did not have a girls water polo team. With Brenda competing alongside and against the male players, the Bell Gardens Boys Water Polo Team won four consecutive league championships and back-to-back California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Division III championships.

In the fall of 1998, following Brenda's graduation, the younger Patty entered Bell Gardens High School just in time to join the school's newly-formed Girls Water Polo Team. At that point, CIF rules prohibited Patty from playing on the Boys Water Polo Team. With Patty as part of the high school's first girls team, the female players went on to win four consecutive CIF Championships.

Following high school, both women would go on to realize their dreams of playing competitive women's water polo in college and in the Olympics.

At Stanford University, Brenda took a leave of absence to train with the Olympic Women's National Team for the 2000 Olympic debut of the women's water polo competition in Sydney, Australia. The team won the Silver Medal. Two years later, Brenda was awarded the Peter J. Cutino Award, an honor given annually to the top female collegiate water polo player in the nation. In 2004, as a member of the U.S. Women's National Water Polo Team at the Athens Olympics, Brenda and her teammates took home the Bronze Medal.

Between Olympic Games, Brenda achieved another victory. In 2003, when she graduated from Stanford with a degree in Political Science, she became the first member of her family to earn a college degree.

Patty stayed closer to home after high school. She enrolled at Golden West Community College in Huntington Beach, California. There, Patty helped her team win the 2002 California State Championship. In 2005, Patty transferred to the University of Southern California where, for the past couple of years, she has trained on the U.S. National Women's Polo Team.

The Summer Olympics in Beijing will be Patty's first Olympic competition and Brenda's third. This time, with both Commerce athletes on the same team, they hope to work together with their other teammates to bring home the Gold.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the 34th Congressional District and the state of California, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Brenda and Patty on their incredible

achievements and extending to them and their teammates our best wishes for a victorious trip to the Beijing Summer Olympics. I can assure you, regardless of how the team places, these two remarkable athletes will always be champions to their many devoted fans in the City of Commerce. They are among our hometown heroes, and we are very proud of them—in and out of the pool.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, July 22, 2008 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JULY 23

9:30 a.m.
 Environment and Public Works
 To hold hearings to examine the Midwest floods, focusing on ways to determine what happened and how to improve managing risk and responses in the future.
 SD-406

Veterans' Affairs
 To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs, focusing on responding to the needs of returning United States National Guard and Reserve members.
 SR-418

9:45 a.m.
 Energy and Natural Resources
 To hold hearings to examine the status of existing federal programs targeted at reducing gasoline demand, focusing on additional proposals for near-term gasoline demand reductions.
 SD-366

10 a.m.
 Finance
 Business meeting to consider S.J. Res. 44, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule set forth as requirements contained in the August 17, 2007, letter to State Health Officials from the Director of the Center for Medicaid and State Operations in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the State Health Official Letter 08-003, dated May 7, 2008, from such Center, and S.J. Res. 41, approving the renewal of import restrictions con-

tained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.
 SD-215

Foreign Relations
 To hold hearings to examine the nominations of James Christopher Swan, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti, Alan W. Eastham, Jr., of Arkansas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo, and W. Stuart Symington, of Missouri, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda, all of the Department of State.
 SD-419

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
 To hold hearings to examine information sharing, focusing on connecting the dots at the Federal, State, and Local levels.
 SD-342

Judiciary
 To hold hearings to examine courting big business, focusing on the Supreme Court's recent decisions on corporate misconduct and laws regulating corporations.
 SD-226

Joint Economic Committee
 To hold hearings to examine skyrocketing household costs and falling home prices, focusing on ways to help American families out of this crisis.
 SD-608

10:30 a.m.
 Appropriations
 To hold oversight hearing to examine the adequacy of defense contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan.
 SD-106

11 a.m.
 Aging
 To hold hearings to examine person-centered care, focusing on reforming services and bringing elderly citizens back to the heart of society.
 SD-562

1:30 p.m.
 Foreign Relations
 To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Tatiana C. Gfoeller-Volkoff, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Kyrgyz Republic, Richard G. Olson, Jr., of New Mexico, to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, David D. Pearce, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, and Michele Jeanne Sison, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Lebanon, all of the Department of State.
 SD-419

2 p.m.
 Judiciary
 To hold hearings to examine the nominations of J. Patrick Rowan, of Maryland, and Jeffrey Leigh Sedgwick, of Massachusetts, both to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, and William B. Carr, Jr., of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission.
 SD-226

2:30 p.m.
 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
 Children and Families Subcommittee
 To continue hearings to examine childhood obesity, focusing on declining health of America's next generation (Part II).
 SD-430
 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
 To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Carol A. Dalton, Anthony C.