

storm surge caused by Hurricane Katrina. Despite his loss, Elaine Oneto, 1LT Oneto-Sikorski's mother, said her son looked to the future and talked about his homecoming which would have been in December 2005. "He was devoted to his children. He is so much more than any of us could say," Mrs. Oneto said. "He was a wonderful man who loved everyone and his loss is going to devastate this whole community."

Patrick Rager, 1LT Oneto-Sikorski's son, recently said he will always be remembered for his service and sacrifice. "I am proud of his service, and to this day, I strive to make him proud through hard work and getting good grades in school," Patrick said. "Many people go through this life and have little to no impact. Because of his sacrifice, he will not be forgotten."

1LT Oneto-Sikorski was remembered by a fellow soldier on a memorial website. "I was serving with Ski in Iraq. He was my XO and my close friend," SFC Gene Dufrene said. "Ski was by far the best officer that anyone could serve with. He was what we NCOs called a real soldiers' officer. He would break his neck to take care of us. He took care of each and every soldier under his command. We all miss our brother and we will always remember Ski for the man he was to each of us soldiers."

1LT Oneto-Sikorski was employed at Northrop Grumman's Ingalls Shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, where he worked in the engineering department.

1LT Oneto-Sikorski was buried with full honors at the Biloxi National Cemetery.

1LT Oneto-Sikorski is survived by his parents, Elaine Marie Oneto and Robert Charles Sikorski, II; his wife, Kristine Seamans Sikorski; his three children, Robert Charles Sikorski, II, Patrick Rager, and Hannah Rager; the mother of his children, Clare Rager; and his two sisters, Shawn Durfey, and Kathleen Sherlock.

1LT Oneto-Sikorski demonstrated courage and bravery protecting the freedoms we all enjoy. His service and sacrifice for America will not be forgotten.

#### 2017 WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER—JODY SAMONS

#### HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2017

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Jody Samons of Willows, California, who has dedicated over 37 years to serving her community of Glenn County. She has touched the lives of countless people through her work and volunteer activities. In her current position as Glenn County's Community Development Director, Ms. Samons has secured over \$200,000 in grants and worked with numerous companies to create over 200 new jobs in the area. Her overwhelming success in this role has had, and will continue to have, an undeniably positive impact on her community.

In her volunteer capacities, Ms. Samons has worked to support the youth of her community by creating opportunities and guiding them to success. Ms. Samons was instrumental in the creation of the Orland High School Booster

club which helped support youth athletic programs in her community. She has also spent many years supporting youth in FFA or 4-H programs in any way she could. Ms. Samons served for many years on the Glenn County Junior Livestock Auction Committee and went on to found a non-profit organization to support the program when its future was in jeopardy. She also served for 7 years on the Glenn County Fair Board and worked tirelessly to ensure its continued success. Ms. Samons has spent many years supporting the youth in her community and never passed up an opportunity to help out.

#### HONORING FIRST LIEUTENANT PHILLIP DUPREY

#### HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2017

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor First Lieutenant Phillip Duprey of the United States Army for his dedication and service to our country. 1LT Duprey's extraordinary patriotism, citizenship, and commitment to community and service reflects the best values of Central Texas. He is a fitting recipient of a Congressional Veteran Commendation.

During his deployment to Vietnam, Phillip Duprey faced grave and mortal danger while conducting intelligence collection as a member of the Army Security Agency for the IV Division of the 101st Airborne Division. 1LT Duprey's leadership, dedication, and bravery undoubtedly saved the lives of many. For his service and valor in combat, 1LT Duprey received numerous medals including the Bronze Star and the National Defense Service Medal.

1LT Duprey's service and sense of duty did not finish with the end of his military career. Upon returning to the great state of Texas, 1LT Duprey dedicated his civilian life to the uplifting and betterment of his community. As a highly respected citizen, he is active in numerous community organizations, including twenty-two years on the Cedar Park Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, he served on the Cedar Park City Council for six years, the last two as Mayor pro tem. 1LT Duprey has dedicated himself to serving his community and is an embodiment of the Army values of honor, loyalty, and selfless service. For these reasons and many more, his community came together to honor 1LT Duprey as Cedar Park Citizen of the Year in 2000 and 2014.

I commend First Lieutenant Phillip Duprey's selfless service to the U.S. Army, the nation, and his community. He is a hero who has devoted his life to defending our freedoms abroad and serving his community at home. I join 1LT Duprey's family, friends, and neighbors in celebrating his outstanding achievements.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) JOE NATHAN WILSON

#### HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Joe Nathan Wilson who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on November 2, 2003, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SSG Wilson was mortally wounded in an attack on a CH-47 Chinook helicopter near Fallujah, Iraq. Fifteen other servicemen were killed in the crash. He died from his injuries in a Kuwait hospital. SSG Wilson was assigned to Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Corps Artillery, Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

According to the Associated Press, an Ohio serviceman said he survived because of the heroic act of SSG Wilson. Sergeant (SSG) Joe Minar said SSG Wilson cradled his head with his body to shield him when the helicopter crashed.

SSG Wilson was remembered on a memorial website by a fellow soldier. Staff Sergeant (SSG) Benjamin Dunlap of Stroud, Oklahoma, said SSG Wilson was a leader, "I served with SSG Wilson during our tour in Iraq. He was the epiphany of the NCO corps. He was always leading by example. He could never be seen without a smile on his face. I considered him to be my friend. He was a friend to all who knew him."

SSG Wilson graduated from Crystal Springs High School in Crystal Springs, Mississippi in 1992. Robert Green, the Crystal Springs High School athletic director, said SSG Wilson was a standout student, "He was a nice young man, especially on the football field." Shortly after graduation, SSG Wilson enlisted in the U.S. Army. Maxine Adams, SSG Wilson's mother, said he always wanted to be in the military, "He was a great son. It was important to Nate to be an accomplished person." Patricia Fortenberry, SSG Wilson's sister, is proud of her brother's service, "He was a great brother. He was my best friend."

Shortly after SSG Wilson's death, the city of Crystal Springs designated November 2nd as an official day to recognize his service to our nation. His family hosts a picnic and speakers are included at the event. It is held at the Joe Nathan Wilson Sportsplex and Memorial Fire Station in Crystal Springs which is named in his honor. Sally Garland, mayor of Crystal Springs, said the city will begin a new tradition in honor of SSG Wilson. Beginning this year, flags will be lowered to half-staff on the anniversary of his death.

SSG Wilson was buried at Brushy Creek Cemetery in Hopewell, Mississippi. SSG Wilson is survived by his mother, Maxine Adams; his wife, Erica; his daughter, Yasmin; his three nephews, Jaydan Adams, Jordan Adams, and Specialist (SPC) Jerrick Wilson; his two nieces, Kawanza Fortenberry and Latria Wilson.

SSG Wilson's bravery under fire demonstrated his devotion to his comrades and to our nation. His service will always be remembered.

TRIBUTE TO ANDY AND AMY  
WALSH

**HON. DAVID YOUNG**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 2, 2017*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Andy and Amy Walsh of Waukeke, Iowa for being named the 2016 Waukeke Citizens of the Year.

Andy and Amy own and operate Mickey's Irish Pub in Waukeke, Iowa. The establishment is known as a place for an after work getaway and a place to get a good bite to eat. But what makes the Walsh's stick out is how much they give back to the community. Several organizations, including Waukeke Crime Stoppers, Waukeke Police Citizens' Academy, the Racoon River Valley Trail Bike Association and the annual BACoon Ride, have seen countless hours of their involvement outside of work. They have helped many charities and organizations through discounted and donated food and drinks from their business, and every year they host a free Thanksgiving dinner for city residents. It is because of people like Andy and Amy, and their kindness and generosity, that Iowa communities are some of the strongest in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent community leaders like Andy and Amy and it is with great pride that I recognize them today. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Andy and Amy for this outstanding recognition and in wishing them nothing but continued success.

2017 WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD  
WINNER—JASWINDER SANDHU

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 2, 2017*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jaswinder Sandhu of Sutter County, California, who has spent her career focused on improving the lives of people in her community. At a young age, she joined her farmworker parents in the fields to earn extra money during the summer. It was during those times that she realized the plight of the poor and became determined to make a difference.

Jaswinder's passion to help others has always been her priority. Having left a job in the private sector in 2003, she began her career as Site Manager for Mahal Plaza, a low income multi-family farm labor complex in Yuba City. Since then, she's been credited with securing \$313,000 in grant funding to build a safe passage route for children from Mahal Plaza as they walk to school. She also implemented several community programs and services at the property, including a community garden, day care, and ESL and exercise classes. She also offers Mahal as a venue for community gatherings such as the annual National Night Out, which is one of the most largely attended community events in Yuba City.

A testament to Jaswinder's commitment to the community and her excellence in property

management, she was honored as Site Manager of the Year for Farm Labor Housing for the State of California. In 2011 and 2014 Jaswinder was presented with the national award for excellence in Washington, D.C.

RECOGNIZING WELLS MIDDLE  
SCHOOL AS A 2017 NATIONAL  
SCHOOL OF CHARACTER

**HON. ERIC SWALWELL**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 2, 2017*

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Wells Middle School in Dublin, California for its designation as a 2017 National School of Character.

Wells Middle School is the only school in California to receive the 2017 National School of Character Award. The administration of Wells Middle School has worked diligently to meet the stringent standards necessary to receive this distinction. It has minimized incidences of cheating and bullying while maximizing student and parent engagement.

At Wells Middle School, character education is made a priority by the administration and teachers. The character education program focuses on bringing relevant, engaging and versatile resources directly to the students. The school makes an extensive effort to prioritize the success of its students.

One example is the Response to Intervention program. This program provides a network of instructional sessions for teachers and students, which work to address academic and behavioral concerns. This programming stresses inclusivity and adaptability as it seeks to meet the needs of all Wells Middle School students.

In addition to the National School of Character designation, Wells Middle School was named a 2017 California Gold Ribbon School by the California Department of Education and a 2017 California School of Character.

I am honored to have such an incredible school within my district, and as a Wells Middle School student, benefited myself from its focus on character. The continual effort of Wells Middle School to promote the success of its students both academically and behaviorally, serves as a statewide example of an ideal institution for holistic student growth. Our community is better and stronger as a result of its tireless dedication.

I want to congratulate Wells Middle School on receiving the 2017 National School of Character Award, and I wish the school and its students continued success in the years to come.

HONORING SERGEANT LARRY  
BUSH, U.S. MARINE CORPS

**HON. JOHN R. CARTER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 2, 2017*

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sergeant Larry Bush, United States Marine Corps. SGT Bush's extraordinary commitment to his country, his community of Jarrell, Texas, and his service in the

Marine Corps reflects the best values of Central Texas. He is a fitting recipient of a Congressional Veteran Commendation.

SGT Bush began his career in the Marine Corps by serving in the Vietnam War in 1969. His deep commitment to serving his country can be seen through his extensive list of medals and awards, including the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and the Rifle Expert Badge.

After leaving the Marines in 1975, SGT Bush lived his life for the betterment of Jarrell and its citizens. He served his community in the City Council for six years, the Economic Development Board for two years, and as Mayor of the City of Jarrell since 2014. His commitment to community doesn't stop with elected office. SGT Bush is a devoted member of several advisory boards including water, roads and finances, as well as the Williamson County Road Bond Program. Committed public servants like him have made Jarrell a great place to live and work.

SGT Bush deserves to be celebrated, as he is a man of intelligence, compassion, and integrity. With admiration and deep respect, I pay tribute to SGT Bush for his service to our country and the lasting impact he has had on his community and beyond.

HONORING JEFF GARNSEY, THE  
2017 CLAYTON CITIZEN OF THE  
YEAR

**HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 2, 2017*

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Jeff Garnsey as he is named the 2017 Clayton Citizen of the Year.

Jeff began his long career of service to both his country and community upon entering the United States Navy in 1983. Throughout his 26-year military career, he served on seven different submarines, one of which broke the endurance record under the North Pole by spending 97 consecutive days submerged in water. He also served on the Navy's most decorated warship, the USS *Parche*, where his crew received the Presidential Unit Citation, as well as the USS *Cheyenne*, which participated in the Iraq war's first shots and strategic strike. Jeff was ultimately advanced to the Navy's highest enlisted paygrade of Master Chief Petty Officer.

Now retired from his naval career, Mr. Garnsey is the proud owner of Garnsey's Classic Island Cruises and holds several leadership positions in the Clayton community, including Board President at Save The River and Director of the Muskies Hall of Fame. Truly committed to giving back, he also volunteers at many local organizations such as the 1000 Islands Museum, the Clayton Rotary Club, the Clayton Opera House, and the Clayton Chamber of Commerce.

I would like to thank Mr. Garnsey for the sacrifices he has made in serving our country and the people of the North Country. His commitment to others is a reminder of the strength that veterans bring to our local communities and sets a wonderful example for residents of New York's 21st District.