

MISSISSIPPI FLOODS

HON. KENNY C. HULSHOF

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. HULSHOF. Madam Speaker, when standing at the tops of the levees overlooking the Mississippi River, the mind's eye can still recall the army of sandbags atop the dirt and sand. You can still remember the smell of diesel fumes from the drainage pumps sending water out over the levee walls this summer. Thankfully, after the waters rose and fell, the sun shines again in my district. The floods are by no means forgotten. Winfield even today is still recovering from levee breaks, and LaGrange, Clarksville and Louisiana are still disposing of debris left behind throughout their towns. However, the signs of water lines against levees and unprotected structures mean lives are moving toward normalcy. After weeks of fighting floodwaters this summer, Jeff McReynolds gets to see his wife and baby at night, and Mark Campbell eats meals at home. In short, Northeast Missouri is beginning to recognize normal again.

Growing up in the shadow of Mississippi River levees, I know the stress and anguish a flood brings. I also know that those who sandbag levees to save their neighbor's home or farm are some of the biggest heroes we have in Missouri. So, with that said, let me now honor Canton Emergency Services Director Jeff McReynolds; Hannibal's Emergency Services Director John Hark; LaGrange City Administrator Mark Campbell; Alexandria Mayor Bob Davis; West Quincy's Roger Sutter and Norman Haerr; Louisiana Mayor Don Giltner; LaGrange City Administrator Mark Campbell; Lewis County Emergency Manager David Keith; Des Moines River Drainage District Chairman John Winkleman; Louisiana City Administrator Bob Jenne; Pike County Emergency Manager Al Murry; Marion County Drainage District Commissioner Brent Hoerr; South River Drainage District Commissioner David Bleigh; Gregory Landing Drainage District Commissioner Kent Leftwich; and Clarksville Mayor JoAnne Smiley for leading the efforts to protect their hometowns. I also thank Colonel Setliff and Colonel Sinkler of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. And, finally, I thank every citizen, National Guard soldier and government official that helped saved our towns. These men and women are all true heroes.

There is also sadness in Missouri, for not all of our levees along the Mississippi River held. In addition to the tragic flooding in Iowa and Illinois, many areas of Lincoln County saw levees breached, and the air filled with news choppers that captured images of the flooding. This flooding has a profound effect on everyone who lives or works near the river because once you lose a crop or are forced to rebuild a house, you will always be able to empathize with those who find water where a home or farm should be.

And just as friends, neighbors and perfect strangers helped shore up Clarksville, Canton and West Quincy's levees, we Missourians helped Iowans, Illinoisans and our brothers and sisters elsewhere in Missouri rebuild their lives this summer and now into this fall. Communities up and down the Mississippi River have exhausted themselves and their resources to fight this flood.

To truly honor their service, we must continue to ensure that FEMA and our other federal agencies and resources are committed to the cause of recovery from this and future disasters. We will remain diligent in this effort, for to do otherwise would cheapen the work that the thousands of volunteers in my district and elsewhere in Missouri put forward on this effort. I could not look JoAnne Smiley and all our other volunteers and coordinators in the face without making this commitment, for this is what their commitment deserves and requires.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST VERTICAL ASCENT OF EL CAPITAN

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the 50th anniversary of the first vertical ascent of Yosemite's El Capitan. Standing at 3,593 feet above the Yosemite Valley floor, El Capitan is the largest granite monolith in the world. Since it was named by the Mariposa Battalion in 1851, this natural wonder has lured travelers and climbers from all over the world.

The natural beauty and wonders of Yosemite National Park have inspired countless travelers and have earned Yosemite its reputation as the "crown jewel" of the National Park System. It was this very majesty that compelled Wayne Merry, George Whitmore and Warren J. Harding to fearlessly ascend the seemingly impassable face of El Capitan and become legends amongst the climbing community.

Over a strenuous period of 47 days, this team of climbers courageously charted the Nose Route vertically over the face of El Capitan. Lacking many of the technological developments available in current climbing gear, these men relied heavily on aid climbing with nothing more than fixed rope, pitons and expansion bolts to facilitate their ascent. Finally, on November 12, 1958, they conquered the summit of El Capitan, effectively raising the standards of climbing throughout the world.

I am proud to recognize the accomplishment of Wayne Merry, George Whitmore and Warren J. Harding on the occasion of their endeavor's 50th anniversary. Thousands of climbers have since used the very same route to reach El Capitan's summit and vista. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 50th anniversary of this achievement and honoring the brave men of the original climbing team.

HONORING JUDY PARK

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Judy Park on the occasion of her retirement after 40 years of dedicated service to the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, NARFE, and the 4.6 million Federal workers and annuitants it represents.

Judy began her career at NARFE, then known as the National Association of Retired Civil Employees, in 1968 when newly elected president Thomas G. Walters asked her to join him in starting a legislative presence. Only 4 years out of college, Judy wasted no time. Early victories included granting survivor benefits to second spouses of retirees, extending survivor benefits to spouses in postretirement marriages, making retirees eligible to participate in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program open season, restoring full annuities to retirees at the death of a survivor, and increasing the Government share of health premiums.

In 1976, Judy became the first legislative director for NARFE and began hiring a staff. In the 1980s, Judy coordinated a major NARFE effort that resulted in the crafting of the Federal Employees Retirement System, FERS, after Federal employees were required to be universally covered by Social Security.

Perhaps the biggest legislative accomplishment of her career was the repeal of the Medicare Catastrophic Protection Act of 1988, because everybody said the repeal would never happen. Judy saw that the new law placed an unjust surtax on all retirees, especially Federal retirees. NARFE worked with the Military Officers Association of America and ultimately put together a 38-organization Coalition for Affordable Health Care that continues to work together today.

Judy has dedicated her life to ensuring that Federal employees and retirees are treated fairly and with respect—an incredible recognition of the important work civil servants perform given that she is not a Federal retiree herself. During her 40-year career, Judy has met with six U.S. Presidents and scores of congressional Members; she has worked with a dozen NARFE presidents; and she has seen the NARFE membership double in size.

Perhaps a former employee describes Judy best when she says that Judy "embodies the words 'trust, leadership and grace.'" It has been my pleasure to work with Judy on issues of importance to Federal employees and retirees and I ask that you join me in applauding Judy Park for her excellent service to protecting the rights of Federal employees and retirees. I congratulate Judy in her retirement and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING ARCHIE MANINA ON HIS RETIREMENT AS DIRECTOR OF THE OGEMAW COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE AFTER 26 YEARS

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Archie Manina of Rose City, MI. Mr. Manina has served as director of the Ogemaw County Veterans Affairs Office for 26 years will be retiring effective November 30. In recognition of his quarter-century of service, I ask that you, Madam Speaker, and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring Archie Manina on this momentous occasion.

Mr. Manina was born in Rose City, Michigan and spent the early years of his life living on a rural farm in Gratiot County, MI. For a time,