

TRIBUTE TO MR. GEORGE
GRUGETT

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Mr. George Grugett, who has served the Mississippi Valley region and our Nation for 25 years as executive vice president of the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association. Up and down the river, residents and landowners have been lucky for the expertise and tireless advocacy of Mr. Grugett. His work on their behalf has made the region safer for them and their families, as well as preserved vital river transportation.

The Mississippi River is a strange, and sometimes difficult, neighbor to us in southern Missouri. We are struck by her beauty in times of calm and heartbroken by her unstoppable power in times of flood. Living along the Mississippi River presents unique challenges, which Mr. Grugett has made his life's work to meet.

The infrastructure needs of flood protection are staggering. Levees, pumping stations, locks and dams, berms, floodwalls and river management are all critical components of preserving our relationship with the Mississippi River. Managing the plans, construction and upkeep of these facilities demands a rare, dedicated individual. For 25 years, Mr. Grugett has been that person.

Born and raised in west Tennessee, Mr. George Grugett is no stranger to the service of his country. He is a veteran of World War II, during which he served with the 12th Air Force in Europe. He was educated in civil engineering at the University of Alabama and the University of Mississippi and spent 35 years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers before joining the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association.

Mr. Grugett has received the Meritorious Civilian Service Award and earned a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Rivers Museum. He has been a faithful guardian of our delicate relationship with the Mississippi River in southern Missouri. I thank him for his great service to the residents of Missouri's Eighth Congressional District and to the people of our Nation.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE MONTGOMERY BUS
BOYCOTT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 6, 2005

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, December 1, 1955, became a history-making day, when a brave and courageous Rosa Parks committed one simple act. By sitting down and refusing to give up her seat on a city bus, Rosa Parks ignited a non-violent revolution in America. By sitting down she inspired many of us to stand up and become participants in the modern-day Civil Rights Movement. America is a better country, and we are a better people today, just 50 years later.

The action of the brave and courageous African Americans of Montgomery, under the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr., ushered in a period of great hope and great expectation in America. During the past 50 years, we have seen unbelievable changes. We have seen the end of segregation in public transportation and in places of public accommodation. And the signs that said WHITE and COLORED have come tumbling down. In 50 years, we have witnessed the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

It is my hope that as we pause and take note of what happened in Montgomery 50 years ago, another generation will be inspired to take a stand. I hope another generation will be inspired to speak up and to speak out for what is fair, for what is right and for what is just in this nation and the world.

TRIBUTE TO MR. WILLIAM T.
POWERS

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and applaud the dedication and tireless service of my dear friend and constituent, Mr. William T. Powers. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me today in saluting this outstanding American.

Mr. Powers has had a long and distinguished career within the banking community. Following 21 years of employment with the Bank of America, Mr. Powers relocated to the desert. He soon saw the realization of his professional goal when, in 1993, he joined the First Community Bank of the Desert (now Pacific Western Bank) as President and Chief Executive Officer. The notable achievements of Mr. Powers' professional career are a reflection of his seemingly boundless capacity for hard work and service.

I would like to give special recognition and thanks to Mr. Powers for the tremendous community service that he has, and continues to render the citizens of the desert. I have personally seen the positive impact of his many efforts on the community in which I live. Mr. Powers has served as the President of many organizations throughout the years including; the American Cancer Society, United Way of the Desert, College of the Desert Foundation, Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce, Indian Wells Desert Symphony. He has also served as the Director or President and Tournament Chairman of the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic since 1998.

Mr. Powers has been joined in his efforts by his lovely wife, Anita, who is also a beloved community figure. The Powers' have been partners in so many efforts that have greatly enhanced the desert community. Together they have raised two children and are the proud grandparents of four.

Mr. Powers stated that the best way he knows how to give back to the community is through excellent service and that that philosophy has permeated his personal and professional life. I join with my community this week in commending and thanking Mr. Powers for his great community service as the Boy

Scouts of America honor him as the Distinguished Citizen of the Year. I encourage my colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating the many contributions of Mr. William T. Powers.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARSHA
PETTY—ARKANSAS'S 2005–2006
TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, it is with tremendous pride that I rise today to recognize Arkansas's 2005–2006 Teacher of the Year, Marsha Petty of Texarkana, Arkansas.

A cum laude graduate from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Marsha has been teaching for 29 years and is an 11th grade chemistry teacher at Arkansas High School in Texarkana. There are few jobs more important, more rewarding, and more difficult than that of a teacher.

I have always held a public school education in the highest regard. As parents, educators, and public officials, we have an obligation, a moral duty, to ensure that students, from pre-school to high school and beyond receive the highest quality education possible. By properly educating our students and providing them with the tools they need in order to become successful adults, they will thrive in today's fast-paced and technological world.

The most important component to our children's education is our teachers. Today more than ever, our educators face new obstacles and challenges. As the son of public school educators, I have a deep respect and gratitude for all educators and their personal commitment to our children.

America is deeply indebted to top-notch educators, such as Marsha Petty, for their continued excellence in the classroom and commitment to our students. Today's teachers shape the very foundation of America's future. It is an honor to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Marsha as the 2005–2006 Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DR.
TJ OWENS

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with my colleague, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, to honor the life of Dr. TJ Owens of Gilroy, California who recently passed away. I rise to honor a life dedicated to family and the community. His hard work and compassion for those often overlooked helped to illuminate a path of social awareness and service for others to follow. TJ was the person who made a difference in countless lives, giving them hope and showing them that they could achieve their dreams.

The second of nine children, TJ Owens was born on February 4, 1937, in Shreveport, Louisiana to General and Maxine Owens. When TJ was seven, his father moved the family to

Barstow, California. Although his parents did not finish high school, they instilled in TJ the importance of hard work, perseverance and education. Growing up, TJ excelled in academics, student government, marching band and five varsity sports. He received a football scholarship to the University of Idaho but transferred to Fresno State after spending two cold years in Idaho. While at Fresno State, TJ was an outstanding football player, an undefeated boxer, and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. TJ received his bachelor's degree in 1960, making him the first African-American from Barstow to graduate from college. He subsequently earned a Masters degree in Counseling from Santa Clara University and a Doctorate in College Administration from the University of San Francisco.

In 1960, TJ married his college sweetheart, Carol Curtis. The couple had three beloved daughters, Annette, Alisa, and Audrey. They settled in Barstow, where TJ began teaching and coaching at his former high school.

He also launched his social and community activism as President of the Barstow NAACP.

The family moved to San Jose in 1968, where TJ worked as a Counselor at San Jose City College. He was a mentor and friend to his colleagues and students, creating a lasting legacy for the student body. TJ served as an advisor to the Black Student Union at San Jose City College, and organized the Black Studies Program. He was one of the founding members of EOPS (Extended Opportunity Programs and Services), a program that provides college support services for low-income and educationally disadvantaged students. In 1969, TJ also co-founded the San Jose Chapter of the NAACP and served as president of the organization.

TJ married Brenda Jordan in 1984 and became a father to her two children, Milah and Navarro. As a loving parent, TJ instilled his children with the same dedicated work ethic and perseverance that brought him success: All five of his children earned college degrees. He loved his children very much and was so very proud of them, treasuring his time with them.

In 1991, TJ became Vice President of Student Services at Gavilan College. He was elected President of the Gilroy School Board in 2000 and served on the Santa Clara County Grand Jury. He was involved in more than ten organizations, serving as a leader and community role model in all. I first met TJ when I served as a Member of the Board of Trustees of the San Jose/Evergreen Community College District. I know first hand about his leadership and his passion for those in need. Countless young people achieved educational success because of his efforts. TJ was an active member of 100 Black Men of Silicon Valley where he received a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001.

TJ died on October 17, 2005, surrounded by his family and friends. He is survived by his wife, Brenda Jordan-Owens, his children, Annette, Alisa, Audrey, Navarro, and Milah, and his two grandchildren, Samuel and Tyler.

TJ's death leaves a huge hole in our community. As a pioneer of civil rights, social awareness and community activism, TJ was a friend, mentor and local hero. We are grateful for all that he gave to help so many in our community, inspiring us all with his dedication and showing us how one person can truly make a difference.

CONGRATULATING THE MICHIGAN CITY MARQUETTE HIGH SCHOOL BLAZERS ON THEIR BACK-TO-BLACK CLASS 1A STATE GIRLS VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

HON. CHRIS CHOCOLA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, when we think of sports dynasties, we often think of the Chicago Bulls, the New York Yankees, or the New England Patriots. But in my District, in Michigan City, Indiana, we think of Marquette High School and the girls volleyball team.

Over the past 7 years, they have won five Indiana High School Athletic Association Class A State Girls Volleyball Championships. From 1999 to 2001, they won back-to-back-to-back titles. This year makes another series of back-to-back titles, having also won the State crown in 2004. And the 2 years they were not State champs, they were State runner-up.

Needless to say, the past 7 years at Marquette High School have been amazing for the girls volleyball team.

Amazing, too, for third-year coach Troy Campbell. His 34-win season was capped off with his team not only winning the title match, but it also earned him his 100th career coaching victory at Marquette.

This year's championship squad includes seniors Sarah Denny, Kalan Sebert, Danielle Barnett, Colleen Trainor, and Michelle Fletcher, juniors Rachel Konrady, Kara Kmiecik, and Tiffany Cerrillos, sophomores Emily Komanski, Katie Krueger, Alison Griffin, Ashley Pinkney, Mary Catherine Mengel, and Kim Ziarko, and freshmen Danielle Easton, Jenna Furno, Janie Welsh, and Marissa Disbrow.

Assistant coaches Larry Sheagley and Kylee Osborne also deserve a note of congratulations.

Congratulations to all of you, and to the seniors, best of luck on your future endeavors. You have proven you have what it takes to be a champion.

TORTURE VICTIMS RELIEF REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 6, 2005

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of H.R. 2017, the Torture Victims Relief Authorization Act.

I am especially proud that the first Center for Victims of Torture in the United States is located in Minnesota. Minnesota's Center for Victims of Torture is certainly one of the premier centers for torture survivors in the entire world.

Minnesota is home to about 30,000 victims of torture, and there are some 500,000 victims of torture in our country. Even though people are becoming increasingly aware of the issue of torture, support and treatment for the victims have often been lacking.

That's where the center, with its excellent leadership, comes in. We in Minnesota have learned much, and now we want to bring that

leadership, and the path-breaking work of the center, to the rest of the country.

Mr. Speaker, this important legislation provides support for Minnesota's Center for Victims of Torture and will enable our world-renowned Center to continue providing rehabilitation and other critical services to victims of torture.

All Minnesotans can be proud of our Center for Victims of Torture, which helps victims of torture recover from their horrific pain, suffering and scars.

Mr. Speaker, the issues of torture and human rights have finally penetrated the global consciousness, and I urge my colleagues to support passage of this important legislation.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES J. FINKLE, U.S. AIR FORCE (RETIRED)

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and recognize a great American patriot, retired Lt. Col. James J. Finkle, for his distinguished accomplishments in both the U.S. Air Force and in civilian public service.

James joined the U.S. Air Force in 1968, 4 years before attending the University of Maine, from which he graduated in 1976. Shortly thereafter, he was assigned to the Maine Air National Guard and appointed the first town manager of Veazie, Maine.

James stayed in Maine until 1980, when he was hired by the Suffolk County Legislature's Office of Budget Review. Returning to Long Island, where James was born, did not interrupt his commitment to military service. He transferred to the 106th air rescue wing of New York's Air National Guard located at Gabreski Air Force Base on eastern Long Island.

Within the civilian community, James served as the federal aid coordinator for the Nassau-Suffolk Regional Planning Board. He was promoted by the board to serve as the first administrator of the Suffolk County Pine Barrens Commission, and participated in the evacuation study of the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant.

Subsequently, James was selected as the director of planning for the Town of Huntington, managing a staff of 15 and guiding the economic development of this suburban community. After working for the Research Foundation of SUNY Stony Brook in 1990, James joined Shoreland Distributors as vice president for administration where he helped direct the company's rapid growth as it became the largest distributor of boat trailers in the nation.

His National Guard service provided a natural transition to his civilian duties, which included recovery in the aftermath of TWA Flight 800. He helped write a definitive account of that experience in *Deadly Departure: The True Story of Flight 800* and contributed to the New York Times bestseller, "The Perfect Storm: A True Story of Men Against the Sea" about the 106th air rescue wing.

James returned to active duty to serve in Operation Allied Force, which responded to the crisis in Kosovo in 1999. He also served in media affairs through the aftermath of the September 11th attacks and participated in the