

in honor of its 40th season. On September 14, 2008, VocalEssence kicked off its anniversary year with a community concert celebration featuring Garrison Keillor.

During its distinguished history under the direction of the internationally renowned director Philip Brunelle, VocalEssence has become one of the largest and most prestigious choral organizations in the country. Founded by Brunelle in 1969 as the Plymouth Music Series, the choral organization became VocalEssence in 1992, and has steadily grown in reputation along with Mr. Brunelle. Mr. Brunelle himself is an institution in the choral music community, and an outstanding artist. VocalEssence has earned praise for its innovation among the music community by working to spotlight lesser known compositions from all time periods, as well as the work of contemporary composers. By 1991 the organization enjoyed international recording success, as well as international recognition as a leader in choral music performance.

VocalEssence has been actively involved in community engagement in the Twin Cities through programs such as WITNESS, an initiative that honors and celebrates the contributions of African Americans to our cultural heritage. Through concerts and recordings featuring African American composers and artists and educational outreach designed to inform students of the historical role of African Americans in our culture, WITNESS has enriched our community and the musical world, reaching more than 115,000 students in more than 55 schools in the Twin Cities area.

VocalEssence has brought great distinction to the Twin Cities arts community, earning numerous recognition and awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, as well as the Margaret Hillis Achievement Award for Choral Excellence, an outstanding achievement and an unparalleled honor in the choral music community.

Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to honor VocalEssence, and to celebrate the 40 years it has enriched the culture of the Twin Cities.

IN RECOGNITION OF FRANK W.  
BUCKLES

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2008*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Frank W. Buckles. Mr. Buckles, at the age of 107, is the last known remaining veteran of World War I.

Having joined the Army at the age of 16, Mr. Buckles fought bravely for his Nation in World War I. During the Second World War, as a civilian he was imprisoned by the Japanese and spent 39 months in captivity.

The freedoms we enjoy today and the prosperity our nation has enjoyed throughout its history are due in large part to the sacrifice and courage of men and women like Mr. Buckles. As the son of a World War II veteran and a former member of the National Guard and Reserve myself, I know firsthand and am grateful for the tremendous legacy of patriot-

ism shared by our military. I am the proud to be the father of four sons who serve in our nation's military, including two sons who served in Iraq.

In honor of his sacrifice and dedication to his country, Frank Buckles was recognized by President George W. Bush earlier this year during a ceremony honoring World War I veterans. On September 24th, the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction honored Mr. Buckles by bestowing upon him the Scottish Rite honor and rank of Knight Commander of the Court of Honour. As a fellow mason, I am proud of the tradition of brotherhood and dedication to freedom that masons embody.

I congratulate and thank Frank Buckles for his service to our Nation.

TRIBUTE TO THE TEXAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD 147TH RECONNAISSANCE WING

**HON. NICK LAMPSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2008*

Mr. LAMPSON. Madam Speaker, I am privileged to recognize the men and women of the Texas Air National Guard 147th Reconnaissance Wing of Houston, Texas for their outstanding service to the community in helping 5,943 constituents in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike.

Forty-two members of the Texas Air National Guard 147th Reconnaissance Wing were tasked with providing support for the congressional mobile office in a variety of ways; including traffic control, translation assistance, security, technical support, parking and bus operations. Commander Col. McNeely and Vice Commander Col. Horn provided excellent leadership in the recovery efforts along with Lt. Col. Cooper, Lt. Col. Allinson, and Lt. Col. Garner.

In addition to supporting the operation and function of the congressional mobile office, these service members immediately transitioned into supporting units for the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center at Ellington Field where they have continued to serve thousands of individuals.

It is my distinct honor to recognize the remarkable efforts of the Texas Air National Guard 147th Reconnaissance Wing for their outstanding service to their community and country. Southeast Texas is grateful for the efforts and leadership provided by the commanders, senior enlisted leaders, and guard members, and I am proud of their noble service to the victims of Hurricane Ike.

The following members of the 147th Reconnaissance Wing joined in the recovery efforts: SMSgt Glenn Boutte, SMSgt Richard Williamson, MSgt Mali Cornitius, MSgt Howard Williams, MSgt Rodolfo Robles, MSgt Patrick Hurley, TSgt Andres Cabrera, TSgt Leanne Bates, TSgt Terry Matheson, TSgt Joel Agtang, TSgt Burdette Deyo, TSgt Lex Paxton, TSgt Hugo Torres, TSgt Nathan Kelley, TSgt Sonya Bond, SSgt Klaus Riel, SSgt Nakeia Mitchell, SSgt Stacie Sandoval, SSgt Kevin White, SSgt Lindsey-Lumpkin,

SSgt Erin Calhoun, SSgt Kevin Dupree, SSgt Marshall Nettles, SSgt Vanessa Chase, SSgt Carlton Newkirk, SSgt Efren Almario, SrA Carlos Suazo, SrA Jana Phillips, SrA Tameka McCray, SrA James Kyaw, SrA Juan Rosales, SrA Winnett Knox, SrA Clifton Smith, SrA Jessica Mosley, SrA Justin Gaskill, SrA Francisco Mendez, A1C David Hartmann, A1C Isaac Saldivar, A1C Bronson Woods, A1C Shuan Guthrie and A1C Michael Tran.

CONGRATULATING LOVING CHOICES PREGNANCY CENTERS OF NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

**HON. JOHN BOOZMAN**

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2008*

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate Loving Choices Pregnancy Centers of Northwest Arkansas. The centers provide critical services for women who are faced with life changing decisions.

Employees in the Rogers and Fayetteville centers have a difficult task counseling and educating one thousand women annually on the choices they have. Their job is made easier with the help of 30 volunteers who collectively spend more than one thousand hours serving the needs of women in a reproductive health crisis. Offering a listening ear, helping expectant mothers prepare for their baby and using their sewing skills are just a handful of services volunteers provide.

In recognition of their efforts, Loving Choices Pregnancy Centers of Northwest Arkansas received the 'President's Volunteer Services Award.' This honor is given to Americans who demonstrate their commitment to volunteerism and inspire others to do follow their example.

I am thankful Northwest Arkansas residents are so willing to help their neighbors in need and share their time and resources to benefit the greater good of the community. Volunteers are a critical component of ensuring the continued success of Loving Choices Pregnancy Centers of Northwest Arkansas.

TRIBUTE TO RAYL ROBBINS

**HON. TOM LATHAM**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2008*

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rayl Robbins of Huxley, Iowa for his service at the Wesley Community Hospice.

Rayl is the hospice chaplain at Wesley Community Hospice, where he is able to incorporate his love for music at work. A self-taught musician, he sometimes plays on his guitar and sings hymns to some of the clients. He hopes to help others find peace in the midst of the chaos in their lives. Rayl's commitment to his job and his clients has earned him admiration, trust and friendship from the staff and from those residing in the hospice. Great service goes a long way, and I am honored to see fellow Iowans like Rayl providing service second to none.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending Rayl Robbins for his service at Wesley Community Hospice. I consider it an honor to represent him Congress, and I wish him the best.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. URSULA  
VILLERE

**HON. STEVE SCALISE**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2008*

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mrs. Ursula Villere who will be 90 years old on November 30, 2008. She was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana, and has lived in Metairie, Louisiana, since 1955. Mrs. Villere had seven children: five boys and two girls. Six out of the seven still live in Louisiana and one daughter moved to Texas after Hurricane Katrina. She also has 14 grandchildren: 12 boys and two girls; and six great-grandchildren: two boys and four girls. Mrs. Villere graduated from Dominican High School and Dominican College with a B.S. in education. Mrs. Villere taught school both in New Orleans and Jefferson Parish. She retired from Jefferson Parish School System in 1980. She is still an active member of KKI Sorority, Lakeshore Golden Age Club at Lakeshore playground, and is a parishioner of St. Angela Merci Church.

IN HONOR OF REPRESENTATIVE  
JOSEPH E. MIRO AND JOANNE  
MIRO

**HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE**

OF DELAWARE—

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2008*

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize Delaware State Representative Joseph E. Miro and his wife, Joanne. On October 17, the Delaware Latin American Community Center will honor Joe and Joanne for their contributions to the Delaware community at their Annual Grand Ball, Una Noche en España.

Joe's life in public service began following his 1970 graduation from Lincoln University when he accepted a position teaching in the Wilmington School District in Wilmington, Delaware. He continued teaching in the Christina School District until his retirement in 2001. In 1975, he earned a masters degree from West Chester University and completed post-graduate degree work at the University of Delaware. Joe's career in politics began in 1992 when he was elected to the New Castle County Council, serving until his election to the Delaware House of Representatives in 1998. As a member of Delaware's General Assembly, Joe has been a strong advocate of an increased focus on improving education statewide and nationwide, joining such associations as the Delaware State Education Association and the Association of Teachers of Foreign Language.

Likewise, Joanne has dedicated herself toward improving education for our youth in

Delaware and across America. Her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Delaware and background in education and school counseling have served her well in numerous influential leadership positions, including serving as vice president of the College of Education, Human Services and Public Policy at the University of Delaware and as president of the Delaware School Counselors Association and the Delaware Counseling Association. Joanne also served as a board member of the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. Joanne currently serves as an education associate for school improvement with the Delaware Department of Education.

In addition, Joe and Joanne have been very active members in the Hispanic community. Joe currently serves as the President of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators and as a member of the Governor's Advisory Council on Hispanic Affairs. From 1994 to 2002, Joe was a board member of the Latin American Community Center in Delaware. Joanne continues to lend her support to Joe's efforts in representing the interests of Latinos in Delaware and throughout the United States.

I acknowledge and thank Representative Joe and Joanne Miro for their service to the State of Delaware and our country. I am confident that they will remain active and enthusiastic advocates for these causes that are so dear to their hearts.

HONORING SHERIFF RICHARD  
ROTH

**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2008*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my highest commendations to Sheriff Richard Roth and to thank him for the nearly twenty years of service that he has selflessly dedicated to Monroe County.

It is a testament to the greatness of our nation that a native of Minneapolis, Minnesota can find his calling in the Law Enforcement community of Florida and work his way up from a radio dispatcher to the Sheriff of Monroe County.

Sherriff Roth has committed himself wholly and unwaveringly to the safety of our community. Throughout his career, he has sought to further his expertise in law enforcement with a degree in Police Administration from Florida Keys Community College, as well as successfully completing courses at the National Sheriff's Academy and the prestigious FBI National Academy for police executives all so that he may better serve our community.

As Sheriff, his efforts to boost community involvement have resulted in nearly 140 Crime Watch groups in Monroe County and recognition at the State and National level for its accomplishments; not the least of which is reducing crime in Monroe County by fifty percent during his tenure as Sheriff.

His service to his country in the United States Navy and to his community in the Monroe County Sheriff's Department have bene-

fited us all, and I know that I sleep soundly at night knowing that Sheriff Richard Roth is watching over all of our neighbors.

IN HONOR OF COMMISSIONER  
CYNTHIA WHITE

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2008*

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Denton County Commissioner Cynthia White and her years of service to Denton County and the North Texas region.

Cynthia White began her career in public service as a Constituent Liaison for U.S. Congressman Dick Arme. She then began a distinguished career in local government serving on the City of Lewisville Planning and Zoning Commission as well as the Board of Adjustment. In 1992 Commissioner White was elected to the Lewisville City Council where she served as Mayor Pro-Tem from 1994 to 1995. She was elected Commissioner in Denton County in 2000 where she has since worked hard for the people of Precinct 1 and beyond.

Commissioner White has become known as a leader on transportation issues for her region. Her dedication has helped pave the way for numerous projects in Precinct 1 from safety improvements along Highway 377 to providing needed funding for FM 423 to partnering with local cities to secure funding for improvements on FM 2181. When the Lewisville Lake Bridge/FM 720 concept stalled, Commissioner White brought concerned parties back to the table to get the project moving again. Thanks to her efforts, that bridge is now being constructed and will soon help provide needed relief to traffic congestion. The Commissioner has served as the Chair of the Regional Transportation Council, a board member of the Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition, and has spoken on transportation to audiences throughout the state, including the Texas Senate.

Commissioner White's public service goes far beyond government. She has volunteered with organizations such as the United Way, the Boys and Girls Club, the Denton Benefit League, the American Heart Association, and the Salvation Army of Denton Advisory Board. In addition to this, she remains an active member of her church, a certified personal trainer and promoter for health and fitness issues, and often performs as a musician in the community.

It is with great honor that I recognize Commissioner Cynthia White for her years of hard work and dedication given to the citizens of Denton County and North Texas region. I am proud to represent her in Washington. Her service sets a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.