

training and employing individuals with disabilities.

The people who are blind or who have other severe disabilities who work under the JWOD Program are given the opportunity to acquire job skills and training, receive good wages and benefits and gain greater independence and quality of life. This program allows people with disabilities enjoy full participation in their community and can market their JWOD-learned skills into other public and private sector jobs.

In the United States, the program serves 40,000 people with disabilities and generated approximately \$280 million in wages earned and nearly \$1.5 billion in products sold. In Georgia alone, approximately 1,000 people with disabilities earned nearly \$3 million in wages last year as a result of JWOD.

It is with great pleasure that I recognize the great contributions of American workers with disabilities and I encourage others to do so on February 23, which is National Disability Day. More importantly, let us all remember everyday that every person has ability. Everyone has something to share for the greater good. America truly works best when all Americans work. I commend the JWOD Program, its supporters, and its participants for making a difference where it is needed most.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN "JACK"
EMERSON

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay special tribute to John "Jack" Emerson who passed away on December 29, 2005 at the age of 64. Jack was a loving father and husband, an outstanding public servant, and friend and mentor to many, including myself.

I ask unanimous consent to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the eulogy given by Jack's good friend Barry Balan on January 3, 2006.

Jack Emerson, a devoted husband, caring father, man of compassion, civic leader, mentor and colleague. A man I am proud to call my friend.

There are not enough words to describe this man, who has made such an impact on this community and all who met him. Knowing Jack for 26 years, I will give you a glimpse into the man who has made a difference in so many people's lives.

The Lowell Sun called Jack a man of vision, but I believe he was also a visionary. Webster defines a visionary as not founded on fact, imaginary, and impractical, having idealistic goals or aims incapable of realization.

He had the uncanny ability to take something that was idealistic and incapable of realization and make it real. Thus was born the Chelmsford Sewer Project. People told him that it was impractical, it would cost too much, and it would bring too much growth to this suburban community of Chelmsford. It would change life as people knew it. Jack, in his own inevitable way took up the challenge and for four long years he went on cable TV to every church, synagogue, civic group, or gathering of two or more people, to sell the town on the sewer project. In 1984, town meeting rewarded his efforts and appropriated the first funds for

the project by a unanimous vote then again in 1985, 1987, 1989 and 1996.

Jack, although small in stature, pursued this project with the vigor of a small army.

He had the boundless energy, as seen by the different positions he held throughout his political and non-political activities. Jack was elected to the Sewer Commission in 1980.

He became a selectman in 1982; his mom was so proud of him at that accomplishment that she would introduce Jack to everyone she met, this is my son "the selectman." He is and will continue to be Chairman of the Chelmsford Sewer Commission. He holds the distinction of being the longest continuous serving chairman of any board in the town of Chelmsford.

At one time in the mid eighties, Jack was the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, Chairman of the Sewer Commission, and Assistant Director of Public Health in the same year. You could say he had the whole town wrapped up in his hands. Jack was on the Board of Registrars, Dog Pound Committee, Town Meeting Representative, Lowell Regional Transit Authority Board, and member of the Chelmsford Elks, Advisory Board of Camp Paul and Good Friends Incorporated, and Catholic Charities. How Jack did all this is beyond comprehension. The only solution I can find is it must have been his mom's chicken soup that kept him going. (She made the best.)

I first met John Patrick Emerson, Jr. (known affectionately by his friends as "the Flea") in Jack's Diner. I started going there when I first moved to town, (yes, I am a blow-in, but so was Jack—he moved here from Lowell in the fifties, so I feel I am in good company.) I would go in for my morning coffee and happen to sit next to this man who was holding court, discussing politics and this sewer project. It was Jack Emerson. He introduced himself, we talked, and the rest was history. We enjoyed each other's company and over the years we became best of friends.

I learned more about Jack's passion to establish a sewer program for the town of Chelmsford and how he felt the need to help people less fortunate than himself. Jack convinced me to run for the sewer commission in 1984 and we have been together since that first campaign.

Speaking of politics, some people may be surprised to know Jack Emerson was a Democrat (as was his Dad before him and presently his brothers Packy and Danny and his sister Ellen, although Jack would say Ellen's politics were even further to the left than his.) Jack was as passionate about his politics as he was about helping people. Jack would rather cast a ballot for a yellow dog before he would vote for anyone who was not a Democrat.

Although he was a Democrat, he did transcend party lines when it came to helping the people of Chelmsford.

He was a master at reading people and situations. Before going to town meetings for a crucial vote on the project, Jack would say "all we have to do is be up front with the voters, if we tell them the facts and are honest and tell the why, we should have no problem, they will give you the vote we need and you know they did. That philosophy has held fast throughout Jack's career and is still held by his friends on the commission.

In 1996, Jack walked up to the town meeting floor microphone and said he needed forty-nine million dollars to proceed with the project and that if need be, he was prepared to give a lengthy presentations to show them how it would be used. In three minutes the motion was seconded and passed unanimously. That was Jack; prepared, truthful, trustworthy.

In his earlier years, Jack was a mason or as he would say, a bricky. (Jack belonged to local 31 in Lowell) He was a strong union man (as was his dad). Whenever Jack ran for political office he would make sure that the union bugs would appear on all his literature and anyone he backed for political office must have the union bug on their literature as well or got his wrath.

Jack was a good listener, he read a lot, he always updated himself on current events, he was also, to say the least, an impatient driver.

When I say Jack was a good listener I mean he would evaluate the situation, ask the right questions and decide on the approach on how to handle the problem. As someone said to me the other day, if you called Jack Emerson with a problem, you knew he would take care of it.

Jack would read the papers and political journals and the project contracts. He would go over the contracts with a fine tooth comb and inevitably would find errors. Whether it was misspelled words, wrong sentence structure, or pricing errors. Jack was involved in all aspects of the project.

Wherever we went Jack had to drive, it was like his security blanket. If you have ever driven with him, you know it is quite an experience. No need to call it road rage, just "Jack" rage. Thankfully, we all survived.

I have given you some of the background of Jack Emerson the man, some of which you already know, some you might have read in the newspapers. Now I want to tell you about something you may not know about Jack Emerson the Person.

I had the privilege and honor of being his friend for 26 years; we talked or saw each other almost everyday. So I can talk from experience.

You know anyone that loved animals had to be a good person. Jack loved his dogs. Through the years he had 6 dogs, Cocoa, Cory, Courtney, Toto, Chelsea and Commish. He loved them, but his all time favorite was Cocoa. They were so close that when Jack developed Pancreatitis, so did Cocoa. Cocoa is the first dog in the country, or maybe even the world to have a pump station named after him. The Cocoa Emerson Pump Station located next to the town dog pound on Old North Road.

In 1959, Jack graduated Chelmsford High School where he had many friends, though none as close as Sam Parks, Paul Leahayes, and Bobby Hughes. They remain close friends to this day.

Jack's charity knew no bounds, whether it was giving to the Secret Santa Fund, or being his own Santa by adopting a family at Christmas, or Thanksgiving. His charity did not stop all year long; he was involved with Good Friends, Inc., Camp Paul and Catholic charities. He was most affected when children were involved. Jack was the most caring and giving person I have ever met.

He was a fun loving person with sharp wit and a keen sense of humor. He loved music from the fifties and sixties; it was one of his passions. On one occasion he had the radio on in the wagon playing "Tuti Fruti Alaroody". I asked him how he liked the type of music the kids of today enjoy. He said hard rock, rap, and heavy metal just don't make any sense, so I said Tuti Fruti Alaroody does, we both had a laugh over that.

Jack had many talents, one of them being dancing. I think if he had a second vocation, he would have been a dance instructor. He loved dancing. Once he got on the dance floor and started his feet moving, he would dance all night.

Jack was an avid golfer as are his two brothers. He was a member of Mt. Pleasant Golf Club for over 30 years. He and his brothers would often play in tournaments. When

Jack, George and Danny were playing golf together, you might think World War III had broken out. Its amazing to me they all survived. On the golf course they were fierce competitors, but off they had each other's love and admiration. One year at Mt. Pleasant, Jack and Briana entered the father-daughter golf tournament and came in first. Jack thought he had another natural golfer in the Emerson family.

Briana breaking with Emerson tradition decided to take up dance instead of golf and Jack supported her in that endeavor.

He was devoted to his family, his mom Betty and his dad John Sr., he loved his brothers; Charlie, Packy and Danny (Dennis) and his sister Ellen. He loved all his nieces, nephews and cousins. If they needed a helping hand, Jack was there and they were there for Jack.

I mentioned how he loved children, well Briana, Joe Maher and I had the great honor of being with your father in the hospital when you were born, all you had to do was look at his face and you could see his excitement and energy. When the nurse came in and said "Mr. Emerson, you're a daddy" Jack jumped out of his chair and ran down the hall to see his beautiful baby daughter. Briana, you are the light of his life, he loved you so much. He would talk about your dance recitals and especially the last one he saw you perform. He was really not up to par that night, but he knew he wanted to see you dance again.

You have grown up to be a beautiful young lady with the compassion and love that was part of your father. You now carry the banner for dad. And as you grow up and have children of your own, I know the legacy he has left will be carried forward.

One evening Peggy's brother, Connie Stone, brought his friend home, by the name of John Emerson. Connie introduced his sister to John and it started a relationship that lasted 40 years. Peggy, what can I say, your devotion to Jack was unquestionable; you have been Jack's backbone. At times it was very difficult for you, through all his ups and downs with his health, but I know Jack loved you and adored you; you were his wife, his friend and his nurse. I often told Jack that he married a saint. He would retort, "Barry, what are you talking about." I would tell him "who else would put up with you but a saint." He would say "you know, you're right." Peggy, you have a beautiful daughter who you have nurtured into a wonderful young woman and I know you will look forward to the day that you tell your grandchildren all about their grandfather the selectman.

You cannot put down in words what Jack Emerson has meant to this community, his family, his friends and the people he has helped along the way. Jack Emerson leaves a legacy that few people can claim. He started a project that few people thought would succeed, and because of his tenacity, it has succeeded. And along the way his success was recognized at the local and national levels.

He was awarded the collection systems by the New England Environmental Association in 1994. In 1995 the national organization, Water Environmental Association presented him with the national award in New Orleans. He was voted man of the year for his accomplishments by the Chelmsford Chapter of the Elks. In 2000 he was voted into the Chelmsford Hall of Fame. On October thirtieth of this year, at an emotional ceremony, Jack had just been released from the hospital the day before; he was recognized by his fellow Democrats and received the Greater Lowell Area Distinguished Democrat award. His legacy lives on in his wife, daughter, friends and the people of Chelmsford.

If they gave out awards for Mr. Chelmsford it would be to Jack. If they had a hall of

fame for good people, Jack would be your first choice. If they gave out a friend of the year award, Jack's name would be on the plaque. And if they gave out awards for devoted husband and father, Jack would be the first in line.

Well my friend, you have come to the end of a long hard fought journey. You put up the good fight as always. It's time for us to say so long, but not goodbye. You will be able to rest knowing that what you started will be carried on. We, your community will watch over Peggy and Briana, as I am sure you will be watching over us. Say hello to your mom, dad, brother Charlie, and all your friends who are with you. I know if God needs a waste water system, you'll be the guy to start the project. So Mr. Chairman, you will be deeply missed by all who knew you. I love you. So long old friend.

Peggy has asked me to read a prayer that Jack liked. It was read at his dear friend Ira Park's mass:

I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one
I'd like to leave an afterglow of smiles when
life is done
I'd like to leave an echo Whispering softly
down the ways,
Of happy times and laughing times and
bright sunny days
I'd like the tears of those who Grieve, to dry
before the sun
Of happy memories that I leave When life is
done.

TRIBUTE TO DR. NANCY DICKEY

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a champion for medical research and health care innovation in this country, Dr. Nancy Dickey, president of the Texas A&M University Health Science Center. The principled work of Dr. Dickey is testament to excellence in medicine and scientific research that will undoubtedly save countless lives.

While the pursuit of excellence characterizes the mission of the students and faculty of the Texas A&M Health Science Center, it is their passionate commitment to the care of their fellow human beings that defines them and forges their vision for the future. There is no question that the architect of that vision is Dr. Nancy Dickey.

As a graduate of Texas A&M, it is my privilege to honor the work of Dr. Nancy Dickey and I personally want to thank her for the shining example to us all and wish her well in her future endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to enter into the RECORD a speech by Dr. Dickey that serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of vital medical research in this country and the groundbreaking work of the Texas A&M University Health Science Center.

TEXAS A&M INAUGURAL CONVOCATION SPEECH BY
PRESIDENT AND VICE CHANCELLOR DR. NANCY W.
DICKEY

Today we are making history.

We are assembled at this convocation not only to celebrate our accomplishments and honor our outstanding faculty, but also to affirm the honorable principles that guide us toward our vision of excellence in medicine and the healthcare professions. Let this day forever be remembered as the day that the Texas A&M Health Science Center branded

upon the world's canvas our promise to change the lives of people around the globe with the most outstanding health education, compassionate care and superior science as we confidently fulfill the obligations of our sacred oaths.

Let no one doubt that our faculty is composed of men and women who are devoted healthcare professionals, educators and researchers of extraordinary competence and integrity. We believe that every human life is precious and that this great institution and its members are obligated and committed to providing everyone with the best care and leadership possible. Our care for the body is strengthened by our faith in the intrinsic worth of every human soul. Therefore, our current practices provide important and lifegiving care to individuals, insight and direction to communities, and research that provides the hope that tomorrow will be better than today.

Those of us who have dedicated our lives to the health professions, indeed our vocations, believe that we are making a difference. We all benefit from an understanding of the past, the experiences of the present and the intellectual curiosity that discovers and invents those things that will enrich and strengthen our future. We believe firmly in our mission, and we are convinced that our faculty, staff and students are transcending all expectations as they make the world a better place in which to work and live. Our efforts have just begun, and the fruits of our labor shall have no end.

What then are the guiding principles of our organization that lead us to distinction in education programs, prominence in scientific research, and innovation? And, what are the guiding principles that make our care of those who suffer illness more compassionate, comprehensive and successful?

We pursue excellence in all we do. We are committed to providing the best care imaginable for all Texans. We have a special calling and duty to serve with sincerity and compassion the rural and under-served populations in the great State of Texas. When one person in our state is without needed care, we all suffer. If we know anything from quantum physics, it is that everything in the universe is connected in one way or another. Therefore, we intend to see to it that our connections are cared for with expertise and excellence.

We are convinced that the myriad of multi-form fibers composing the human body make it stronger, just as the diverse population of our state make our mosaic stronger, better and more beautiful. We take pride in the cultural diversity found in Texas and we are privileged to serve with tenderness and understanding all people, regardless of race, religion, cultural heritage or gender. We do not limit our inquiries or services based upon preconceived ideas or outdated conceptions of who is and who is not worthy. Every person is worthy, and we are eternally invested in the solemn American promise of serving everyone fairly, equally and honorably.

We will never compromise our integrity or our academic freedom. We are steadfast in our enduring commitment to honor and decency in all we do. And, our good reputation is best assured by transparency and accountability in our every transaction and relationship. Our academic freedom fosters the necessary environment to promote lively discourse and scientific inquiry. We cherish the freedom to express informed viewpoints without fear, and we will never shrink from our duties and responsibilities to our colleagues and fellow citizens.

We trust in active collaboration and continued professional development. Our research, teaching and services are strengthened and enhanced by our relationships at