

City of Los Angeles, I rise to honor Jim Seeley for the 34 years of service he has given to the city as our Chief Federal Legislative Representative. As delegation Members and their staffs gather tonight to celebrate our friend and to wish him all the best in his retirement, we wanted to share with our colleagues in the House the wonderful legacy that this Los Angeles "institution" leaves behind.

Jim Seeley was born in the city he would one day represent, grew up in Los Angeles County, and made his way to Stanford University. He graduated in 1959, the same year he married the love of his life Jo Ann Browning. After a stint in Paris where Jo Ann studied at the Sorbonne, and then St. Louis where Jim did his six-month Army training, the couple settled in Washington, D.C. to build their successful careers and raise a large and wonderful family.

Following 8 years with the Department of Commerce, Jim accepted a position in the Washington Office of the State of Illinois. Assisting Illinois businesses in promoting their goods abroad at trade shows and on trade missions, Jim began to hone his government relations expertise as Deputy Director of the office serving under two Governors.

In 1976, after 7 years with the Illinois Washington Office, Jim returned to his roots when he accepted the position of Chief Federal Legislative Representative for the City of Los Angeles. Reporting first to the office of the Chief Legislative Analyst, and later directly to the Office of the Mayor, Jim has served the city and its residents with distinction under Mayors Tom Bradley, Richard Riordan, James Hahn, and Antonio Villaraigosa.

Over the years, he forged close working relationships with the Los Angeles Congressional Delegation Members and their staffs, as he led his own staff to further the federal legislative agenda of the Council and Mayor. Jim has flourished for more than three decades in his role as the city's "go to" guy in the nation's capital. Through changes in Mayors, Presidents, and Democratic and Republican House and Senate majorities, Jim has been a constant, adjusting the city's advocacy strategies to the changing times.

Jim guided the city's federal response to the Northridge earthquake in 1994, as city and county officials sought maximum federal relief to address the devastation caused by the quake. In the post 9/11 years, he has focused on homeland security and Los Angeles' efforts to improve airport security. He relished his work around the 1984 Olympics in his hometown, and has been an integral part of the effort to build our transportation infrastructure and move Angelinos out of their cars and onto subway and light rail.

For 34 years, LA congressional offices have benefited from Jim's deep knowledge of the city and the federal policies that impact Los Angeles and our constituents. We also have benefited from the pleasure of his company, as "Seeley" was always a welcome visitor. When he dropped by to touch base with staff, check up on the latest legislative rumor, or just banter with the congressional colleagues who had long since become friends, I think we all felt like City Hall was down the street—not 2700 miles away.

Jim officially retired from the City of Los Angeles at the end of March, but will continue to consult and share his vast institutional knowledge with the City of Los Angeles office. In

the meantime, he and Jo Ann, who retired last year, will no doubt devote much of their free time to their 11 children and their 14 beautiful grandchildren.

On behalf of the Los Angeles Congressional Delegation, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jim Seeley on his retirement, and in thanking this dedicated public servant for his 34 years of service to the City of Los Angeles. We send our very best wishes to Jim and Jo Ann for a happy and fulfilling retirement.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF CRESTMONT

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the First Baptist Church of Crestmont on its momentous 100th Anniversary. Just north of Philadelphia, First Baptist Church of Crestmont was the very first church to be established in the town of Crestmont over a century ago.

The congregation that founded the First Baptist Church of Crestmont originally met in the homes of two of its members. The group was formally organized into a Baptist church in October of 1910. Determined to build a meeting place for their new congregation, the members of the church worked together to begin digging the foundation with their own hands. Neighborhood children assisted with fundraising by performing concerts and organizing social events. In the early 1920's, the congregation developed plans to construct a new building for their church, which was a fortunate decision as the original building was destroyed in a fire shortly before the new church was completed. This new building housed the congregation for decades before construction began on an updated building.

As the congregation continued to grow, transitioning from one pastor to the next, the commitment to community was passed down from generation to generation. In 2008 the sanctuary was once again destroyed by a fire. The First Baptist Church of Crestmont turned to their neighbors for support as they worked to repair their church. Last September the congregation returned to worship in their newly renovated edifice and fellowship hall.

For decades, this community has provided a place for generations of children and adults alike to learn and worship together. The congregation has overcome great hardships over the past 100 years and has emerged even stronger. Although First Baptist is a small assembly, it has served as a significant, steadfast source of spiritual sustenance for its people while remaining committed to working hand in hand with the community to create a positive environment in which to raise our children and keep our seniors safe.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating First Baptist Church of Crestmont's 100th anniversary milestone and wishing the congregation many more years of community enrichment and service.

HONORING ROBERT ACREE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Robert Acree upon being awarded with the "Lifetime Achievement Award" by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. Mr. Acree was honored on Saturday, January 30, 2010 in Chowchilla, California.

Mr. Robert Acree was born and raised in Chowchilla, California. He attended Chowchilla High School, where he participated on the track team as a pole vaulter. He graduated from high school in 1965, and in 1967 enlisted in the United States Air Force.

Mr. Acree completed basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, and completed technical school as a Tactical Aircraft Maintenance Specialist at Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas. His first assignment was at Davis-Montham Air Force Base in Arizona where he worked on the F-4C "Phantom." In September 1969, Mr. Acree received orders to deploy to Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam. He joined the 558th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 12th Combat Support Group. He and his squadron kept the F-4 "Phantoms" in the air as the 558th conducted close air support for ground forces fighting the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese. The squadron was also responsible for conducting interdiction and combat air patrol activities.

Mr. Acree was assigned to the 421st Tactical Fighter Squadron of the 366th Tactical Fighter Wing at Da Nang, Vietnam. With an aircraft landing or taking off every 52 seconds Da Nang Air Base is considered to be the busiest base in the world. The 421st, also known as the "Black Widows," flew thousands of close air support missions and conducted interdiction and combat air activities. Toward the end of his military career, Mr. Acree was rotated to the States for one of several assignments at George Air Force Base in California. In April 1971, Mr. Acree received an Honorable Discharge from the Air Force; after only 88 days he re-enlisted back into the Air Force for 2 additional years. He served at Beale Air Force Base where he worked on the top secret SR-71 "Blackbird" spy plane. He was cross-trained in Aircraft Weapon Systems at Lowery Air Force Base in Colorado and was then assigned to George Air Force Base. He completed his tour in Udorn, Thailand, working on F-4C's.

In 1976, Mr. Acree requested a tour in Korea and served at the Kunsan Air Base. He then spent 2 years at the Soesterberg Air Base in Holland, working on the F-4 Phantom and the F-15 Eagle. In 1979, he reported to Edwards Air Force Base. While at Edwards he met his soon to be wife, Amy. They spent 4 years at Hahn Air Base in Germany and finally landed back at George Air Force Base.

In July 1988, Master Sergeant Acree retired from the United States Air Force. During his twenty-one years of service, he earned an Associate of Science Degree in Aircraft Armament Systems Technology from the Community College of the Air Force. Upon his retirement, he was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the Good Conduct Medal with five oak leaf