

out on his own and start his own business. Along with my late mother, Joan, as bookkeeper, the Portman Equipment Company began modestly, with two salespeople and two mechanics. The company was started with borrowed funds, and it took a few years to turn a profit.

Today, the company employs over 400 people, handles multiple lines and services, and is one of the largest material handling distributors in the United States. Dad would tell you that's because he hired outstanding people, which is true, but it is also because he is a good leader and a hardworking entrepreneur.

He was the first equipment dealer in the country to recognize the importance of operator safety and mechanic education. In 1972, Dad initiated a training operation, now called the "Learning Center," which offers twenty industry courses, has instructed over 80,000 students worldwide, and is the largest regional training site for Caterpillar and Mitsubishi forklifts. Portman Equipment Company, now run by my brother, William C. "Wym" Portman III, is now one of the country's largest Cat Lift Truck distributors, and was listed as one of Cincinnati's top 100 privately held firms twelve times.

Dad always recognized the importance of giving back through community service. In 1975, he became the first small businessperson to chair the Greater Cincinnati United Way campaign. He was the first chair to visit all 105 agencies that received United Way funding, and fundraising set a new record. He has served on the boards of United Way; Community Chest & Council; the Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce; and the Greater Cincinnati Foundation. He has held leadership positions with the Cincinnati Business Committee; the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland's Small Business Advisory Council; the Hamilton County Regional Airport Authority; and chaired the Chamber's first Leadership Cincinnati class, which is one of the country's most prestigious leadership development programs.

In all his business and community endeavors, he was strongly supported by my mother, Joan, who herself was an accomplished civic leader. Among her accomplishments, she was named a Cincinnati Enquirer Woman of the Year in 1979, and was the recipient of the Jacob E. Davis Volunteer of the Year Award of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

Our family, including my wife, Jane; brother, Wym; sister-in-law, Jan; sister, Ginna; brother-in-law Allan; and Dad's nine grandchildren; are proud of all of Dad's accomplishments, and congratulate him on being named a Great Living Cincinnati.

CONGRATULATING HISTORY DAY  
SCHOLARS

**HON. GEORGE MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 25, 2005*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the nation was relieved that on January 7, Edgar Ray Killen was arraigned for the 1964 murder of three civil rights martyrs—Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, and James Chaney. The brutal murders of these three men, who were registering African-American

voters in Mississippi during the 1964 Freedom Summer campaign, helped to galvanize the civil rights movement in the nation and centuries of legal and de facto mistreatment of our fellow citizens.

In 1967, Killen was one of several men charged with violating the advocates' civil rights, but an all-white jury failed to convict Killen and only lightly sentenced 7 of the men involved. Prosecution in connection with the 1964 killings lay dormant for 40 years and would have continued to do so had Sarah Siegel, Allison Nichols, and Brittany Salties, students at Chicago's Stevenson High School, not prompted a reopening of the case.

Mr. Speaker, these young women chose the 1964 Goodman-Schwerner-Chaney case as the subject of their project for the National History Day competition last year. As many of our colleagues know, NHD programs target over half a million students throughout this country, promoting the teaching and study of American history. Entries to its yearly contest are chosen at the school, city and state level and consist of presentations of topics in American history based on themes developed by NHD. Students may prepare research papers, storyboards, video documentaries or performances on their subject.

The reopening of this long-dormant civil rights case demonstrates the NHD's dramatic impact on American historical literacy, and illustrates better than any other development the impact of the study of history on student understanding of and ability to affect world events. Through the creation and promotion of dynamic, participation-driven programs, NHD has changed the way that teachers present American history. Students who engage in NHD programs enjoy a boost in historical literacy and interest in matters of key historical interest.

Mr. Speaker, I am also very pleased that the Congress recently authorized federal support for the National History Day program. Under P.L. 108-474, the Secretary of Education may award grants to the NHD program, and we are very hopeful that he will do so. I know that we are joined in that wish by thousands of administrators, teachers, students and historians around the country who share our pride in NHD and in the work of these, and many other talented young students. With the added support of federal funding, NHD will be able to expand its commendable work of promoting historical literacy in our nation's schools.

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Sarah, Allison and Brittany for their work in publicizing the Goodman-Schwerner-Chaney case. Their research has not only improved our understanding of history; it has helped make history.

THE LIBERATION OF NAVASSA  
AND DESECHEO ISLANDS BEGINS  
ANew

**HON. NICK J. RAHALL II**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 25, 2005*

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, regardless of the fact that the Federal Government holds land in trust for the American people, sadly it appears that what the people own, the people may not necessarily ever get to use.

Last year, I informed this House of the case of two tiny islands in the western Caribbean. It is a story worth repeating.

Navassa and Desecheo islands have interesting histories, but I doubt most Americans even know they exist, let alone that the islands are, in fact, part of our very own country.

The story of Navassa Island is a classic tale of American capitalism. It came to be part of America in the late 1800's through the mining and sale of petrified bird guano, yes, guano, as fertilizer. It is also the site of one of our Nation's early, ugly labor disputes. Over time, guano went out of fashion, but the outpost served a new purpose for 80 years, as a light source to guide ships through the islands of the Caribbean. In 1996, with the advent of new technologies, the lighthouse went dark. The property, however, remained part of the U.S.

Eventually that island and Desecheo Island, a former military training range, were incorporated into the National Wildlife Refuge system. The designation rightfully recognizes the unique qualities of the two islands, which are rich in uncommon plant and animal life. But, in turn, it has also led to their being essentially fenced off from the people who own them, the American public. For in fact, today, the Fish and Wildlife Service bars legal access to these two islands apparently under any circumstance.

That might be the end of the story, were it not for a group of Ham radio operators, who, after having been granted special use access to these public lands for 20 years, were suddenly denied permission to visit the islands to broadcast.

Indeed, for no sensible reason, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the same agency that had been granting access to these radio operators, arbitrarily reversed course and denied permits for a non-controversial recreational activity that had been approved for two decades of responsible and uneventful public use.

Not only did the agency cut off these broadcasters, it did so even after they agreed to assume all liability, to submit to any regulation or permit condition, and even to pay all administrative, management and travel costs for the Federal agency to remove all financial and logistical hurdles.

It has also come to my attention recently that Ham radio operators have also been denied access to the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge located off the California coast 28 miles from San Francisco, even though this refuge allows access by special use permits. Moreover, there are eight broadcast antennae already on one of the islands that provide radio communications and the transmission of weather and seismic information to the mainland.

This is an instance of outrageous administrative arrogance to deny permits for a recreational use that has been shown to be harmless to fish and wildlife. Public recreation at our National Wildlife Refuges is as much a part of the history of Refuge System as the critters themselves.

The Secretary of the Interior has been given congressional authority to grant special use permits for just such circumstances, when a public use is not incompatible with the purpose of the refuge. Yet, for some reason that escapes me, this Secretary will not budge. In the case of these two islands, the Secretary's discretionary powers amount to guano.