

has grown from a small first ring town into a burgeoning suburb that is a destination for many folks looking for a safe community to raise a family. Professionally, Paul is a CPA, and he brought those budgeting skills to his work as Town Supervisor, after initially serving a short period of time as Town Comptroller. Paul's work to stabilize town finances, combined with a vision for his town that resulted in developing industrial parks, cultural attractions and recreational areas for residents, means that a lasting legacy of accomplishments will follow the conclusion of his service as Supervisor on December 31.

Since my days representing West Seneca as a member of the New York State Assembly, I have been proud to work with Paul on many projects. I have taken particular pride in working with Paul on one of his own favorite issues—the AmeriCorps program, which for Western New York is headquartered in West Seneca. More than 3,000 young Western New Yorkers have graduated through West Seneca's AmeriCorps, all the while tutoring nearly 25,000 local schoolchildren, clearing 3,500 vacant lots and planting thousands of new trees throughout Western New York. All as a result of Paul Clark's vision.

Paul has a great many accomplishments about which to be proud, but Paul counts as his proudest accomplishments his family—his wife Kathy, and his children Andrew and Kelly.

Madam Speaker, Paul Clark leaves a lasting mark upon the government of the town of West Seneca, and his constituents are better for the service he provided to them. I am pleased to honor his contributions to our community, and I ask that you join me in extending to Paul and his family the House's most heartfelt wishes of good luck and Godspeed.

IN APPRECIATION OF SACRAMENTO AREA FIREFIGHTERS

**HON. DORIS O. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 13, 2007*

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the men and women of the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District and the Sacramento City Fire Department that responded to the southern California fires. The devastating fires burned tens of thousands of acres over the course of the last 2 months. More than 20 local firefighters from Sacramento courageously worked to end these wild fires. I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring and thanking some of our Nation's finest firefighters.

On October 20, 2007 the first of 15 fires began as a ranch fire in Los Angeles County's Angeles National Forest. The Santa Ana air stream caused wind speeds up to 100 miles per hour, combined with 95-degree temperatures. The combined wind, hot temperature, and severe drought conditions in southern California spread the fire across hundreds of thousands of acres. Over a 7 day period, nine people were killed, and at least 1 million people were evacuated. Thousands of businesses, homes, and structures were destroyed. To date the fire has caused more than \$1 billion dollars in damage across San Diego, Orange, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Ventura, Riverside and Santa Barbara Counties.

The tireless work of these men and women was invaluable as they saved lives and property throughout the southern California region. The crews are a reflection of the positive contributions and selfless actions of our local firefighters. They responded to fires such as the ferocious Witch Creek Fire in Ramona, where crews grappled with flames more than 70 feet high and were exposed to conditions that included 70 mile per hour wind speeds. The horrific conditions were so dangerous that doors flew off hinges from burning structures. At times, pieces of burning roofs were carried by the winds, which forced firefighters to take cover. Crews worked around the clock for many days with as little as 30 minutes of rest. Their invaluable efforts helped save countless structures and homes that were in the line of fire.

In response to the crisis, Sacramento City Fire Department deployed Battalion Chief Craig Wiedenhoeft, Battalion Chief Niko King, Battalion Chief Jay Glass, Captain James Doucette, Captain Scott Visser, Engineer Sean Dail, Engineer Tom Malim, Firefighter Greg Murdock, Firefighter Dave Stork, and Firefighter Kyle Anderson.

Sacramento Metro Fire Department also deployed more than 40 firefighters. They included Deputy Chief Geoff Miller, Captain Darren Taylor, Captain Scott D. Cockrum, Captain Scott McKenney, Captain Michael Hazlett, Battalion Chief Richard Andersen, Captain James Vell, Engineer Jack Costello, Captain David B. Durham, Captain George E. Kruger, Jr., Engineer Phillip Allen, Engineer Tracey Valentine, Firefighter Ty J. Bailey, Firefighter Erik R. Rubalcava, Firefighter John Schanzenbach, Firefighter Kyle D. Thomas, Captain Steven C. Campbell, Captain Kiley Keeley, Engineer Jeffrey Harris, Engineer Brian M. Swindler, Firefighter Brad Reynolds, Firefighter Aaron S. Wham, Firefighter Tim J. Eisert, Firefighter Kenneth J. Harrington, Battalion Chief John Wagner, Battalion Chief Bary A. Flores, Captain Michael D. Veilleux, Captain William V. Lobsitz, Captain Christian Pebbles, Captain John P. Murakami, Captain Randolph E. Gross, Engineer Russell Powell, Engineer Charles E. Lynch, Engineer Ryan L. Maerklen, Engineer Maurice D. Johnson, Engineer Mark T. Stewart, Firefighter Phillip J. Hart, Firefighter Kevin R. Henson, Firefighter Chris A. Manos, Firefighter Carl F. Jewell, and Firefighter Mark T. Dunne.

Each of these brave men and women left their families and loved ones in Sacramento to place their own life on the line to save their fellow citizens from the horrific southern California wildfires. For their efforts, we all owe them our deepest appreciation. I am truly honored to represent such fine individuals and fire departments in Congress. Once again, I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking them for their unwavering dedication to our country during this difficult time.

COCA-COLA 100TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 13, 2007*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to recognize the Beaumont Coca-Cola Bottling Company founded in 1907 in Jeffer-

son County, Texas. C.T. Heisig established and managed the first store located on Park Street. Off to a great start, the company purchased over 470 gallons of Coca-Cola syrup during its first year of operation. Today Coca-Cola is the best selling soft drink in the world and this year over six million cases of Coca-Cola products will be sold.

In 1911 Charles Rainwater purchased the Beaumont franchise, and in 1931 a new plant was completed and the company moved to Mariposa Street, where it remained for 54 years. In 1985 operations were moved to its current location at 11450 Eastex Freeway. The current plant employs 207 individuals and contributes nearly nine million dollars to the local economy. The Beaumont Bottling Company alone delivers to over 5,000 customers in eight counties.

The Beaumont Bottling Company has been a great partner in Jefferson County. Its commitment to giving back to our community and helping local charities is greatly appreciated. As the U.S. Representative of the 2nd Congressional District it is an honor to congratulate the Beaumont Coca-Cola Bottling Company and all the members of the Coca-Cola family on their 100th anniversary. I wish Beaumont Coca-Cola Bottling Company another 100 years of continued success.

And that's just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF EDINBURG NORTH HIGH SCHOOL FOR ACHIEVING SILVER MEDAL STATUS IN U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT HIGH SCHOOL RANKINGS

**HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 13, 2007*

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Edinburg North High School for achieving silver medal status in the 2007 U.S. News and World Report ranking of the best high schools in the Nation. Of the over 18,000 high schools in the country, only 505 were recognized as gold or silver medal winners based upon their performance on state tests and success in providing college level work for all of their students.

Edinburg North High School demonstrates that academic excellence is not restricted to the economically advantaged. More than half of its students participate in the free and reduced price lunch program. Over 95 percent of the students at Edinburg North are Hispanic, and many students are the children of migrant and seasonal farm workers. The Edinburg North students and community may not be economically advantaged, but they are rich in family values, tradition, and potential. It is these characteristics that have served as the foundation for their success.

In 2004, Edinburg North High School was recognized with the College Board Inspiration award for its success in expanding Advanced Placement opportunities for students. Edinburg North High School made access to challenging courses a number one priority. It instituted an "open-door" policy for advanced placement courses, more than doubling the number of students taking at least one advanced placement exam.