

IN RECOGNITION AND REMEMBRANCE OF THE LIFE OF U.S. ARMY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER MATTHEW LOUREY

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2005

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to recognize and honor the life of U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer Matthew Scott Lourey.

Matt Lourey, son of Minnesota State Senator Becky Lourey, was an Army helicopter pilot under the command of the Tikrit-based 42nd Infantry Division. He died May 26, 2005, from injuries received when the Kiowa Warrior helicopter he was piloting was shot down in Baqouba, Iraq, while he was serving his second combat tour in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Matt was born July 28, 1964, in Laurel, Maryland, grew up in Kerrick, Minnesota, and graduated from Askov High School in 1982. He had always wanted to be in the military as a child, and after graduating from high school, joined the U.S. Marine Corps. When he was not able to fly for the Marines, he left the military, trained as a private pilot in northern Minnesota, and joined the Army as an officer. Matt Lourey flew Kiowa reconnaissance missions in Bosnia and elsewhere prior to going to Iraq. Matt was preceded in death by his brothers, Jay and Fernando.

Matt Lourey grew up in a large, loving family, with 11 brothers and sisters, many of whom were adopted, in northern Minnesota. Matt was Sen. Becky and father Eugene Lourey's second son.

Three years ago, Matt Lourey married a fellow soldier, Army Capt. Lisa Lourey. They lived in Lorton, Virginia.

There have been 22 members of the military from Minnesota who have died in Iraq since 2003. I honor Matthew Lourey for his courageous service to this country, and his commitment to protecting our freedom.

TRIBUTE TO FRANKIE AVALON

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2005

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to musician, vocalist, actor, community advocate and friend Frankie Avalon.

Frankie Avalon is a show business icon. In some ways he is also a show business anomaly. Frankie Avalon has been the loving husband of 43 years to Kathryn, and the devoted father to his eight children, four boys and four girls. He is also a firm believer in giving back to his community. A resident of the city of Thousand Oaks in my district, he will exhibit that quality once again when he appears as Master of Ceremonies at the Awards Dinner following Monday's 2nd Annual Michael DiRaimondo Foundation Golf Tournament and Silent Auction.

U.S. Army medic Michael DiRaimondo died when his medical helicopter crashed in Iraq after being hit by a rocket-propelled grenade in January 2004. His parents, Tony and Carol, launched the foundation to provide scholar-

ships to those who wish to become paramedics, a dream of their son. Frankie Avalon's participation in the event has raised its profile and has helped ensure the event was sold out.

Frankie Avalon began his show business career as a child growing up in Philadelphia, where his father inspired in him a love of playing the trumpet. By the time he was 12, Frankie Avalon was performing on national television. He also formed a dance band with another young musician, drummer Bobby Rydell. His first hit, "De De Dinah," which he performed on Dick Clark's "American Bandstand," sold a million copies just as he was turning 18. More million-record hits followed.

In 1960, Frankie Avalon began his movie career when he co-starred with Alan Ladd in "Guns of the Timberland." In 1963 he and Annette Funicello began their series of surfing movies, "Beach Party," "Muscle Beach," "Beach Blanket Bingo," and several others.

Frankie Avalon continued to record during his movie-making years and in the summer of 1985 teamed up with Bobby Rydell and Fabian on a successful 50-city tour as the "The Golden Boys of Bandstand." In 1987 he reunited with Annette Funicello to parody their earlier beach movies with "Back to the Beach."

Frankie Avalon continues to perform in nightclubs and concerts, often with two of his sons, one who plays guitar and one who plays drums.

Frankie Avalon's music and movies has always presented him as a clean-cut, all-American boy. In his case, however, it is not a Hollywood facade. Frankie Avalon's success in the entertainment industry is equaled by his success as a husband and father and his success in giving back to his community.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues will join me in thanking Frankie Avalon for decades of entertainment and in paying tribute to him for retaining and promoting the American values we all hold dear.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN RONALD DAVIS, U.S.C.G.

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2005

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, for more than 20 years Ronald Davis has served Tennessee and the Nation as a member of our Armed Forces and a dedicated District Attorney General for the 21st Judicial District.

And today, looking back on those years of faithful service, it's fair to say that we in Tennessee have been truly fortunate to count Ron as a friend and neighbor.

It is with pride and thanks that we recognize Captain Ronald Davis as he retires from the United States Coast Guard. Ron's service history is truly inspiring. He served in Vietnam, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Allied Force, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The commendations and medals awarded to Captain Davis are simply too many to mention here, but among those he's received is the prestigious Defense Superior Service Medal.

Williamson County and middle Tennessee are thankful Ron will continue his work as Dis-

trict Attorney General, and we look forward to many more years of his leadership in our civic and community organizations.

Mr. Speaker, it is because of men and women like Ron that America remains strong and free. God bless Ron and his family.

APPLAUDING ASSISTANCE TO MILITARY FAMILIES

HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2005

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, "Operation Helping Hand," a program of the Tampa Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), was recognized for its efforts to assist the families of service members wounded in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

The James A. Haley VA Medical Center is one of four designated polytrauma centers within the Department of Veterans Affairs. Since the start of OIF/OEF, these trauma centers have served as regional referral centers for individuals who have sustained serious disabling conditions due to combat. Patients treated at these facilities may have a serious Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) alone or in combination with amputation, blindness, or other visual impairment, complex orthopedic injuries, auditory and vestibular disorders, and mental health concerns. Because TBI influences all other areas of rehabilitation, it is critical that individuals receive care for their TBI prior to, or in conjunction with, rehabilitation for their additional injuries.

"Operation Helping Hand" provides assistance to the families of the very seriously wounded and injured service members who were deployed in either Iraq or Afghanistan and are now receiving treatment at the James A. Haley VA Medical Center. The average hospital stay for the injured is approximately 45 days. The families of these injured service members travel from all over the country to be with their loved ones at this critical time.

"Operation Helping Hand" assistance ranges from providing rental or leased cars, bus or taxi fares, cell phones or phone cards to the families of wounded service members. The program also provides tickets to local amusement parks, movie theaters and restaurants to make these families more comfortable while they are in Tampa waiting for their loved ones to recuperate. The assistance provided allows families to focus on their loved ones' recovery.

This year marks the sixth year that Newman's Own Inc., Fisher House Foundation Inc., and the Military Times Media Group have joined forces to present the "Newman's Own Awards" which seek to reward ingenuity and innovation for volunteer organizations working to improve the quality of life for military personnel and their families. These organizations issued a challenge to all private organizations serving our military communities: "present an innovative plan to improve the quality of life for your military community and receive funding to carry out that plan."

This year, 177 organizations submitted nominations for the award. I am pleased that "Operation Helping Hand" received the top