

South Carolina, the American-Bulgarian partnership continues to strengthen. Kalin and Sharon have founded the Songs of Life International Choral Festival to be held this November 21st through December 1st. The festival will include performances in Plovdiv and Sofia, Bulgaria, as well as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, Israel. It marks the 65th anniversary of the historic rescue of Bulgaria's Jews during the Holocaust and serves as an opportunity to connect citizens from these nations on cultural, educational, and spiritual levels. Songs of Life will bring together choirs, musicians, educators, and students from around the world.

Just as our sister-city relationships serve to advance friendships and understanding among Americans and Bulgarians, the organizers of this festival hope and believe that it will have as positive an impact on an international level. Not only are the United States and Bulgaria allies, but we share common values and a belief in freedom. The Songs of Life International Choir Festival is a platform to share these values with the rest of the world.

I wish to commend Kalin and Sharon Tchonev for their hard work in strengthening the partnership between the United States and Bulgaria.

IN HONOR OF THE EL HASA
TEMPLE #28

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the El Hasa Temple #28 Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, A.E.A.O.N.M.S., on the occasion of their one-hundredth anniversary. The members of El Hasa Temple #28 celebrate this grand anniversary with their 46th annual Potentate Ball. I also rise in honor of El Hasa's current Illustrious Potentate, Andrew D. White, and in recognition of his outstanding leadership and dedication to the community.

El Hasa Temple #28 A.E.A.O.N.M.S. was founded on November 19, 1908, when it obtained its Charter from the Imperial Council. The Charter was delivered to Charles E. Gordon, who became El Hasa's first Illustrious Potentate. On the occasion of El Hasa's one-hundredth anniversary, I also rise in honor of H.H. Franklin, the 25th Illustrious Potentate, F.D. Armstead, the 50th Illustrious Potentate, and LaVon McCall, the 75th Illustrious Potentate. El Hasa is part of an international fraternity built on the values of fellowship, philanthropy and community. During Christmas each year, members of El Hasa Temple #28 distribute Christmas baskets to the economically disadvantaged in the Greater Cleveland Area.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor of El Hasa Temple #28, as they celebrate their one-hundredth anniversary during their annual Potentate Ball, and in recognition of the outstanding community work its members contribute to the Greater Cleveland Area.

RECOGNIZING NEAL SUNDEEN,
JOHN ALDECOA AND PAUL
GRIFFEN, AMERICAN LEGION DE-
PARTMENT OF ARIZONA, ADVOCACY FOR THE G.I. BILL

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Neal Sundeen, Mr. John Aldecoa and Mr. Paul Griffen, three individuals from my district whose leadership roles in The American Legion was instrumental in building broad bi-partisan support for the new 21st Century G.I. Bill of Rights. These three men deserve the admiration of their state and nation for their efforts to improve the lives of Veterans. I commend them for their tireless service and sacrifice to this country.

This year, with the passage of the G.I. Bill, 1.5 million post-9/11 military veterans will have access to a college education. This legislation will help fulfill the obligation America has to those with honorable wartime service. As a member of the Veterans Affairs Committee and the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations I regard this as the most important piece of veteran's legislation in a generation.

I commend Mr. Sundeen, Mr. Aldecoa and Mr. Griffen for their selfless dedication to the advancement of this legislation. These gentlemen have worked in the State of Arizona, as well in Washington, to make their elected officials fully aware of the importance of this bill.

The grassroots efforts of these three men will help this new generation of returning servicemembers make a more successful transition back to civilian life. This will not only benefit those veterans, it will also provide a tremendous boost to our nation's economy and productivity. The new G.I. Bill keeps our promise to provide better educational opportunities to the men and women who have valiantly protected this country and its liberties.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing these gentlemen for their efforts and their continued dedication to America's veterans.

MR. BRUCE LEETZ AND NORTH
COAST DISTRIBUTING

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I stand before you today to recognize one of Northwest Indiana's exemplary companies. For nearly seventy years, North Coast Distributing has been a leader in the Northwest Indiana business sector, and while the company has seen much success, it is what they have done to give back to the community that makes them so vital to Northwest Indiana. For the third straight year, North Coast, in conjunction with Ivy Tech Community College of Northwest Indiana, will be providing the community with their "Fall

Innovators Cafe" in an effort to share their expertise in operating a successful organization with regional and community leaders. This special event will take place on Thursday, September 25, 2008.

A local, family-owned beer wholesaler since 1939, North Coast Distributing, formerly Valpo Beverages, Incorporated, has become one of the premier distributors in the Midwest. The success they have seen, under the leadership of President and Chief Executive Officer Bruce Leetz, is in large part due to the core values of North Coast: Passion for business, Respect for each other and surroundings, Integrity to demonstrate the highest ethical and moral standards, Commitment to achieve goals, and in Excelling in everything they do. This commitment to excellence has led to many accolades at the local, state, and national levels for North Coast, who in 2007 became the first distributor to win both the Miller and Coors top distributor awards. While the many awards they have received are outstanding enough, North Coast's commitment to corporate responsibility and to their community are the most impressive.

Led by Bruce Leetz, North Coast Distributing has always been committed to promoting responsible consumption and in giving back to the community, as is evidenced by their participation in the upcoming innovative session. A graduate of Valparaiso High School and Ball State University, Bruce has been employed with North Coast for over 45 years. In 1970, Bruce took over as President of the company, and his accomplishments, as well as the success of North Coast, have been astonishing. A true expert and legend in the industry, Bruce has served in many capacities, including: membership on the National Beer Wholesalers Association's Executive Board, as President of the Indiana Beverage Alliance for ten years, and as Chairman of both the Miller and Coors Distributor Councils. Like his company, Bruce has always been an active participant in his community as well, having served on the boards of the Northwest Indiana Forum, the Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce, and the Northwest Indiana Entrepreneurship Academy. He is also a past president of the Porter County United Way and the Valparaiso Rotary Club, and he is a Ruling Elder at the First Presbyterian Church in Valparaiso.

For his service to his community and his commitment his industry, both economically and socially, Bruce has received many accolades throughout the years. To name a few of these, in 2004, Bruce was recognized as a Miller Legend, a lifetime achievement award that is the Miller Brewing Company's highest honor. Also, in 2005, then Governor Frank O'Bannon presented him with the Sagamore of the Wabash award, one of the highest honors awarded by the Governor of the State of Indiana.

Madam Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Bruce Leetz and North Coast Distributing on their success throughout the years and honoring them on their commitment to the people of Northwest Indiana. Bruce and the entire team at North Coast Distributing are to be commended for their dedication to improving Northwest Indiana.