

study at Howard University. She became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1973 and went on to earn a B.S. degree (*Magna Cum Laude*) from Howard University; her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees are from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Dr. Jerome led a pioneering role in launching nutritional anthropology as a discipline within anthropology. Dr. Jerome has received numerous honors, tributes and awards and served on many national and international committees and panels concerned with women's health and development issues.

For her many contributions, not only to this community, but worldwide, Dr. Jerome is being recognized as a Johnson County "Trailblazer".

MAYOR CARL WILKES

Carl Wilkes and his wife of 42 years, Wanda, have been residents of Merriam, Kansas, for 40 years. Carl has a 31-year career in public service for local and federal governments and currently serves as a Field Supervisor for the Housing Services Division of Johnson County's Human Services and Aging Department.

Carl Wilkes was instrumental in the development and receipt of funds for the first transportation program for the elderly in Johnson County, "Dial-A-Ride". Carl also established—in conjunction with United Community Services—the Multi-Service Center, served as its Executive Director and developed and secured funding for the City of Kansas City, Kansas, Section 8 Housing Program and served as its Director.

Carl Wilkes has received numerous awards and recognition for his service, such as Certificates of Commendation; the Meritorious Public Service Award and the Distinguished Service Award, to name a few. Nevertheless, Carl Wilkes will always be remembered in Johnson County as the first African-American to be elected as Mayor of a local community. On April 23, 2001, Carl Wilkes was sworn in as the 10th Mayor of Merriam, Kansas. On recount, his election was determined by two votes. Carl Wilkes is currently serving his second term as Mayor of the City of Merriam, Kansas.

Carl Wilkes is truly a "Trailblazer" and deserving of such recognition.

MT. OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH—MERRIAM, KANSAS

In 1922, the members of Shiloh Baptist and First Baptist in Merriam, Kansas, combined their two churches to form Mount Olive Baptist Church.

Mt. Olive members were, and still are, active in church, community and political affairs. During the 1940s Mt. Olive played an important role in helping the parents who were involved in the seminal 1949 decision involving school desegregation—Webb vs. Merriam Board of Education. Mt. Olive, during this litigation, which lasted for approximately two years, opened up its doors for school to be set up and receive instruction. The support of Mt. Olive members helped them to achieve this wonderful victory.

It was also during the late 1940s and early 1950s that the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, allowed the NAACP to utilize its basement for its meetings and continue to be a voice in the community for civil rights and equality advocating. To this day, the Mt. Olive Baptist Church is still committed to the spiritual growth of all and concerned about matters that impact the community.

For its contributions to the development of Johnson County, Kansas, the Mt. Olive Baptist Church is truly a "Trailblazer".

ALFONSO AND MARV WEBB

In 1947, parents of 39 school children attempted but failed to enroll their children in the new South Park Grade School, which was less than a mile from their homes. The parents did not want to send their children to the Madame C.J. Walker School, which did not have running water, electricity or up-to-date textbooks. Instead, the parents elected, with the permission of the pastor of the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, to set up school at the church and in homes. Two of these parents were Alfonso and Mary Webb.

Preceding the Brown vs. The Topeka Board of Education decision, Mr. and Mrs. Alfonso Webb, on behalf of their minor children, Harvey and Eugene Webb, the plaintiffs, filed suit in the 1948 desegregation case, Webb vs. School District #90. Included in this litigation were Shirley Ann Turner and Herbert Turner, minor children of Thelma and Earnest Turner, and Delores Gay and Patricia Black, minor children of Thomas Black.

The Kansas Supreme Court ruled that the black students would attend the previously all white South Park Elementary School. In September 1949 the black students were admitted without incident.

Alfonso and Mary Webb were truly "Trailblazers."

THE MCCALLOP FAMILY

Robert L. McCallop was born in Wilder, Kansas, in 1894. Robert reflected the success of African-Americans all across the country. He took something that many of us take for granted and turned it into an achievement based upon business and education.

In 1934 Robert turned the back of a truck into a bus to provide transportation for African-American children so that they could attend school in Wyandotte County, Kansas. The McCallop Company was the first black-owned bus company in Johnson County.

Thanks to the McCallop family, black children in Johnson County in the 1930s through the 1950s were able to get an education. Because of segregated times, African-American Johnson County children were unable to attend secondary school within the county. Instead, they were forced to cross over to Wyandotte County to attend Sumner High School.

Oscar Johnson, former educator and President of the Johnson County Branch of the NAACP, states: "the McCallops were a family so intact, so committed to stay the course in a community that wasn't always welcoming. Yet, they thrived and flourished despite the odds they faced".

William, sibling of Robert McCallop, and his wife Ruth, will appear at Saturday's event to accept this award for the contributions the McCallops has given to this county and the McCallops are truly "Trailblazers".

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to pay tribute to these distinguished Johnson Countians and to Mt. Olive Baptist Church, and I know that all members of the United States House of Representatives join with me in saluting these "trailblazers."

TRIBUTE TO EARL FOWLER

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 15, 2006*

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Chief Earl Fowler of Raleigh, North Carolina. Chief Fowler recently retired, ending 54 years of service to the Raleigh Fire Department by the Fowler family.

B.T. Fowler, the chief's father, joined the Raleigh fire department in 1956 and served with distinction until 1986, when he retired as a fire inspector and became the department's historian.

After serving in the U.S. Navy, Earl Fowler followed his father's footsteps and joined the Raleigh department in 1971, where he rose through the ranks as a firefighter, district chief, fire marshal and assistant chief. He became chief in 1999.

I have had the pleasure to work with Chief Fowler over the years, and he has served with humility, honor and professionalism. His fellow chiefs have recognized him as "a leader and a visionary," as well as "a creative thinker and motivator."

Today, I am honored to recognize Chief Fowler and to thank him for his many years of dedication and service to the people of Raleigh and of the Second Congressional District.

TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH BIRT

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 15, 2006*

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sorrow that I rise today to pay tribute to a good friend and former member of my staff, Ms. Elizabeth Ann Birt, who died following an auto accident while on vacation in Colorado late last year. Liz is survived by her three children: Sarah, Matthew, and Andrew.

In 1996, Liz's son Matthew was diagnosed with autism, a devastating neurological disorder that, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, now afflicts approximately 1 in 166 American children. My own grandson is autistic so I know first-hand how traumatic this news can be for parents of newly diagnosed autistic children. All too often, parents give up on the search for answers because raising a child with autism requires so much more time and energy than raising a so-called average child.

Liz, however, did not back away from the fight. No matter how tired and discouraged she might have been, Liz was determined to show the world that one person can make a difference just by asking questions. Her courageous and infectious enthusiasm ignited a quest for truth and justice for the autistic children of this country. There can be no doubt that Liz fought hard for what she believed in and in the end, her brilliant mind, strong spirit, and passion for the truth made her a hero to the autism community.

In fact, it is through her work on autism that I first came to know Liz; and not long after I became Chairman of the Government Reform Committee in 1997, I invited her to join my

staff to help lead the Committee's investigation into the autism epidemic sweeping our country. As a valued legal advisor/investigator for the Committee, Liz helped us to elevate the level of public debate about this disease, as well as educate policymakers at all levels of government about the evolving science concerning the toxic effects of thimerosal—a mercury-based preservative commonly used in vaccines.

Like many of us who have been involved in this debate over the years, when Liz first heard about the connection between autism and thimerosal, she was skeptical. But she read everything she could find, requested government documents and studies, and in the end became convinced that thimerosal was in fact the cause of her son Matthew's autism. Armed with this knowledge, Liz helped to co-write the groundbreaking congressional staff report, "Mercury in Medicine—Taking Unnecessary Risks," published in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in 2003, which challenged the conventional thinking of the Federal Government, the public health systems, the medical communities, and the pharmaceutical companies on the subject of thimerosal and autism-spectrum disorders.

In addition to her government service, Liz served the autism community through her leadership in many nonprofit organizations. As the co-founder of the "Coalition for SafeMinds" (Sensible Action for Ending Mercury-induced Neurological Disorders), founder of Medical Interventions for Autism, founding board member of the National Autism Association, and co-creator of the Extreme Sports Camp in Aspen, Colorado, Liz brought joy, hope, and inspiration to many autistic children and their parents. In addition, Liz was one of the founding members of the autism community's first political action organization, A-CHAMP (Advocates for Children's Health Affected by Mercury Poisoning). Liz was especially proud of this venture; and in a short period of time A-CHAMP has become one of the driving forces behind the growing and highly successful movement to ban mercury at the State level.

I believe, as Liz did, that strong evidence points to the mercury unnecessarily used in vaccines as part of the autism problem, and that thimerosal played a key role in my grandson developing autism. The science is undeniable: mercury is a base element—and it remains a base element even when mixed with other materials—and the most toxic substance known to man outside of radioactive materials.

The fact is that no one has ever identified a positive health benefit to mercury in the human body, and as more science accumulates and more people learn about the dangers of mercury, more time runs out for those who continue to advocate that mercury in vaccines and other medical devices is safe. Eventually, even they will have to admit that it flies in the face of logic to suggest, much less believe, that a substance so dangerously toxic outside the body is harmless once injected into the human body.

Until that day comes, I know that I, and others like Liz who believe as I do, will not be silent about this issue or give up in our fight to make our world a safer and healthier place. And when that day does come, we will all owe a debt of gratitude to Liz Birt for leading the way and becoming a leader in a fight she would rather not have been fighting.

Liz will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her. I respectfully ask my colleagues to join me in sending their deepest sympathies and heartfelt prayers to Liz's family. May God bless them.

HONORING DAVE WOOD, E. FLOYD FORBES AWARD RECIPIENT

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 15, 2006*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Mr. Dave Wood for his achievement in receiving the distinguished E. Floyd Forbes Award. This prestigious tribute is awarded to those who have proven exemplary service to the National Meat Association (NMA) and the meat and poultry industry.

Mr. Wood currently serves as the chairman of the Beef Division for Harris Ranch, Inc., a notable company who praises and recognizes his service, dedication and loyalty.

Upon graduation from California State University Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo in 1970, Mr. Wood relocated to the San Joaquin Valley and accepted a position with Harris Ranch, Inc. With the inception of his career, Mr. Wood embarked on a campaign to expand the company's feeding division, successfully doubling cattle productivity. Mr. Wood's unwavering demeanor and strong work ethic led him to assume more responsibilities within the company; opening the floodgates for his ingenious creativity to take form. Mr. Wood's contributions to Harris Ranch, Inc., include the establishment of the Partnership for Quality (PQ) program—a marketing technique that increased Harris Ranch, Inc.'s reputation by providing consumers with consistent, high quality beef. He also developed a line of fully-cooked premium heat and serve entrees as well as a number of fresh seasoned products to meet diversified consumer demand.

Mr. Wood's expertise goes beyond his role at Harris Ranch, Inc., with the ownership and management of Dave Wood Ranches and Wood Livestock, a cow-calf operation that is part of the Harris Ranch Partnership for Quality program. He is also co-owner of the historic Dressler Ranch near Bridgeport, California, a cattle and stocker cattle operation and he serves as a partner in Wood & Devine Cattle Co., Devine & Wood Farming, Inc., and Double D Farms.

In addition to those commitments, Mr. Wood has assumed leadership roles in several industry organizations including a member of the board of directors of Cattle-Fax, chairman of the Beef Committee and chairman of the National Meat Association's predecessor, the Western States Meat Association. He has sought other leadership opportunities including, serving as: Chairman of the Cattleman's Beef Promotion and Research Board, chairman of the California Beef Council, executive committees of the California Cattleman Association and United States Export Federation.

Mr. Wood's legacy of good stewardship and constant regard for upholding the industry's high standards has led him to receive several awards that recognize those efforts, including the Cattle Business of the Century Award from the National Cattleman's Beef Association and the National Cattleman's Beef Association En-

vironmental Stewardship Award. Mr. Wood was also the recipient of the 2003 Vision Award from the National Cattleman's Foundation, a prestigious award given to individuals whose creativity and imagination inspire others and improve the world around them.

On a personal level, he is a caring and loving father of David, who works with his father on the cattle ranch and is his pride and joy. Dave Wood is a gentleman who cares about his Country, his work and most importantly the friendships of life. Every day he tries to make a difference.

It is with great pride and honor that I join Mr. Wood's family, friends and colleagues in commending his hard work and applaud his recognition as the recipient of the E. Floyd Forbes Award. Mr. Wood's passion and commitment make him a most deserving recipient of this award and a true pillar of this industry.

HONORING AXEL CARL HANSEN, M.D., DHL

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 15, 2006*

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, to be young, gifted, and Black during the first quarter of the 20th century presented unique and overwhelming challenges that not many African Americans could transcend. Among those who did was the distinguished physician, Dr. Axel Carl Hansen.

He has been a recognized researcher, scholar and expert in the field of ophthalmology for over 50 years. The combination of his unique commitment to human egalitarianism and equal educational opportunities for African Americans interested in ophthalmology has been a perennial beacon of light to those entering and those within the profession.

Dr. Hansen was born in my district, on St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, on March 4, 1919, and received his elementary education in the private schools of the island. His college-preparatory training was obtained at the Charlotte Amalie High School in St. Thomas, from where he graduated in June 1937. His leadership and scholastic skill were evident early in life. In his senior year in high school, he was president of his class, editor of the school's weekly newspaper, *The Reflector*, and editor of his class yearbook, *The Last Carib*. A member of the Quill and Scroll Journalist Society, he received the national society's "honorable mention" for a news article he wrote and published in *The Reflector* and won first prize from the Virgin Islands Daily News for an essay, "Nature's Masterpiece", which appeared in the initial issue of *The Virgin Islands Magazine*. He was one of two members of his graduating class to receive the honor society's Forum Award for outstanding accomplishments.

In the fall of 1937, Axel Hansen left the Virgin Islands to attend Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he graduated with a baccalaureate degree. He received his M.D. degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville in March 1944 and pursued internship and 1 year residency at Homer G. Phillips Hospital in St. Louis in ophthalmology and otolaryngology.