

HONORING CHIEF MAURICE L.
KEMP

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to recognize and honor Chief Maurice L. Kemp, the first African-American Fire-Rescue Chief in the city of Miami's history. This outstanding public servant has worked with the City of Miami Fire Department for 24 years and has held the positions of lieutenant, captain, assistant fire chief, and deputy fire chief.

Chief Kemp received a bachelor of science degree in biology from Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina and a master's degree in public administration from Nova Southeastern University.

As Deputy Fire Chief since 1999, Chief Kemp has overseen the technical, management, support, communication, and emergency management services, as well as developed and managed budget and legislative functions. In 2006, he was appointed the Program Chief and Task Force Leader for the United States Department of Homeland Security, FEMA Urban Search and Rescue.

Moreover, Chief Kemp has received accolades throughout his career including the Dr. A. Mancebo Memorial Award and recognition from the 5000 Role Models of South Florida.

Since 1735, professional and volunteer firefighters have been an invaluable facet of our communities, towns, and cities. Through the City of Miami's mission to "serve the citizens of Miami in a professional manner by providing rapid emergency response and other services to save lives and protect property" and their motto, "Excellence through Service," I commend the tremendous bravery of Miami's firefighters and am proud to honor each one today on the Floor of the House. Ever vigilant, this Nation's firefighters respond quickly to emergencies of all kinds and protect and save lives each and every day. From the earliest days of Benjamin Franklin's Union Fire Company to the famous fire departments of New York City, Chicago, and Boston, every fire station in this country has a proud history and tradition of distinguished service.

Today, men such as Chief Kemp along with over one million firefighters answer the call of duty and perform extraordinary acts of selflessness and valor without hesitation.

Madam Speaker and my colleagues, I ask that you join me and the public safety community in this remarkable show of solidarity. Chief Kemp is an outstanding American worthy of our collective honor and appreciation. It is with deep respect and admiration that I commend Chief Kemp, and thank the men and women in the fire service field that dedicate to the selfless protection of others stand together in the face of adversity, bonded by sacrifice and a sense of duty.

WELCOME HOME IN HONOR OF A
AMERICAN HERO CAPT SCOTT
SPEICHER THE UNITED STATES
NAVY

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I have come here today to honor a fallen hero who, after 18 years, has finally been reunited with his family. Captain Speicher was a man of great distinction who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that others might know a more peaceful world. The following poem from Capitol Guide Albert Carey Caswell reflects on his final journey home.

WELCOME HOME

Welcome Home!

Scott, may your sacred body rest!

America's Finest, of all Sons, but one of her very best!

How over the years, have so have so our tears . . . have so run!

And all of those sleepless nights, keeping hope alive . . . as we have all so done!

As your beautiful Children, have so missed you my Son!

And your Wonderful Wife, with hope burning bright . . . how the tears begun!

And your Mom and Dad, praying from evening to morning sun . . .

But, it's over now . . . we can rest!

But, oh how so bittersweet . . . this answer, this emptiness . . . Thy Will Be Done! For you were and will always be, one of America's best!

Welcome Home, Our Most Heroic One!

For you are now, One of America's Chosen Sons . . .

Sons of Freedom and Peace, who defend us with but only their beliefs!

'Oh how so Magnificent, are but all of these . . . such splendid ones!

Just moments, are all that we so have . . .

To make a difference, to heart's grab!

To change the world!

To go off so valiantly, with but out flags unfurled . . .

It's been eighteen long . . . long years!

With all of that heartache, and all of those most swollen tears . . .

Still, in all our pain . . . there are so many families, who will never know . . .

Will never know, but where there loved ones so remain . . .

Bless you, our Fine Son!

And your family, for our country . . . for what you have all so done!

For your last flight Scott, was not over Iraq! But, up to our Lord . . . as straight up to Heaven as was that!

For Scott now, now are an Angel with wings . . .

In the Army of our Lord, of all things!

And on the day you arrived, could you not hear our Lord and his Angels cry!

Scott, Welcome Home!

In honor of a real American Hero, Navy Captain Scott Speicher and his family . . .

may they find peace . . .

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO BLIND
LEMON JEFFERSON AND THE
BLIND LEMON BLUES

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, as the famed York Theatre Company of New York celebrates its 40th anniversary, today I rise to recognize their newest musical genius, "Blind Lemon Blues" and to pay tribute to the Legendary Father of the Texas Blues, "Blind" Lemon Jefferson.

Blind Lemon Blues celebrates the legacy of Blind Lemon Jefferson and his profound influence upon the development of American popular music. Blind Lemon Blues is set in New York City in 1948 at the last recording session of the legendary Huddie Ledbetter, better known as Lead Belly, and combines elements of traditional blues, gospel, rhythm and blues, soul, doo-wop, and rap to evoke the enduring legacy of Blind Lemon and his contemporaries, Blind Willie Johnson, Lillian Glinn, Hattie Hudson, Bobbie Cadillac, Lillian Miller and Lead Belly himself.

"Blind" Lemon Jefferson was one of the most popular blues singers of the 1920s, and has been titled "Father of the Texas Blues." Jefferson's singing and self-accompaniment were distinctive as a result of his high-pitched voice and originality on the guitar. He used Dallas as a base to launch an extraordinary blues career, during which he made over 80 recordings of his intricate melodic rhythms and influenced countless artists, including B.B. King. Other later blues and rock and roll musicians attempted to imitate both his songs and his musical style.

Often heralded as one of the most influential bluesmen of all time, "Blind" Lemon Jefferson was born blind near Couchman, Texas, in Freestone County, near present-day Wortham, Texas, in September 1893. Jefferson was one of eight children born to sharecroppers Alex and Clarissa Jefferson. Jefferson began playing the guitar in his early teens, and soon after he began performing at picnics and parties. He also became a street musician, playing in east Texas towns in front of barbershops and on corners.

In the early 1920s, Jefferson traveled to Dallas, where he met Huddie "Leadbelly" Leadbetter and established the blues scene in Dallas' Deep Ellum district. Five years later, he was on the road of instant success. Between the years of 1925 and 1929, Jefferson made over 80 recordings for Paramount Records and became the first commercially successful male black artist. Some of his most notable recordings are "Black Snake Moan," "Boll Weevil Blues," "Matchbox Blues," and the song that would become his trademark, "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean."

Jefferson died from mysterious circumstances on the streets of Chicago on December 22, 1929, and was buried in the old Wortham Negro Cemetery. His grave was unmarked until 1967, when a Texas state historical marker was dedicated to him. He was inducted in the Blues Foundation's Hall of Fame in 1980. In 1997 the town of Wortham began a blues festival named for the singer, and a new granite headstone was placed at his gravesite—a fitting tribute to the man who