

HONORING SANDRA WILLIAMS BUSH AND RECOGNIZING HER DEDICATION TO HELPING OTHERS

**HON. BRIAN HIGGINS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 8, 2015*

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to recognize and honor Ms. Sandra Williams Bush for her outstanding commitment to service as well as the sharing of knowledge, culture, and community. Sandra Bush is the recipient of the Buffalo Association of Black Social Workers, Inc. Community Service Award; the Black Chamber of Commerce of WNY Beverly Gray Community Service Award, the GROUP Ministries, Inc. Community Achievement Award, the Harriet Tubman Community Service Award, the Afro-American Historical Association of the Niagara Frontier, Inc. William Wells Brown Community Service Award, and Community Service Recognition from the City of Buffalo Common Council Community.

Sandra Bush, the daughter of Willis and Evelyn Williams, was born in Buffalo and grew up attending schools within the Buffalo school system. She continued her education, earning a Human Services degree from Medaille College and a Masters of Library Science degree from the University of Buffalo School of Information and Library Science. Her well-rounded education only strengthened her passion to help others. In August of 1985, Sandra began her career with the Buffalo and Eire County Public Library as a clerk with the Department of Extension Services. A few years later, she decided to pursue a degree in library science, and in 1991 she received her certification as a public librarian. Her career also included working with the RAM Van, Lookie Bookie, the Bookmobile and other several city branch libraries.

Sandra is retiring as the first Branch Manager of the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Library. There she oversaw the care of the largest resource center of African and African American history in central and western New York. Beyond maintaining the collection, she worked tirelessly to incorporate the community with quality library service, programming and outreach efforts.

She credits strong family support along with encouragement from the community for her achievements. Friends and family joined Sandra Bush for her retirement party on August 21, 2015 at the Frank Merriweather Library between 3:30 and 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to honor and recognize Ms. Sandra Williams Bush. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Ms. Bush on an accomplished career and to commend her for her admirable work within the Buffalo library system and community.

CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF JAPANTOWN SAN JOSÉ (NIHONMACHI)

**HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 8, 2015*

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with Representatives ZOE LOFGREN and ANNA ESHOO to honor the 125th Anniversary of the establishment of Japantown San José (Nihonmachi) in Santa Clara Valley. Nihonmachi is a reflection of the values of the original Japanese immigrant community, the Issei (first generation), who settled in Santa Clara Valley in 1890. By the early 20th century, the community formally established residence in what is now Nihonmachi, which offered a uniquely Japanese source of employment, lodging, goods, services, and cultural support. Nihonmachi is one of only three remaining Japantowns in the United States today.

Soon after the founding of Nihonmachi, with the support of the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907, an increased number of Japanese women began settling in Santa Clara Valley. This led to the growth of families and the birth of the Nisei (second generation) of Nihonmachi residents.

Nihonmachi witnessed its first national tragedy as the Great Depression enveloped the United States. However, despite national economic hardship, Nihonmachi experienced slow, yet steady economic growth. Nihonmachi further strengthened its presence in the region by welcoming other Asian communities, serving as a cultural refuge for Chinese and Filipino immigrants. This cultural diversity among the residents of Nihonmachi allowed the neighborhood to withstand the turmoil of World War II, as well as the forced internment of Japanese Americans in 1942.

After the post-war return of the Japanese American community to the West Coast and Santa Clara Valley, Nihonmachi became a haven for residents against the simmering anti-Japanese sentiment and national racial hysteria. Despite the open adversity faced by Nihonmachi, its population nearly doubled in size due to the addition of Sansei (third generation) by the end of the 1940s.

Through the late 1960s and into the 1970s the Nisei were caring not only for the aging Issei and growing Sansei, but were also determined to preserve Japanese culture and combat the widespread acculturation of their community into mainstream American culture. It was during the 1970s that the Sansei embarked on a path of political activism set on sparking a renewal of Nihonmachi through cultural awareness.

Since the 1980s, Nihonmachi has experienced a period of revitalization, including the building of new commercial and residential development, including projects on land that had once been a neighboring Chinatown. Furthermore, the installation of historical markers and plaques around the neighborhood commemorate the cultural history and achievements of Nihonmachi.

Currently, the Yonsei and Gosei (fourth and fifth generations) play a vital role in the international dialogue between Nihonmachi and Japan as well as the continued preservation of Japanese culture brought to Santa Clara Val-

ley by the Issei 125 years ago. For instance, in 2013, the Japantown Business Association sponsored fundraising events to provide aid and support to victims of the Tohoku tsunami and earthquake in Japan.

Mr. Speaker, we commend Japantown San José for its 125 years of dedication to the preservation of Japanese culture in the increasingly diverse Santa Clara Valley. As one of only three remaining Japantowns in the United States, Nihonmachi's contributions to the cultural preservation of the Japanese American community and its commitment to cultural and economic development of the region serve as a national example of what can be accomplished by uniting communities and working toward positive change, diversity, and mutual respect.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA'S BELOVED JAMES C. "BUCK" SMITH

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 8, 2015*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and legacy of Northwest Florida's beloved James C. "Buck" Smith, who passed away peacefully in his home after a long battle with Alzheimer's on August 11, 2015. A longtime resident of Fort Walton Beach and former City Councilman, Buck had a deep love for his family and community, and his contributions, especially the impact on youth in the area, will be remembered.

Born on January 7, 1936 in Columbus, Georgia to Red and Myrtil Clements Smith, Buck and his siblings moved to Florida's Gulf Coast following his mother's passing. Buck, who had a love for sports, which remained with him throughout his life, played football at Choctawhatchee High School, where he graduated Class of 1955, as well as played at Holmes Junior College in Mississippi.

Upon his return home to Fort Walton Beach, Buck became an active member of the community. As a small businessman, Buck started Smith's Plumbing, Randall's Nursery, and Bucran Corporation. As a leader in the civic arena, he was elected to serve the area he loved as Fort Walton Beach City Councilman from 1983 to 1991. Buck also was a member of the Shriners and was a Free Mason.

It was his passion for community and its youth, however, to whom he dedicated much of his life, by which many will remember Buck. He was instrumental in securing the Fort Walton Beach High School's field house and baseball field, as well as preparing the tennis courts for action at Bruner Middle School. He strongly advocated for the need of a vocational school in the area, helped found the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in Okaloosa County and the All Sports Association, which he was inducted into its Hall of Fame in 2004. Whether it was growing the love of softball in the area by starting a men's slow pitch softball team, which competed at National's in 1973; attending high school football games and cheering on players; or supporting Little League teams; Buck was inspired by the character and camaraderie built as a result of participating in organized sports. He believed in

the youth and was dedicated to ensuring that they were afforded the opportunity to become involved.

Without question, Buck lived a life full of love and giving back to those around him. He was a friend and mentor to countless individuals and one of the area youth's biggest fans. To his family, however, he will most be remembered as a loving husband, father, and grandfather, a great man who they were blessed to have as their own and share with the Northwest Florida community.

On behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize the life of James C. "Buck" Smith. My wife Vicki and I extend our heartfelt prayers and condolences to his wife of 44 years, Billie; daughter, Tina and her husband, Ryan; granddaughters Amber and Ryleigh; brother, Rocky; sisters, Connie, Debbie, Sonya, and Rita; and all of the Smith family.

IN HONOR OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRESCOTT AREA WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE COMMISSION

**HON. PAUL A. GOSAR**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 8, 2015*

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the silver anniversary and 25 years of dedicated service of the Prescott Area Wildland Urban Interface Commission (PAWUIC).

In 1989, Ed Hollenshead and Coy Jemmett of the Prescott National along with Prescott Fire Department's Ron Prince and Darrell Willis originally conceived the idea of an organization where community leaders were involved in combating issues in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). These conversations evolved into a task force known as the Interagency Fire and Emergency Management Group. A year later, The Prescott Area Wildland Urban Interface Commission was officially formed on September 7, 1990 when a memorandum of understanding was signed by PAWUIC, the City of Prescott, Yavapai County, Central Yavapai Fire District, Arizona State Land Department and the Prescott National Forest.

In 2001, Prescott was selected as one of seven communities in the United States to participate in the National Fire Protection Association's Firewise Communities program. This distinction resulted from Prescott having a strong, citizen-led commission on WUI issues.

Today, there are approximately 30 Firewise certified communities in and around Prescott protecting more than 12,000 properties and representing more than half of all Firewise communities in the State of Arizona.

I am proud to honor the Prescott Area Wildland Urban Interface Commission for their valuable contributions towards preventing dangerous wildfires and combating other wildland urban interface issues. At a time in our nation's history when catastrophic wildfires are devastating the West and have burned nearly 9 million acres this year alone, we must embrace commonsense and worthwhile efforts

that encourage active forest management. As a native Arizonan, I am personally thankful for the hard work and dedication that this commission has set forth by empowering so many citizen volunteers.

HONORING COL. JAMES ISAAC WHEELER

**HON. MARTHA MCSALLY**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 8, 2015*

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Col. James Isaac Wheeler, who passed away on August 24, 2015 at the age of 93.

Col. Wheeler was an exceptional pilot who served his country with honor in three different conflicts—World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Over his career in the Air Force, he piloted the P-47 "Thunderbolt," F-86, and C-47.

Upon his retirement, Col. Wheeler continued to serve his community and fellow airmen, holding numerous leadership positions in veterans organizations in Tucson. He was stoutly devoted to his fellow veterans and serving the Southern Arizona community he called home.

I met Col. Wheeler as a young captain after arriving at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in 1994. He became a great friend over the years and always encouraged me in my journey as a pilot, officer, and, most recently, Congresswoman. He was such a wonderful example of continued faithful service to the community, Air Force, and military members and family. He was a patriot and true servant leader, and I am so grateful for his example and friendship.

Few can say they answered the call to serve and defend our country as often, and during such critical times, as Col. Wheeler. It was my honor to have known and served with him, and I extend my sincere condolences to his family and friends.

HONORING THE DEDICATED SERVICE AND SELFLESS SACRIFICE OF TECHNICAL SERGEANT TIMOTHY A. OFFICER, JR.

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 8, 2015*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with both profound sadness and deep gratitude that I rise to pay tribute to a fallen decorated American hero. On Monday, August 3, 2015, Technical Sergeant Timothy A. Officer, Jr., of the 24th Special Operations Wing, located in Florida's First Congressional District, tragically lost his life during a military freefall training accident. TSgt Officer was 32 years old, but lived a lifetime marked by and full of service.

Timothy was born to Timothy and Linda Officer on August 8, 1982 in Huntington, West Virginia. After graduating high school, he followed in his family's footsteps of service and joined the Air Force in 2001. Upon becoming

a Tactical Air Control Party Journeyman and ultimately a Joint Terminal Attack Controller, TSgt Officer earned his stripes as one of our Nation's most elite, both in training and in the ultimate crucible of combat. With multiple deployments around the globe and specifically in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM, TSgt Officer's leadership and devotion to duty served his fellow airmen and our Nation well over his prestigious fourteen-year career.

Among his many awards and accolades are two Bronze Stars, one with Valor Device, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Air Force Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Award with one oak leaf cluster, Combat Readiness Medal, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with three oak leaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Iraq Campaign Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, among many others.

One fateful night in Iraq, on March 31, 2003, while serving as a Tactical Air Command and Control Journeyman in support of the 1st Armored Division, TSgt Officer and his unit were engaged by enemy mortar, artillery, and direct fire. After an artillery shell exploded near his vehicle, then Airman Officer engaged the enemy, killing two, while coordinating close air support. When his crew ran out of ammunition, the citation for his Bronze Star with Valor reads, "He voluntarily dismounted his vehicle, ran across the battlefield through a hail of small arms fire to another vehicle, and returned with enough ammunition for his entire crew." Then Airman Officer assisted in the delivery of air support, resulting in 55 enemy killed. As the citation concludes, "His tremendous bravery under constant enemy fire undoubtedly saved his fellow crewmembers along with countless members of task force 2-70, and directly aided in the defeat of the enemy."

Mr. Speaker, this is the type of man we lost on August 3, 2015. Described as honest and loyal, he truly was a significant role model for those who knew him, not just by his words but by his actions. Adding more weight to our hearts, TSgt Officer is the second son and brother his family lays to rest upon the altar of freedom. His younger brother, Army Sergeant Justin Officer, tragically fell on the battlefield of Afghanistan while serving with the 101st Airborne on September 29, 2010. There are no words I, this body of Congress, or the Nation can say that might assuage the bereavement of the Officer family, as they endure the unendurable yet again. All I can say is on behalf of a humble and grateful Nation, we thank them for the love, counsel, guidance, and support given to Timothy and Justin, which helped make them the heroes they became. Their lives stand as a testament that freedom is not free, and their legacies will echo in time as examples of the ultimate sacrifice for all free people. My wife, Vicki, joins me in praying that God is with Timothy's parents, Timothy and Linda; his sister Kylea; and all of his family and friends during this time of great mourning, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.