

time and a longtime personal friend, Oscar Brown, Jr. Throughout his life, Oscar defied convention not only by blurring the lines between art and activism, but by consistently and passionately articulating a message of hope, freedom and equality for all people. Oscar passed away on May 29, 2005, in his hometown of Chicago, Illinois.

A performer from an early age, Oscar was known for acting his songs as much as for singing them. Through the popularity of songs like "Brown Baby" and "Signifyin' Monkey," he became known for his use of art as a way to celebrate African-American culture and to denounce racism.

I met Oscar during the early 1970s in Oakland, California. I was amazed at his profound sense of history, his insight and clarity on the root causes of racism and economic exploitation, and his "bold defiance" of all that was corrupt. He often spoke of his deep love for and dedication to his family. A man of tremendous strength, dignity and sensitivity, Oscar Brown, Jr. was a man for all seasons.

Oscar wrote a number of plays that addressed the issues of cultural politics and social division, and made those expressions even more powerful through his regular inclusion of Chicago youth in their casts. One of his best known plays was "The Great Nitty Gritty," which focused on gang problems in Chicago and featured a number of local teenagers onstage and in the production process.

Oscar remained a cultural force in Chicago throughout his life, and is credited with inspiring or influencing countless artistic careers. His bright spirit touched and improved the lives not only of those he knew and mentored, but of the countless others who found hope, purpose and pride through his work.

I was in Los Angeles on December 4, 2004, and learned that Oscar was performing locally. My spirit led me to go see him perform, not knowing that this would be the last time I would see and hear this great genius. After a magnificent performance, I went backstage and we talked and reminisced, and in his unique way, he gave me his candid critique of the United States government and the critical issues facing us. He was excited when I invited him to be my guest at the upcoming Congressional Black Caucus dinner in September, and again talked about his love for his family.

On June 24, 2005, Oscar's family and friends will gather to celebrate his extraordinary life. Oscar was a visionary thinker, a cultural legend, and political guru. My life, like the lives of many, has been enriched by my friend: the great, the magnificent, Oscar Brown, Jr. He will be deeply missed.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF KAREN C. BROOKE

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the only good thing to come out of Congressman Max Sandlin's defeat in the November election was that it brought his long-time staffer Karen Brooke to the Intelligence Committee as Minority Executive Assistant—where her good humor, good will and remarkable institutional knowledge were instant assets.

Much to our dismay, Karen has decided to retire after 30 years of loyal and dedicated service to the U.S. government, the House, and most recently, to the Committee.

Except for a year at the State Department, Karen's entire career has been spent in the Legislative Branch working for four different Members from four different parts of the country until joining the Committee staff. She is a pleasure to be around, and everyone has benefitted from her professionalism, efficiency, her meticulous approach to every task, and her ability to make it all look so easy.

Through it all, Karen Brooke has somehow found the time to dote on her wonderful husband John, and together they have raised two great children—daughter Adrienne and son Anthony. On behalf of the Members and staff of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I extend our congratulations and wish her and her family the very best as they begin this new, exciting chapter of life.

RECOGNIZING JEANNE DAFFRON, PH.D.

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeanne Daffron Ph.D. Dr. Daffron is Assistant Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs at Missouri Western State College in Saint Joseph, Missouri and in a few days will receive the Saint Joseph YWCA Women of Excellence Award for Women in the Workplace.

Dr. Daffron received her undergraduate degree and doctorate in nursing from Texas Woman's University. For nineteen years she served as a faculty member in the nursing department at Missouri Western, and later served as chair of the department and Dean of Professional Studies for seven years. Recently, Dr. Daffron was appointed Assistant Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. She is a member of the International Honor Society of Nursing, as well as the Missouri Nurse Association. In 1999, she was recognized by her alma mater as one of its "Distinguished Alumna." In 2004, Dr. Daffron was selected by students as the "Outstanding Honors Program Faculty Member."

In addition to her career at Missouri Western, Dr. Daffron has served in a number of leadership positions throughout the greater Saint Joseph community. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for Heartland Regional Medical Center Foundation, Leadership Northwest Missouri, and Junior Achievement, and served as only the second female chair of the Saint Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Daffron is also Co-Chair of the Higher Education Division for the United Way, and is a member of the Saint Joseph Community Plan Board. She was appointed by Governor Blunt to a three-year term on the State of Missouri Life Science Research Board as well.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Jeanne Daffron, Ph.D. Her commitment to Saint Joseph exemplifies the qualities of service and dedication. I am honored to represent her in the United States Congress.

HONORING THE EFFORTS OF FLICK SEED COMPANY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that the Flick Seed Company, Kingsville, MO, has received an Honorable Mention award from Region Seven of the Environmental Protection Agency. This is the second time in as many years that Flick Seed has been recognized for its environmental awareness.

Since Steve Flick founded Flick Seed more than twenty years ago, he and his company have worked with state, municipal, and federal agencies, as well as private businesses to restore the original ecosystems that once covered Missouri and the rest of the Midwest. Steve is a graduate of the University of Missouri at Columbia and has put his agriculture degree to good use with the founding of Flick Seed Incorporated.

Flick Seed has worked tirelessly to keep seed waste out of the landfills. They have done this by combining seed waste with office paper waste and creating pellets that are used in pellet burning stoves. This work has not only kept our landfills from becoming full of seed waste, but it has provided a unique and innovative form of renewable energy.

I know that my fellow House members will join me in congratulating Flick Seed Company for its recognition by the Environmental Protection Agency.

TRIBUTE TO JUDY SCHNEIDER

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to commend one of my constituents, Judy Schneider, on receiving the Women in Government Relations 2004 Distinguished Member Award.

Ms. Schneider is a specialist on Congress at the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a department of the Library of Congress, and an adjunct scholar at The Brookings Institution. She worked previously for Senate and House committees, including the Senate Select Committee to Study the Senate Committee System. Ms. Schneider is a frequent speaker and lecturer on Congress and legislative procedures. She holds a bachelor's and master's degree from The American University. Ms. Schneider is also co-author of the Congressional Deskbook, a comprehensive resource tool frequently used by Congress and Lobbyists.

Ms. Schneider is well known on Capitol Hill by Members of Congress, staff, lobbyists and others as "The person" for information on numerous topics including House, Senate and Committee Procedure.

Ms. Schneider has been a long time friend of WGR. Valuing Ms. Schneider's dedication and support for the organization, she was granted Emeritus Member status in 2004. Emeritus Membership status is reserved for

women who have displayed an exceptional commitment to helping other women succeed in the field of government relations, and who have also achieved notable personal success in that endeavor. Previously, only Members of Congress have been awarded this honor.

Judy is a dedicated public servant who is committed to making a difference in the lives of others. I am proud to represent her in the U.S. Congress and to have the benefit of her wisdom, insights and experience.

I commend Judy Schneider on her accomplishments and wish her continued success in the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING BAR MITZVAH OF CHARLIE DANN

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Bar Mitzvah of Charlie Dann, on June 4, 2005. Here is Charlie's speech entitled "Memory is Powerful."

There were many, especially some of my former Hebrew teachers, who would have doubted my commitment to Judaic and Hebrew studies.

At times, to be honest, I've doubted myself.

But I stand here today honored to join in a tradition that has meant something to so many in our world, our community and our family. And means so much to me. I am still not sure of exactly who I am in a large context, but I continue working on that with the help of so many.

Thank you Rabbi Schonberger. And thank you Mrs. Kessler. And thank you Mr. Zevor and thank you Mr. Zaltsman and yes, thank you Mr. Grabiner and thank you Mrs. Schonberger. More thank you's later.

Now I want to talk about why I decided to go ahead with a Bar Mitzvah.

For those of you who know my parents, you probably realize that they did not force me to go through with this Bar Mitzvah. It was my choice.

I chose to do this for many reasons. But many of them center around five men and five women. Four of the men aren't here in a physical sense. And two of the women aren't here either. So, now before I explain more, I'd like to ask my grandfather Bentley Lenhoff to stand. Next, I'd like my great-grandmother, Eva Dann to stand. Now my grandmothers, Hope Ellis, Michelle Dann, and Nancy Lenhoff and even though she denies it, I'd also like Barbie Hodros to stand as she too has been a grandmother to me. Thank you for everything that you've taught me and thank you for loving me and believing in me.

Now I will explain more.

The men that can't be here today—those that I knew and one that I never met—have given me an incredible legacy. Phil Arian, Stuart Dann, Julie Dann, Dean Cribbs and the men after whom I'm named, Charlie Lenhoff and Phil Oxman, valued tradition and doing the right things in life. None of them led a conventional life. But their lives have taught me the importance of being connected to a larger community and of making contributions to the family.

And my great-grandmothers—Jessie Gorsline and Bess Lawrence Oxman—were real pioneers in life. From you, I have been given drive and determination. I sometimes wish I had more of your scholarly dedi-

cation. But perhaps that will come in time. Like my grandfathers and great-grandfathers, you also valued community and being connected to larger goals that extended beyond your own universes.

I stand up here today to pay tribute to my family, of course. And to Rabbi Schonberger who suffered through my occasional—OK frequent—obstinence and poor study habits. And I would be remiss not to thank my mom and dad, Alyssa Lenhoff and Marc Dann. And my aunts and uncles, Frank and Maddy Joseph, Ken and Marilyn Steinback, Kathy and Robert Leb, Scott and Priscilla Dann, Dan and Nan Arian, Mark and Ellen Arian and Lyndean and Myron Brick and my wonderful cousins—all of you—the little ones and the big ones—Big Emily, Meg, Robin, Amanda, Sylvie, Benji, Molly, Harte, little Emily, Mickey, Jillian, Jordan, and Jackson.

And there are two others who I must mention—my sisters. Mavilya, Mia—who is studying somewhere in Italy or at least that's what she told her mom. Dr. Gulnara Tarpe who is a lot like a second mom to me as well. And of course my younger sister, Jessie—Pishur to me. I love you.

But I also stand up here to talk about my thoughts about our community—the Mahoning Valley.

I'm a politician's son. You didn't expect me to be brief, did you?

I believe our community is at a crossroads and I further believe that we—as individuals—have the power to determine its future.

As a graduate of Akiva Academy, it is painful for me to see the school suffer enrollment declines year after year after year. It is even more painful to drive to downtown Youngstown or over to Girard and see the remnants of what once was. It makes me sad to think of how we—as a community—have allowed our economy and our population to decline.

Of course I realize that the steel mills can't come back. And I realize that there is no magic bullet for the economic development problems that plague our community.

But I truly believe that some of our problems could be cured with a little bit of the ideas that are presented in today's Torah portion.

Today's Torah portion talks about a census—counting people.

Counting people involves more than just lining them up and ticking off numbers.

Surveying the population of a town, a community, a state or a nation is something that is critically important as the Torah portion explains. But when you count them, it is important to realize the value inherent in every human being. We are more than numbers. I think this message is extremely important to us as a community and can help us better address the problems that we face.

For too long, we have been intimidated by the declining census. We have allowed ourselves to believe that we are on a slippery slope down because our population has fallen.

If we do what the Torah portion seems to advise and count people as more than just numbers, our census will swell to incredible proportions. We will see that among us are people of immense talent and incredible energy and great values. We will see that our census is among the best in the Nation.

I am ready to join the community and to help so many of you who have been working so diligently to preserve what's left and to try to recapture what once was. I will join as a person of a lot of energy, a lot of creativity and a great deal of dedication to the values and morals that we as Jews have inherited from the prophets. I believe in honesty. I believe in hard work. I believe in compassion. I believe in solving and not creating prob-

lems. I am sure of all of this. But other questions still linger for me. What will I be? A politician? Perhaps. A football player? Doubtful. A journalist? Maybe. What I do know for certain is that—guided by my faith as a Jew—I will be a good person. I will be a person who knows right from wrong and who practices it. And, I will be a person who thinks and who cares and who draws on faith, memory and tradition in daily life.

We can't forget who we are. We can't forget what we were. We can't lose sight of what we could be.

Memory is powerful.

And they say, past can be prologue. It is up to us to decide which past we choose.

A TRIBUTE TO YOLANDE I. NICHOLSON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the accomplishments of Yolande I. Nicholson.

Ms. Nicholson obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Bachelor of Fine Arts in Journalism at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. Then she earned a Juris Doctor from Columbia University School of Law, where she was actively involved in the Columbia Journal of Transnational Law. As a student, she received the Harry S. Truman Congressional scholarship, George B. Dealy Journalism Award, and a Distinction in Political Theory for academic excellence. In 1994, she received the Mayoral Special Achievement Award for commitment to economic development projects involving small businesses and entrepreneurial activities in New York City.

Ms. Nicholson began her admirable career as a legal assistant at Bozeman & Trott, P.C. in Mount Vernon, New York, and subsequently held executive roles in several prominent financial institutions, including Vice President and Transaction Execution Manager at J.P. Morgan Securities Inc. and Vice President and Assistant General Counsel at Chase Manhattan Bank. She now holds the position of Executive Vice President and General Counsel at the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation in Brooklyn, where she has served since June 2004.

Ms. Nicholson has continually shared her talents and experience to help others. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I proudly recognize Ms. Yolande I. Nicholson, an asset to the community.

IN SUPPORT OF MAIN STREET AMERICAN SMALL BUSINESSES

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of robust funding for two important Small Business Administration programs: the 7(a) Lending Program and the Microloan program.

Small business owners take huge risks to try to realize their dreams of owning their own business which fuel U.S. economic growth. If