HONORING THE LATE JOHN GARDINER

HON. SAM FARR
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, June 21, 2000

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, it isn't often that the world is graced with individuals who change the lives of others around them.

However, Mr. John Gardiner's compassion for the sport of tennis transcended the tennis community and touched the lives of others around him. Gardiner's love for the sport propelled him to build a first-of-its-kind tennis ranch in California Valley. This love and devotion for the sport will forever keep Jack Gardiner's memory alive for all.

John Gardiner's love first developed as a child in Philadelphia, where he would often play at the municipal tennis courts. His love was further developed once he moved to Monterey Peninsula. As a teacher and football coach at Monterey High, he led the Toreadores to victory in 1948 in an undefeated season in 27 years. Former student, Dan Albert recalls, "Something special happened with that team and John Gardiner was the cause of that something special with that group of young men." Later, Gardiner's tennis resort would become most noted for teaching and dedication to adult literacy in Grand Junction.

Perhaps Maynard's most heart-warming success story occurred when he helped a 65 year-old learn to read a letter that his family had written to him. The gentleman was discouraged because he didn't know how his family was doing, and most of all, he couldn't communicate with them in the slightest, to the point he couldn't even write the word hello. After enrolling in the Mesa County Public Library's literacy program, Maynard taught the individual how to read and write and is still working to teach the elderly gentleman the finer points of written language.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I honor Maynard Hesselbarth for his hard work and dedication to adult literacy in Grand Junction. His formidable efforts deserve the praise and admiration of us all. His service to his community, and to those less fortunate, is something that we all should seek to emulate. We are proud of you, Maynard.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD BIGOS

HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT
OF MASSACHUSETTS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, June 21, 2000

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, the formality of a posthumous tribute conjures up the image of Dick Bigos enjoying a big bellylaugh. In the time it takes to write this, he would have launched a political candidate, confirmed a senatorial appointment, delivered a fiscal report, argued a federal grant, arranged a human services roundtable—and taken in a Jerry Springer rerun. You can almost imagine him, with a half-smile, shaking his head at all of us trying to make sense of his death.

An encounter with Dick could take many forms, but could never be a passive experience. His antennae were always up; he was always crunching the numbers—but never for personal profit. Dick was a good man who committed with our capacity and obligation to do better as a community. Day in and day out, year after year, he summoned the determination and tools to elevate our collective humanity.

Dick was a shrewd and entirely selfless voice for those outside the corridors of power. If he didn't win you over with street smarts, he'd regale you with a gallows humor that left you laughing so hard you'd beg him to quit. His passion for justice was so contagious because he instinctively understood the needs of others—and then took on their causes, large or small, with unparalleled passion and tenacity.

To the tasks at hand, he brought neither fame nor wealth. From his work, he sought only results to benefit others. Occasionally, he might indulge himself some satisfaction on a well-waged campaign, on a particularly clever strategy. In the end, however, he kept his eye on the prize—food, clothing, shelter, health care and respect for those who needed it most.

Politics can be a tough business, especially if you enter it without official position or sanction. Dick rose to that challenge with clarity and confidence. Once each objective was defined, it was only a matter of time until the obstacles fell aside. Hurdles were leaped, rivers crossed, mountains climbed, walls shattered, alliances forged—whatever it took, Dick worked with or around the system on behalf of children, the hungry, the disabled, the homeless in our midst.

In the process, Dick engaged Senators and sanitation workers, abused women and hospital administrators. He did not always endear himself to others. He could inspire, motivate, cajole—and sometimes irritate. But even those who brushed across this roughness came eventually to see the other side of Richard Bigos.

Some of Dick's greatest admirers are those who first encountered him in the heat of battle. He could be a prickly combatant. But he also he could be a prickly combatant. But he also kindled personal crisis, the first and most discrete phone call was one to Richard Bigos. He could inspire, motivate, cajole—and sometimes irritate. But even those who brushed across this roughness came eventually to see the other side of Richard Bigos.

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