

Sacramento Junior League, the Sacramento/El Dorado Medical Association Alliance, the History Museum, and the Sacramento Symphony League. She also chaired the Advisory Board for California State Historic Park, and was a Mayor's appointee on the Downtown District Study. Muriel's close involvement with the diversity of community organizations is a testament to her unyielding commitment to bring about positive changes to her community and improve the quality of life of her fellow citizens.

In 1992, Muriel Johnson was first elected to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. Muriel represents approximately 250,000 people living in the County's Third District. The Third District includes the communities of Arden/Arcade, Carmichael, Campus Commons, East Sacramento, College Glen, College Greens, East foothills Farms and a portion of North Highlands. During her tenure, Muriel has served as the Chair of the Board of Supervisors in 1995 and 1999.

In addition to her duties as County Supervisor, Muriel has also served admirably as the Chair, President and Board Member of the following organizations since first being elected as supervisor: Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Sacramento Public Library Authority, California State Association of Counties, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, Cable Commission, Sacramento Regional Sanitation District, Sacramento Regional Transit, Sacramento Air Quality Management District, and California's Elected Women's Association of Education and Research.

In recognition of her dedication to public service, Muriel is the rightful recipient of a number of community service awards including: the California Medical Association Alliance 1999 Member of the Year, the National Philanthropy Day Award for Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser, the first E.A. Combatalade Community Service Award, Soroptimist Woman of the Year, the 1993 Business Volunteers for the Arts Award for Individual Service, the Women's Transportation Seminar 2002 Woman of the Year Award, the 2003 Shots for Tots Immunization Registry, and the 2003 American Society for Public Administration's Excellence in Public Arts Award.

Throughout her term as County Supervisor, Muriel Johnson has remained a steadfast supporter of neighborhood preservation, more efficient transportation, better air quality, health and welfare issues, sound economic development, better schools for our children and flood control. There is no doubt that every one of Muriel's constituents has benefited in one way or another as a result of her hard work, dedication, and vision.

Mr. Speaker, as Muriel's friends, family, and colleagues gather to celebrate her great career and acknowledgement as Sacramentan of the Year, I am honored to pay tribute to one of Sacramento's most respected leaders. Muriel's continuous leadership is a true testament to public service. Although her career in public service may soon be over, her involvement in community service is, fortunate for us, far from over. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in wishing Muriel Johnson continued success in all her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO JOY DEFENBAUGH, RIVERSIDE CITY COUNCIL

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Riverside, CA are exceptional. Riverside 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. Joy Defenbaugh is one of these individuals.

Joy has represented Ward 3 of the city of Riverside for 12 years and has continually worked for the interests of her constituency. Her area of representation includes the Magnolia Center and the Riverside Municipal Airport.

Joy served as chair of the Development Committee and served on the Finance and Government Affairs Committees. She is a member and past chair of the March Joint Powers Commission for the reuse of March Air Reserve Base. Her commitment to the improvement of the city of Riverside has been steadfast.

Early in her political career, Joy recognized the diversity and cultural differences within the community. At the direction of Colin Powell, Joy spearheaded the Common Ground Task Force which brought different groups of people in the community together regardless of ethnic background and cultural differences in order to relieve tension within the community.

In 1998, a former Riverside City employee broke into the Riverside City Council Chamber during a meeting and seriously injured several people. Despite this incident, Joy persevered and continued public service.

Joy's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Riverside, CA. She has had a commitment to the economic growth and has demonstrated leadership by recognizing an immediate need for community initiatives such as railroad crossings and the Vision for Today and Tomorrow. Her patriotic spirit for military and country is admirable. She has been the heart and soul of many community initiatives and I am proud to call her a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for her service and salute her as she retires.

CELEBRATING SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, in the month of January, across the country, the State of Texas and in the Fifth Congressional District, we celebrate School Board Recognition Month, to acknowledge the hard work of school board members and thank them for their valuable service in the education of our children.

During School Board Recognition Month we honor the administrators, staff, and volunteers who work to promote academic excellence and provide a safe learning environment for our students.

School board members are responsible for fulfilling one of the most important roles in our society—helping develop young men and women into the future leaders of our nation's economy, government, community, and houses of worship.

I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to all school board members in the Fifth Congressional District of Texas for their continued dedication and hard work. Their contribution to the education of our children is truly helping to shape the future of our communities and our Nation.

HONORING ALICE A. HUFFMAN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great leader, a woman of distinction, and a good friend, Alice Huffman. This month marks Alice's 30th year of leadership in her efforts for equality and justice. The ninth Congressional District salutes and thanks Alice for her tireless and spirited service.

Alice Huffman was elected president of the California State Conference of the NAACP in October 1999, where she is the first woman to hold this post. In this role, Alice leads 67 local branches, and more than 30 college chapters and youth units. With her leadership, they are continuing to fight for civil rights and equality for people of color all over California. In 2002, she was elected to the NAACP National Board of Directors, representing Region I.

Her past experience includes serving as an appointee in Governor Jerry Brown's administration where she was Chief Deputy Director of the State Parks and Recreation Department and, later his Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, a cabinet level position. Ms. Huffman has also served as the Associate Executive Director for politics for the California Teachers Association and State President of the Black American Political Association of California.

Alice is founder and president/CEO of A.C. Public Affairs, Inc., a public affairs firm that specializes in public and grass roots advocacy. She served on the Democratic National Committee as the cochair for the Site-Selection Committee for the 2004 Democratic Convention. She is also a member of the Rules Committee for the California Democratic Party. Currently, Ms. Huffman serves on the board for Capitol Focus, as well as serving on T-CAP, which is a consumer advisory panel to SBC/Pacific Bell. In addition, she serves on the "Commission for One California," a forum for diversity and understanding headed by Lieutenant Governor Bustamante. She has recently been appointed to Assembly Speaker Herb Wesson's Commission on Police Conduct.

Ms. Huffman graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with honors in Social/Cultural Anthropology. She then advanced her studies at the University of Pennsylvania, University of California, Davis, and University of

Southern California. Her long-standing tenet is that learning is a life-long process.

Alice was inducted into the Los Angeles African American Women Political Action Committee's Political Hall of Fame in April 2002 for her outstanding achievements as a social activist in the minority community. Ms. Huffman is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Kappa Alpha, and also the Sacramento Branch NAACP. The Los Angeles Times called her one of the most powerful people in California. The California Journal listed her as one of the top 50 individuals who had the greatest impact on California over the past 25 years and her local African American newspaper, The Sacramento Observer, annually includes her in its 100 most influential citizens.

Finally, as we honor Ms. Huffman today, I want to thank her for being an exemplary role model, hero, and friend. I take great pride in joining Alice's family, friends, and colleagues to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of the marvelous Alice Huffman.

HONORING THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association as the organization celebrates its 50th anniversary. I take great pride in the fact that two companies from my home district, Twin Lakes Telephone Cooperative in Gainesboro, Tennessee, and North Central Telephone Cooperative in Lafayette, Tennessee, are among the founding members of NTCA.

Forming soon after the Rural Electrification Administration (REA)—now known as the Rural Utilities Service—was granted authority to make loans to telephone companies, the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (NTCA), along with Twin Lakes and North Central, has evolved from providing basic multi-party telephone service to offering a full array of advanced telecommunications services.

The idea of expanding the scope and authority of the REA began in the late 1930s when REA Administrator John Carmody wrote: "Personally, I have long felt there was a real opportunity for constructive assistance to rural people in the idea of Federal financing of farm telephone lines. It seems to me that the rural people have just as much right to up-to-date communication as they have to modern power. There's no question in my mind but that Government assistance will be required if the job is ever to be completed."

This idea remained just an idea until 1944 when Senator Lister Hill (D-AL) introduced legislation calling for the formation of the Rural Telephone Administration, modeled after the REA. Senator Hill was soon joined in his effort to bring telephone service to rural America by Representative W.R. "Bob" Poage (D-TX), who introduced similar legislation granting the REA the authority to make loans for the extension and improvement of rural telephone serv-

ice. President Harry Truman signed the telephone amendments to the Rural Electrification Act into law on October 28, 1949.

Soon after, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) created a telephone committee, composed of representatives of newly-formed joint electric-telephone cooperative organizations. By 1954, representatives from these co-ops, with the encouragement of NRECA, decided that the time had come to form a separate national organization to represent telephone cooperatives. On June 1, 1954, eight companies—BEK Mutual Aid Corporation (Steele, North Dakota); Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative (Chase City, Virginia); Mark Twain Rural Telephone Company (Bethel, Missouri); Mid-Rivers Telephone Cooperative Inc. (Circle, Montana); Pineland Telephone Cooperative Inc. (Metter, GA); Winnebago Cooperative Telephone Association (Lake Mills, Iowa); and my constituents at Twin Lakes Telephone Cooperative and North Central Telephone Cooperative—formed the National Telephone Cooperative Association, which was later renamed the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association.

One of the first recipients of telephone loans from the REA was Twin Lakes Telephone Cooperative, which was founded on March 13, 1951. With its \$25 membership fee and a REA loan approved in November of that same year, Twin Lakes was able to purchase an existing telephone company and expanded telephone service to Clay, Overton, Pickett and Fentress counties in northern Middle Tennessee. Soon, Twin Lakes was serving twelve exchanges and had customers stretched over 1,150 miles of line. By 1959, Twin Lakes was able to lower its membership fee to \$10, which finally put the luxury of a telephone within reach of many who considered the initial membership fee of \$25 out of reach. Inundated with new customers, Twin Lakes soon had a backlog of close to 700 requests for service. People in rural Tennessee soon found that telephone service was not a luxury, but rather a necessity. Today, Twin Lakes has more than 40,000 access lines serving fifteen exchanges spread over Jackson, Clay, Overton, Pickett, Fentress, Smith, and Putnam counties in Tennessee.

Like Twin Lakes, North Central Telephone Cooperative formed in the shadow of the expansion of the REA. Like REA Administrator Carmody, then Lafayette Mayor Hugh Butler understood the importance of telecommunications in rural America. As he stated in the Macon County Times on Nov. 29, 1951: "The installation of modern dial telephone service with adequate long-distance facilities will put Lafayette on par with any rural county seat in Tennessee and will do much to insure continued progress and prosperity."

Prior to 1951, telephone service, if available, could only be described as sporadic. On March 8, 1951, Will Hall Sullivan, who served as North Central Telephone Cooperative's first general manager, was successful in joining 17 home-owned mutuals to form North Central Telephone Cooperative. By 1954, North Central had connected its first exchanges in Green Grove in Hillsdale. In just two years, North Central had expanded to serving 2,600 customers spread over ten exchanges: Lafayette, Hillsdale, Oak Grove, Green Grove, Bethpage, Scotsville, Pleasant Shade, Red Boiling Springs, Defeated and Westmoreland. Like Twin Lakes, North Central also faced rapid ex-

pansion as folks in rural America understood the necessity of a telephone and the importance of telecommunications. Today North Central serves in excess of 21,000 customers. As part of its commitment to providing advanced telecommunications services to its customers, North Central, in 1989, went beyond the then-standard copper cable and analog switches that were still heavily used. The innovative cooperative instead opted to install digital switches and fiber-optic cable, and soon the rest of the industry was following. Some 15 years later, these technologies are still widely considered the top of the line. This record of providing state-of-the-art technology continues today with its provision of high-speed Internet access, long distance and digital satellite services. As North Central's general manager, F. Thomas Rowland, said: "Providing state-of-the-art technology has always been one of our main priorities. It's our way of giving the community what it needs to be a great place to live, work and raise a family."

Twin Lakes and North Central are indicative of the membership of the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association. NTCA's membership has expanded from eight members in seven states to 558 members across 45 states. These small rural telecommunications systems provide voice services to approximately 3,270,000 subscribers over a combined territory comprising about 40 percent of the geographic United States. On average, NTCA member-companies serve rural areas with a population density averaging between one to five customers per square mile, a sharp contrast from the average of 130 customers per square mile for larger companies. Today, NTCA member-companies on average serve 5,100 subscribers. In addition to their traditional voice offerings, they provide rural customers with Internet, wireless, long distance, paging, and cable or satellite television services. Through it all, NTCA members have maintained that local touch which can only be found by folks serving their friends and neighbors. With the financial assistance of the Rural Utilities Service, the Rural Telephone Finance Cooperative and CoBank, NTCA members remain on the cutting edge of technology by expanding broadband opportunities through fiber-to-the-home projects in communities across this country. As committees examine the issue of broadband availability across the nation, NTCA rural telephone companies continue to connect the heartland of America to the world. NTCA and its 558 member-companies should be commended for their ever-present commitment to rural America. Happy 50th Anniversary, NTCA.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, in his State of the Union address on Tuesday night, President George W. Bush proposed new job-training grants for community colleges. This Member is extremely pleased with this proposal, as the initiative would allow America's community colleges to train workers for the industries that are creating the most new jobs.