

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING VERONICA CHRISTIANSEN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Veronica Christiansen, a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, troop 472, and in earning the most prestigious honor of the Gold Award.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest achievement attainable in girl scouting. To earn the Gold Award, a scout must complete five requirements, all of which promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values, and leadership skills. The requirements include: 1. Earning four interest project patches, each of which requires seven activities that center on skill building, technology, service projects, and career exploration; 2. Earning the career exploration pin, which involves researching careers, writing resumes, and planning a career fair or trip; 3. Earning the Senior Girl Scout Leadership Award, which requires a minimum of 30 hours of work using leadership skills; 4. Designing a self-development plan that requires assessment of ability to interact with others and prioritize values, participation for a minimum of 15 hours in a community service project, and development of a plan to promote girl scouting; and 5. Spending a minimum of 50 hours planning and implementing a Girl Scout Gold Award project that has a positive lasting impact on the community.

For her gold award project, Veronica refurbished and painted a playground.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Veronica Christiansen for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of the Gold Award.

HEART DISEASE IN AMERICA

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. BACA. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Congresswoman JULIA CARSON for helping bring awareness to heart disease. Heart disease is America's number one cause of death. That fact alone is distressing but coupled with the fact that many cases of heart disease are preventable makes the issue catastrophic. Approximately 108 million Americans are overweight. 44 million are obese. This nation has got to do better about taking care of our health not only for our own lives, but also for the lives of our children.

Children in America are learning bad habits. They are not being exposed to the proper

diets or the necessary physical activity. Too often children sit idle throughout a school day and then return home to once again sit idly in front of a TV playing a video game. We need to learn the lesson that stimulation of the muscles and body are just as important as stimulation of the mind. Cases of heart disease will only continue to increase until we make a conscious effort to offer better nutrition in schools, access to health education, and more access to physical activity.

This month is American Heart Month and the American Heart Association wants us all to learn the warning signs of a heart attack, because so often people ignore the signs and the situation becomes fatal. This message is important and we should help bring more attention to this life saving information. However, we should not rely on warning signs alone to save our lives. Prevention is essential.

Heart Disease is not an issue that can be ignored by certain segments of the population. It is not a Caucasian disease, an African-American disease or a Latino disease. It is a disease that affects everyone! It is the leading cause of death for all Americans! That is why we must all come together to make a change collectively!

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE BOB BILLINGS OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, on February 13th the city of Lawrence, Kansas, lost one of its most influential and visionary leaders with the death of Bob Billings.

The leading developer in Douglas County, Kansas, Bob Billings, more than any other individual, was responsible for the growth and development of suburban, west Lawrence. Most notably, he designed and developed the Alvarado development: more than 3000 acres of residential and commercial property, a nationally recognized public golf course and a country club complex.

Mr. Speaker, I am placing into the RECORD two articles concerning Bob Billings from The Lawrence Journal World: his obituary, and an article describing his recent memorial service. I join with Bob Billings' many friends and business colleagues in mourning his passing and in expressing deep sympathy to Beverly Billings for the loss of her husband.

[From the Lawrence Journal-World, Feb. 14, 2003]

ALVAMAR DEVELOPER DIES; FRIENDS RECALL
"VISIONARY" DEEDS
(By Ann Gardner)

Bob Billings, a Kansas University alumnus who changed the face of Lawrence with his work as a developer, philanthropist and community leader, died Thursday at home. He was 65.

As President of Alvarado, Inc., Billings helped lead the development of thousands of

acres in west Lawrence. As a student athlete at Kansas University, he was a player on the 1957 Jayhawk basketball team that made it to the NCAA championship game. And as a man, friends and business associates said Thursday, his optimism and humanity touched many lives.

His most obvious legacy, though, is the development Billings created in partnership with Realtor John McGrew and Mel Anderson. Alvarado encompasses more than 3,000 acres of residential and commercial property, a nationally recognized public golf course and the Alvarado Country Club complex.

"There is a quality of life around here that would not exist if he had not been the active, optimistic, visionary, enthusiastic person he was," McGrew said. "Bob was the best, the absolute best in just about everything. . . . I think history will say that Bob was one of the major influences for good in this area and the state."

Douglas County Administrator Craig Weinaug remembered Billings as different from many developers. "In negotiations with developers or somebody in the development business, normally you have to be very careful, to be sure the public interest is protected."

"With Bob, he'd often be pointing out to us the things we needed to do to protect the public interest, often to his own detriment. He was a man with an incredible amount of integrity and with an incredible love for Lawrence, and the physical evidence of that will be permanently with us through the things he accomplished."

Funeral arrangements are pending at Warren-McElwain Mortuary.

Billings was raised in Russell, where he grew up in a house across the street from the home of Bob Dole, the future senator.

At Russell High School, Billings was a student leader and athlete. He was president of the high school student council and a delegate to Kansas Boys State. He also played basketball, football and ran track all four years in high school. As a senior in 1955, he was co-captain of the football team and was named the Kansas High School Basketball Player of the Year.

Billings came to Lawrence that fall to attend Kansas University. He stayed to become one of the city's most active community leaders.

At the university, he was a guard and played with Wilt Chamberlain on the basketball team that battled for the national championship. He was student body president, president of his fraternity and a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

His leadership at KU and in the community brought him many honors, including KU's Distinguished Service Citation in 1988 and the KU Alumni Association's Ellsworth Medallion in 1984. His honors in the community included the 1989 Leadership Lawrence Don Volker Award for community leadership, the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year award in 2002 and Kansan of the Year award from the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas in 1989.

In addition to Alvarado, Billings was the developer of Oread West Corporate and Research Park and served on a number of corporate boards, including American Investors Life Insurance, Kansas Public Service, Reuter Organ Co. and University State Bank.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Billings' title at Alvamar Inc. was president and chairman of the board, but in a July 1999 interview he described himself as "just general flunkie."

"We have a lot of development partnerships," he said. "It's a total of about 3,000 acres—2,000 already developed, with another 800 to 1,000 acres to go. There's a lot going on out here."

Despite the massive project, Billings always downplayed his role in Lawrence's westward expansion.

"Lawrence is just good. We're just fortunate to be a very small part of what's going on," he said.

The name of his development honored his parents, Alva and Margaretta.

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Billings was remembered Thursday by friends for his positive attitude and many contributions to Lawrence and the university.

"If Bob, as bad as he might feel, could look out the window today, he'd remark about what a great day it was and put some kind of positive spin on it," said Jerry Waugh, who coached Billings on the KU basketball team and later worked for his corporation. "I never saw him down in the many years I knew him and he remained that way to the end, always up, always inspiring others and never seeing any dark side."

Monte Johnson, a former KU athletic director who had known Billings since both men were freshmen at KU, called his former teammate a "generous, caring considerate, unselfish, positive, forward-thinking human being."

"My sense of loss is tremendous, but far greater is the loss to his family, KU, Lawrence, the state and humanity in general," Johnson said. "There is no way to replace him, yet it is so important to remember his legacy and, for the rest of us and those who follow, to try to measure up to the incredible standards of outstanding citizenship and friendship he set."

Friendship was the focus of many memories expressed Thursday. Billings' friends Nelson and Judy Krueger remembered a telephone call from Billings and his wife, Beverly, after the Kruegers' grandson was killed in a traffic accident. "It was the most meaningful call," Nelson Krueger said. "They left a voice mail, and they couldn't talk; they could only cry. Bob planted a tree at Alvamar in honor of Jack within a week after Jack died."

Krueger also shared a number of photos reproduced in today's *Journal-World*, including one of a children's fishing contest Billings sponsored every Memorial Day at a lake on the Alvamar Golf Course. Billings didn't want any child to go away without a prize, so he gave prizes for the biggest fish, the ugliest fish, the wettest fish, anything he could think of, Krueger said. "He wanted everyone to be a winner."

Another friend, attorney Jerry Cooley, also remembered his unselfish attitude. "He has been a great benefactor to the city of Lawrence and Douglas County," Cooley said. "His developments have been prize winners for the community, and he did that without great personal gain. He plowed back into the community what others may have taken as profit."

Don Johnston, a banker and former executive of Maupintour Inc., said Billings created more than brick and mortar.

"He was a builder not just of structures but of character and goodness," Johnston said. "I'm not sure he ever had a negative thought in his life. He could dream, inspire, make things happen and make people feel good while they were striving for something positive."

Waugh, Billings' former coach, recalled, "Bob was a student of history and always remembered what Abraham Lincoln's mother told him: 'Be somebody.' Bob's mother, Margaretta, was as supportive as a mother could be and, in effect, had relayed that concept to her son. He didn't fail her. Bob, absolutely, was somebody."

[From the *Lawrence Journal-World*, Feb. 22, 2003]

FRIENDS CELEBRATE MEMORIES OF BILLINGS (By Leita Walker)

Bob Billings couldn't say no.

"A friend of mine once said that if Bob had been female, he would have been pregnant all the time," said Monte Johnson, who spoke Friday at a memorial service for Billings, who died Feb. 13.

Billings couldn't turn down charities.

He always wanted to help out with even the craziest of business ventures.

And students in need were his weak spot.

"He exemplified all that's good in a person and practiced it every day," Johnson told the more than 1,000 people who attended the service at the Lied Center.

The occasion was a solemn one, but, as shown by Johnson's remarks, it was not without humor. Giant red and purple flower arrangements complete with sunflowers and wheat stalks festooned the stage, and Jayhawk-adorned basketballs helped decorate tables in the lobby.

Guests included Kansas University administrators, coaches and athletes; city officials; and scores of friends and business associates.

Catered refreshments greeted everyone as they left the auditorium, and soon the Lied Center lobby was filled with conversation—and laughter.

Billings wanted the service to be a celebration, his friends and family said.

By the time he died of cancer at age 65, Billings had accomplished more than most people dream.

The Russell native played on the 1957 KU basketball team that made it to the NCAA championship game, and he served as student body president.

He developed thousands of acres in west Lawrence, and he was president of Alvamar Inc., which includes 3,000 acres of residential and commercial property, a nationally recognized public golf course and the Alvamar Country Club complex.

"He was Mr. Everything," Johnson said.

But Friday, his humanity was the focus, and his accomplishments came second.

When Billings met someone, he always had a handshake ready, said his nephew Jim Billings.

"Great to see you," he would say. "How are you doing? Super."

He knew everyone's name, Jim Billings said, and yet the man who did so much for Lawrence was also human.

"His humanness should give us hope that any one of us could become more like Bob," he said.

He was a developer not just of property but of people and of communities, said the Rev. Butch Henderson.

And longtime friend John McGrew said, "Some people are generous with their time, some with their money. Bob was generous with both."

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. JOSEPHINE HAMMARY

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to a friend

of the Sixth District of New Jersey. Mrs. Josephine Hammary, is an outstanding individual, who is being honored for her many accomplishments by the National Council of Negro Women.

Mrs. Hammary is being recognized for the many years of service she has devoted to her community. Throughout her life, Mrs. Hammary has volunteered much of her time to working with various religious and social organizations designed to enrich the lives of her fellow citizens.

Mrs. Hammary is an active and devoted member of the Martin Luther King Presbyterian Church where she has served on the Board of Elders, the Board of Deacons, the Stewardship Committee, and the Sunday School Ministry. Mrs. Hammary was also elected to preside over the Presbyterian Women's Organization as its President, where she proved herself as an effective leader. Currently, Josephine Hammary serves on the Christian Outreach Missions and the Christian Education Committee, as well as Recording Secretary of the National Council of Negro Women's North Shore.

Through her work with these numerous organizations, Mrs. Hammary has fostered a sense of community in her area and strived to help those less fortunate than herself. On this day I would like to honor the distinguished Mrs. Josephine Hammary for her extraordinary service to her community. I ask my colleagues to join with me in commending her in this dedication.

HONORING DETECTIVE MICHAEL CALVIN

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an exemplary member of the Long Island community.

The Suffolk County Police Department consistently shows us the best and most heroic that Long Island has to offer. For the past thirty-five years Detective Michael Calvin served as an admirable member of that department, first as an exceptional undercover officer with the Rackets Bureau, and then as a detective with the Homicide Squad. Over the years, Detective Calvin worked as the lead detective on numerous murder investigations, including the murder of Claudia Broder of Moriches, by her son-in-law, Ralph Farino. He has made a lasting impact on the safety of Long Island residents.

On January 6, 2003, Detective Michael Calvin retired from the Suffolk County Police Department. He will be sorely missed by his colleagues and by the community that has depended on his hard work to keep them safe for so many years. I come to this floor to out of respect and offer my congratulations and best wishes.

Mr. Speaker, Suffolk County owes a debt of gratitude to Detective Michael Calvin.