

leader from Southwest Virginia. Dot left us on January 9, 2012.

Born on September 6, 1926, Dot was an active member of the Pulaski County community. Dot lived by the philosophy, "You get out of anything what you put into it." This philosophy was evident through her service in a number of local groups and the awards she received. In 1984, she was named Pulaski County Woman of the year. She also received the Gerry Atkinson Community Service Award. Dot was involved with local Girl Scout and Cub Scout groups, the PTA, Band Boosters, the Fairlawn Fire Department, and was a long-time member of the Pulaski County Republican Women. She served as a member of the Radford University Advisory Board on Vocational Education, the Advisory Committee for Marketing Curriculum at New River Community College, the American Cancer Society, and the American Red Cross Board. Dot was also an election officer in Pulaski County and an active member of Mountain View United Methodist Church.

Dot leaves behind her husband, Donald; daughter and son-in-law, Alice Fowler and Butch Buford; son and daughter-in-law, Dennis James and Eva Fowler; brother, Calvin Dexter Hall; sister, Ester Soper; sister-in-law, Thelma Hall; stepdaughters and their spouses, Rhonda and Phil Moser, and Sandra Kay and Brandon Clabes; stepson, Donald Keith Sheffey; as well as four grandchildren, one great-granddaughter, and four step-grandchildren.

Dot impacted the lives of many through her work in Pulaski County. She never wanted to be in the spotlight. Instead, she pushed others to become leaders in the community and was content to stay in the background. She had a positive attitude and was always there with words of encouragement or advice. I had the honor of knowing Dot for many years. I am honored to pay tribute to this great woman's many contributions. Her legacy and influence will be long remembered in Pulaski County and throughout Southwest Virginia.

TRIBUTE TO ODELL MERRICK

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 18, 2012

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Odell Merrick, a successful Kentucky businessman and longtime community leader of Pulaski County, Kentucky. His passing is a great loss to his family, his community, and to me personally.

As the Co-Founder and CEO of Cumberland Wood & Chair, Co-Owner of Somerset Wood Products, and Director of Citizens National Bank, Odell Merrick has left behind a legacy of successful business ventures.

In 1985, Odell founded Somerset Wood Products, alongside his son, Steve Merrick, which grew over the years to become a nationally-recognized manufacturer of hardwood flooring. Odell remained a co-owner with the company up until his death last November.

In addition to his many successful business ventures, Odell was a highly active member of his church, where he taught Sunday school for more than 30 years. Serving as both a Dea-

con and Chairman of his church, Odell has been highly involved in many church projects, including the founding of Somerset Christian School.

Odell was a man of service and dedication to his community and in 2010, he was honored by the Somerset-Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce with the highest honor for those who have made significant contributions to the community, the "Distinguished Community Service Award."

Odell Merrick leaves behind a devoted family: his loving wife of more than 53 years, Nancy Routt Merrick; their children, Steve Merrick and Debbie Eades of Somerset, KY, along with four sisters and grandchildren. On behalf of my wife Cynthia and myself, I want to extend our deepest heartfelt sympathies to the Merrick family.

TRIBUTE TO GREATER CORONA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR MIKE ZELLER

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 18, 2012

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Corona, California are exceptional. Corona has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Mike Zeller is one of these individuals. On January 21, 2012, Mike will receive a prestigious honor when the Greater Corona Valley Chamber of Commerce names him the 2011 Citizen of the Year at the organization's annual awards and installation gala at the Eagle Glen Golf Club.

Mike began his career as an educator but 30 years ago he decided to make a change and open a life insurance business through Primerica. Mike's business offers clients options to purchase insurance, from term to life, and anything in between. Another component unique to his business is the marketing and structure of Primerica. Mike has been honored by Primerica often, and was again on January 15 as he celebrates 30 years of providing service to his clients.

In addition to his business acumen, Mike has also lived a compassionate and giving life. Twenty years ago, his son Chad was fatally injured on a bicycle ride. Both he and his wife Nancee refused to let this tragedy define their lives and in honor of Chad they formed a foundation, called the Chad Zeller Memorial. The foundation has held annual consecutive walks/runs to ensure public safety—giving thousands of helmets to children of all ages.

Throughout the many years that Mike has been a member of the Greater Corona Valley Chamber, Mike has been involved and supported the Chamber financially in sponsorships and door prizes. Every year, he is quick to recognize the Chamber for its involvement with the Chad Zeller Memorial Walk/Run events.

In addition to the Greater Corona Valley Chamber of Commerce, Mike is involved with service clubs and multitude of other charities.

Mike has a philosophy to help as many people as possible and lives his life in service to others, regardless of their status in life.

In light of all Mike has done for the community of Corona, the Greater Corona Valley Chamber of Commerce named Mike their Citizen of the Year. Mike's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Corona, California. He has been the heart and soul of many community organizations and events and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and I join them in saluting him as he receives this prestigious award.

HONORING GERALD ROPER

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 18, 2012

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, on January 25, 2012 longtime civic leader Gerald Roper will receive honors for his commitment to greening and beautifying Chicago, as well as improving the region's business and entrepreneurial communities.

A founding member of Chicago Gateway Green Committee, Jerry's commitment to beautifying Chicago over the past 25 years can be seen all across our city. As Chairman, Jerry oversaw the planting of 57,000 shrubs, 53,000 perennials, and 2,050 trees and the removal of more than one million pounds of litter from Chicago's expressways. He was instrumental in the installation of numerous sculptures at Chicago's beautiful landmarks and has helped make our hometown a place travelers from around the world want to visit and admire.

Under Jerry's leadership as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce for more than 18 years, the Chamber earned a 5-star accreditation by the United States Chamber of Commerce for its sound policies, effective organizational procedures, and positive impact on the region's business climate. The award is given to only the top five percent of all chambers in the country.

Jerry demonstrates the meaning of a true public servant. In 2000 he formed the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center, an affiliate of the Chamber of Commerce. The Center's contributions features the innovative Bridge Program that connects emerging companies to establish Chicago area firms to their mutual benefit, as well as the Illinois Innovation Accelerator Fund that bolsters access to venture capital.

A founding member of the National Business Leaders for Transportation, Jerry is an outspoken voice for the aviation and rapid transit industries. He also participates actively in several civic and industry organizations, serving as Chairman of the President's Advisory Council for Harold Washington College, for example.

Jerry's passion and commitment to the City of Chicago is beyond compare. On this day, we thank Jerry for his outstanding service to our greater community and look forward to his future contributions.