

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
OWYHEE DAM

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the construction of the Bureau of Reclamation's Owyhee Project in Malheur County, Oregon, located in the district I represent. This momentous occasion will be celebrated at a major community event at the dam this weekend. At the time of its construction, the Owyhee Dam was the highest in the world. The dam rises 417 feet above the river with nearly another 100 feet below the river surface. The arch section of the dam spans the distance of 2 football fields. The dam created the Owyhee Reservoir, which is 52 miles long and holds enough water to cover 13,900 acres with 1 foot of water.

You may be wondering how it came to be that one of the largest concrete structures in the world was built in a true American frontier. In the early 19th century, scouts, trappers, and traders began to explore all parts of the Northwest; the high-desert region of what would become the Oregon Territory was no exception. This area was and currently is home to bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, golden eagles, coyotes, and mule deer. The settlers in the area also discovered that the ground, provided with adequate water, could grow just about any crop including barley, oats, sorghum, wheat, alfalfa, beans, peppermint, spearmint, sugar beets, sweet corn, and more.

At the turn of the 20th century the need for more water became apparent and the Reclamation Service (now the Bureau of Reclamation) investigated several dam sites and irrigation plans. It finally issued a proposal in 1925 to construct the dam. The following year, Interior Secretary Hubert Work and President Calvin Coolidge approved the plans and in 1928 contracts were awarded and construction began.

However, as with any significant construction project, challenges arose. John Terry, a retired copy editor for The Oregonian and a member of the Oregon Geographic Names Board, recently highlighted a few of those challenges.

"The Bureau of Reclamation built a construction camp with housing, administrative buildings, water and sewer facilities," Terry wrote. "Crews labored around the clock, although the winter of 1930-31 produced sub-freezing temperatures and a 53-day work stoppage."

In 1935, the first water was delivered to ranchers, farmers and communities in Oregon and Idaho. And while the dam continues to provide irrigation water, it also provides numerous other benefits, including flood control, recreational fishing, and excellent habitat for bighorn sheep, mule deer, pelicans, and cormorants.

At the dedication ceremony, President Herbert Hoover sent along his congratulations in a written statement "commemorating the completion of the highest dam in the world."

"The sympathy of the administration and the Congress and the wholehearted and fine spirit of the people of this community have cooperated to make the completion of this dam possible," President Hoover said.

We should emulate the cooperative work of those who raised this dam when demanding it meet the needs of today's farmers, ranchers, communities, and wildlife. I congratulate Owyhee Irrigation District Manager Jay Chamberlin and his staff on commemorating the completion of the dam. And I thank the local elected officials and Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Robert Johnson for their efforts to steward the water resources provided by the Owyhee Dam. May the next 75 years for the Owyhee Project be as successful and prosperous as the first 75.

TRIBUTE TO MR. CHARLES
LINDBERG

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Charles Lindberg, an honorable soldier and citizen, a great Minnesotan and American. Mr. Lindberg passed away on June 24, at the age of 86, the last surviving member of the squad who raised the original flag on a mountaintop during the Battle of Iwo Jima.

Charles Lindberg, with five other men, climbed his way to the top of Mount Suribachi during the morning of February 23, 1945. He dodged enemy fire, engaged enemy pillboxes and for his valor and bravery was awarded the Silver Star. At the foot of the mountain he repeatedly exposed himself to machinegun fire and hand grenades, almost surprised to make it to the top. Years later he would express wonder for merely having survived the day, which saw some of the most intense fighting of the war: "We thought it would be a slaughterhouse up on Suribachi, I still don't understand why we were not attacked."

It wasn't planned ahead of time, they hadn't been ordered to do it; but after a long, arduous climb, during a brief reprise in the gunfire, two members of Lindberg's squad noticed a long pipe up on top of the mountain—and it just so happened that one of them was carrying a flag. They scoured the mountaintop for the highest point, and raised the Stars and Stripes up over the island—the first American flag to make it on Japanese soil. Lindberg would later recall the reaction of the American forces that day, lamenting how "down below, the troops started to cheer, the ships' whistles went off, it was just something that you would never forget."

As such moments always seem, the peace and celebration was too soon shattered. Enemy troops began emerging from their caves, and Lindberg's squad continued the fight. Three of the six men wouldn't survive to see the photographs taken on the mountaintop that morning. Lindberg himself survived a gunshot wound through the arm a week later, for which he received a purple heart. When he was discharged from the Marines he went home to South Dakota, and in 1951 moved to Richfield, MN, to become an electrician. He spent his life speaking to school groups and veterans, ensuring that the story of his fallen comrades lives on in memory as an illustration of the price we pay for our democracy.

Madam Speaker, I am honored and humbled in recognizing Mr. Charles Lindberg in

the event of his passing, and as a Minnesotan, proud to claim such an illustrious American as one of our own. Charles, on behalf of a grateful nation, I thank you.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
JERRY FITZGERALD

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my dear friend Jerry Fitzgerald, on the occasion of his retirement from Oakwood Healthcare System after 41 dignified years of service.

A Native Detroiter, Jerry received a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Detroit and went on to attain a Master's Degree in Hospital Administration from the University of Michigan. He is also an American College of Healthcare Executives, ACHE, Fellow, as well as an adjunct instructor for the University of Michigan's Program in Health Care Administration.

Jerry began his work at Oakwood Hospital & Medical Center as the Assistant Director in 1966. In 1980, he was named the President and CEO and held that position until his sage leadership led to the successful union with the People's Community Hospital Authority to form the doubly large Oakwood Healthcare System. The new system immediately established itself as the premier healthcare provider in southeastern and western Wayne County. Under Jerry's guidance Oakwood has earned the reputation as one of the top 100 cardiac hospitals in the Nation for 7 out of the past 8 years, serving over one million residents.

Jerry's vision for exceptional service and excellent healthcare has fueled a myriad of initiatives and improvements, all of which have established Oakwood's outstanding status. His vision and efforts have been met with extensive gratitude and support from the community, as he is the recipient of the American College of Healthcare Executives Senior Healthcare Leadership Regent's Award, the Sy Gottlieb Award from the Greater Detroit Area Health Council, the Universal Partnership Award from the American Arab Chamber of Commerce and the Lawrence A. Hill Award of Excellence from the University of Michigan.

Although this marks the closing of one chapter in Jerry's career, it does not signal the end of Jerry's commitment to the community, as he currently serves as the chairman of the Michigan Health & Hospital Association, MHA, Board of Trustees and is actively involved in American Hospital Association. He holds several board membership positions throughout the Greater Detroit Area including the Detroit Regional Chamber, the Detroit Economic Club, the Dearborn Community Fund Board, the Downriver Community Advisory Board, Michigan Colleges Foundation Board of Trustees, the University of Detroit Mercy College of Health Professions Advisory, and the Detroit Sacred Heart Major Seminary Foundation.

Jerry's years of service have been essential in shaping the healthcare system of the Greater Detroit Area and southeast Michigan. I ask that my colleagues rise and join me in wishing Jerry all the best in a happy, long and active retirement.