THE FATHERS OF THE GREATEST GENERATION

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2008

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, this year the Poe folks welcomed two new Texans to our brood, making me a proud grandfather of seven. With each new addition, I think back to my grandfathers and the influences they had on me growing up. While they came from very different backgrounds, their impressions on me as a child set an example of what a father, grandfather and man should be.

My mom's father was a lanky, fiery redheaded German who was as hard-headed as he was strong. Theodore Otto Herman Hill, or ''Thunderhead'' as he was more appropriately known, was born in 1899. His Prussian grandparents immigrated to the United States through Galveston in the early 1800's and settled in the growing German community in Texas to begin a new life.

I remember him as being very set in his ways, very militaristic in his daily routines. He was meticulous in everything he did and as a result, he did most everything well. Like the Army, he did more before 6 a.m. than most anyone I knew. He arose early, worked hard with his hands all day and reared three girls, he called ''the boys'' to work the cotton fields with him.

Papa was a hunter, a taxidermist and a Teddy Roosevelt conservationist. He found hundreds of Apache and Comanche arrowheads on his land that he organized and that were later donated to the Texas Ranger Museum.

He was the frontiersman type. He could tell the type of tree by looking at the bark or observing the leaves and predicted the weather by just looking at the sky and watching the habits of the animals. And as most men of his generation, he was tough. The only thing I think he was ever scared of was my grandmother—an equally fiery German. Theodore is a long time family name that has been passed on to my son and grandson.

My dad's father was of Scots-Irish descent and a man of many hats. He was adopted by a neighboring family at the age of six after his single father decided to move on without him. As a young teenager, he ran away from the only real family he knew and set out to start a life for himself. I loved hearing his stories, some sounded like tall tales. Grandpa, a snake-oil salesman of sorts, rode the rails all over the country, selling anything and everything to earn a buck.

After meeting my grandmother in his late teens, the two married and he settled down to raise a family. He became the local Assistant Postmaster, worked on the railroad and was a barber. He opened his own barber shop next door to the local bank and became so involved in the banking business that he ended up running the place. During the Depression he loaned farmers money on a hand shake. That job took him to Pearland, TX, where he started another local bank and sold real estate on the side. Interesting enough, although he was a banker he always paid cash and thought credit cards were a bad idea for average Americans. The concept of rest and relaxation was not one he could appreciate. He was tinkering with something every day of his life. He was an electrician, plumber, made furniture and had a huge garden. He was a leader in the local Church of Christ and never missed a service until his death.

He never let the fact of his abandonment as a child be an excuse for anything.

Grandpa lived to be 88 years old and he and my grandmothers were a large part of my life and my kids' lives. Papa was tragically killed by a drunk driver in the 1950s while laying asphalt for the Texas Highway Department. Because people married so young back then and their kids married young, I got to spend far more time with my grandparents than most kids do today.

Neither of my grandfathers made it past 7th grade, but were far wiser than most men I know. While both very different, they both embodied the very traits that define men of their generation. They were the fathers of the Greatest Generation. They believed in hard work and providing for their families even in the depression—no excuses. They taught their children and their children's children the value of an earned dollar, pride in hard work, respect for their elders and a love of God and country.

I am so thankful to have known these two men and wish there were more like them today. They were good men, good examples, good fathers and inspiring grandfathers. Happy Father's Day.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING EMERGENCY MANAGERS IN SHELBY COUNTY

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2008

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and recognize the extraordinary contributions of emergency management, disaster response, and recovery personnel as well as elected officials and community leaders in my district devastated by the recent severe weather in Indiana.

I wish particularly to honor these outstanding individuals in Shelby County: Mike Schantz, Director, Emergency Management Agency; Mike Bowlby, Sheriff; Tony Lennen, President and CEO, Major Hospital; Scott Furgeson, Mayor, Shelbyville.

These areas suffered greatly from tornadoes, heavy rains and flooding, creating a catastrophe that awaits a presidential response. But the catastrophe did not await the efforts of these individuals. And in response, they went above and beyond the call of duty, showing great poise while saving many lives and serving the people of their communities.

I also commend Governor Mitch Daniels and the many State government authorities who have been so instrumental in leading the State through this crisis. I strongly support Indiana's three requests for Federal aid and renew my request to the President of the United States, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to act promptly, make assessments, and declare an expedited major disaster for all 44 counties in the State of Indiana affected by the severe weather.

We need to speed the necessary relief to the families who have fallen victim to Mother Nature's fury and extend full Federal assistance to Hoosier families, businesses and farms to include direct assistance to individuals, Small Business Administration Disaster Loans and emergency assistance loans from the Farm Service Agency.

Madam Speaker, Hoosier families and communities are hurting and need to know that help is on the way. I urge this administration and my colleagues to focus their attention on this urgent Midwestern need for emergency relief.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS BRANCH 1477 TOPS NATION IN FOOD COLLECTION

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2008

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, for the second straight year, the men and women of the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 1477 of St. Petersburg, Florida, led the Nation in food collection as part of the national ''Stamp Out Hunger'' food drive.

Their chapter alone collected a local record of 1,718,218 pounds of food that has been distributed to Pinellas County food banks. St. Petersburg Branch 1477, combined with two other local branches: Clearwater Branch 2008 and Tampa Branch 599, collected in the Tampa Bay area 4,289,416 pounds, more food than in any other geographic area in the Nation. In fact, these three chapters accounted for three of the top five branch totals nationally.

Having spent Memorial Day with many members of Branch 1477, I know of the great pride they have in serving their community. They acknowledge that the ''Stamp Out Hunger'' food drive was an outstanding partnership between the National Association of Letter Carriers, the United States Postal Services, the American Postal Workers Union, the National Rural Letter Carrier's Association, and local businesses including Valpak, a major sponsor in my area. Most importantly though, the level of success of this annual drive is due to the compassion and support of the residents of our local communities who place bag after bag of food out at their mail box on this one day of the year to help their neighbors in need.

Madam Speaker, please join me in thanking the National Association of Letter Carriers for taking the initiative to sponsor the ''Stamp Out Hunger'' program for these past 16 years and in congratulating the letter carriers of Branch 1477 who serve from Dunedin through Largo, Pinellas Park, St. Petersburg and south to Punta Gorda, Florida, for once again topping the Nation in the collection of food. This program is in the finest American tradition of neighbor helping neighbor.