

HONORING NEIL KOSKI

**HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 2007*

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Neil Koski, who was awarded the 2006 Congressional Volunteer Recognition Award by the Second Congressional District of Maryland's Veterans Advisory Group.

Mr. Koski is a dedicated volunteer at the Department of Veterans Affairs' Fort Howard Community Based Outpatient Clinic. He provides morning coffee to the out patients at the clinic five days a week. He helps complete the mission at Fort Howard by providing a supplemental service to the veterans which could not have otherwise be provided through normal operations at the clinic.

Relying upon his experience as a veteran, he provides companionship and camaraderie that few can supply to the veterans attending the clinic. Mr. Koski is a Disabled American Veteran who, because of his experiences overcoming his physical disability, is able to provide unique encouragement and friendship to the veteran patients at the Fort Howard clinic. His ability to share stories and tales of his accomplishments is legendary.

Mr. Koski is also a member of the National Honor Guard for the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He serves as the VAVS Representative for the Veterans of Foreign Wars at the Department of Veteran Affairs Baltimore Rehabilitation and Extended Care Center. Mr. Koski ensures that members are volunteering to provide services to patients as well as making monetary and in-kind donations to support patient needs at the Center. The pride that Mr. Koski feels representing the Veterans of Foreign Wars is constantly evident in his work as a volunteer.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to honor Mr. Neil Koski. He is a remarkable volunteer for Maryland's veterans. Through his tireless efforts in 34 years and 9,000 hours of volunteering, he has helped improve the lives of hundreds of veterans as they receive their medical care from the Department of Veterans Affairs. He has gone above and beyond the call of duty to aid those who have dedicated their lives to serve our great country.

TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF BLACK  
HISTORY MONTH

**HON. NICK J. RAHALL, II**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 2007*

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, as Black History Month again draws to a close, it is the perfect time to reflect on the accomplishments of so many black figures who were intimately connected to the Mountain State.

To fully appreciate the breadth and depth of the contributions of these heroes, we need only to imagine what life in the Mountain State—what life across America—would be like without them.

We might not even be celebrating this special month, for example, were it not for the ef-

forts of Carter G. Woodson, referred to by many as the "father of black history," a son of slaves who came to Huntington, West Virginia, and worked in our coal mines until he could afford enough money for an education. Once firmly established in a successful academic career which included West Virginia State College and Howard University in Washington, D.C., Carter used this education to bring to life the story of black Americans missing from many of our history books. In 1926, he gained helped establish "Negro History Week," and in 1976 Woodson's week was expanded into the Black History Month we celebrate today.

And where would America be without the contributions of Booker T. Washington, undoubtedly West Virginia's most famous African American? Poverty stricken but free at last, young Washington and his family made a perilous journey on foot through deep forests and across the New River Gorge, from Franklin County, Virginia to Kanawha County, West Virginia. Alongside his father, Booker T. Washington went to work in the salt furnaces at Malden when he was only nine and later in a coal mine along Campbell's Creek. Naturally intelligent and starved for an education, Washington left Malden at 16 and walked the 200 miles to Hampton Institute in Virginia. Upon graduation, he returned to Malden to teach school for both black children and adults.

Like Carter G. Woodson, Booker T. Washington rose to national prominence. He established the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, which still educates many today, and he helped set up the National Negro Business League. Washington wrote twelve books, the most famous of which, *Up From Slavery*, recounted his early life in Malden, still read widely in our schools today.

Other West Virginia sons and daughters, too, have made lasting contributions that have changed the landscape of our land and our intellect:

J.R. Clifford, born in Grant County, fought in the Civil War and then came back home to fight for civil rights. A lawyer and a journalist, he brought the first legal challenge of the state's segregated school system to court, and worked with his friend W.E.B. DuBois to found the Niagara Movement of 1905.

Christopher Harrison Payne, born a slave in Monroe County, broke ground in black journalism, establishing three newspapers, *The West Virginia Enterprise*, *The Pioneer* and *The Mountain Eagle*. In 1896 he was elected to the state legislature as a Republican delegate from Fayette County, the first black to serve in the West Virginia legislature.

Minnie Buckingham Harper of Keystone, the first African American woman to become a member of a legislative body in the United States, broke ground for countless women in 1928 when she was appointed to fill the term of her late husband.

Leon Sullivan, born in Charleston, was brought up in a dirty alley in one of the city's most impoverished sections, worked in a steel mill to pay his tuition at West Virginia State College, and rose from poverty to found the Opportunity Industrialization Center, a job-training organization with branches around the world.

Helen Dobson of Raleigh County, well-known throughout West Virginia for her beautiful voice, performed at the inauguration of two of West Virginia's governors and served as public school teacher for many years. Her

spirit is still strong in southern West Virginia and it was with Ms. Dobson in mind that I signed on as a co-sponsor of a bill that designates the African American spiritual as a national treasure. This bill passed the House of Representatives earlier this month.

This, of course, is just a small sampling of so many strong African Americans who have made a difference. Add to this list the countless men and women who worked long hours for less pay to provide for a better future for their children, the many men and women who fought and continue to fight for our liberties in the armed forces, the men and women who through their compassion and quiet strength, were role models by which we all can live. Also add to this list the many African Americans who continue today to work for a better West Virginia.

We are deeply indebted to our educators, folks like Bluefield State President Albert Walker; Maurice Cooley, Director of African American Programs at Marshall University; Betty Jane Cleckley, Vice President for Marshall University Multicultural Affairs; Loretta Young, Vice President for Development at Concord University; and Roslyn Clark-Artis, Chief Advancement Officer at Mountain State University. These men and women, and so many others, like Thomas Evans, Raleigh County educator and principal of Stratton High School and Rev. William Law, founder of the Beckley World Mission, whom both passed away recently, have raised the torch that Carter T. Woodson lit so many years ago.

Too often, the history of black Americans is not fully taught or remembered. Let this annual return of black history month spur us all to celebrate African-American contributions to the greatness of West Virginia and to commend those carrying on this proud tradition of service today.

HONORING THE HUNTINGTON  
JEWISH CENTER

**HON. STEVE ISRAEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 2007*

Mr. ISRAEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Huntington Jewish Center.

In 1907, some of Long Island's first Jewish families arrived in the Huntington area bringing with them a rich spirit and culture. Their desire to set down roots and to belong to a community has led to the creation of one of the nation's most enduring religious establishments. These Jewish families gathered to pray, learn and socialize in the old firehouse on Main Street and the Huntington Jewish Center was born.

The current building, located on Park Avenue was completed in 1961. It was designed to meet the diverse needs of the membership. The elegantly modern building houses two sanctuaries, a Hebrew school and nursery school, a family life center, youth wing, social hall, library, meeting rooms and an office.

One hundred years later it is celebrating its centennial anniversary. The devotion and dedication of its generations of members has translated into 100 years of worship in the Huntington community. The Huntington Jewish Center is now the oldest synagogue in Suffolk

County, in my district, yet it remains a vibrant spiritual, cultural and social center.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND POLITICAL CAREER OF BOB HOWARD

##### HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 2007*

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the political career of one of Western New York's most colorful and most effective political leaders—Robert “Bob” Howard, of the town of Orchard Park.

Bob Howard is a dear friend of many years standing—so many years, in fact, that Bob's political influence with me and my family stretches back over many years. Bob Howard was a trusted campaign advisor to my father in his campaigns for the Buffalo Common Council's South District seat in the 1960s and 1970s. Bob later provided tremendous assistance in my own campaigns for that same councilmanic seat in the 1980s and 1990s.

Bob was probably most helpful to me during a very difficult race I had in 1998—my initial run for the New York State Legislature. Bob was tremendously committed to my success, practically leading me from one end of the district to the other, and his advice and counsel throughout the campaign was invaluable.

Bob has many political successes to his credit, but I suspect that the campaign that he was most proud of was the successful campaign waged by Toni Cudney for Supervisor of the town of Orchard Park. Orchard Park, long dominated by Republicans, was treated to Toni's effective and dedicated stewardship for eight years as Supervisor, and her campaigns were assisted greatly by Bob's tireless efforts.

Older in age and slower of step now, Bob Howard will be feted by family and close friends on Sunday, March 4 at the home of Toni and Jim Cudney, where a celebration of Bob's political career will take place. It is altogether fitting and proper that his work be honored in such a way, as Bob's efforts made government work better for local taxpayers, homeowners and businesses. Bob's sole purpose in his political life was to produce a better, stronger and more vibrant community, and all local residents owe him a tremendous debt of gratitude for the tireless dedication he demonstrated over the years. I thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing me the opportunity to speak today to extol the virtues of Western New York's own Bob Howard, and to honor his many contributions to our local community.

#### HONORING THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN AND THE U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY

##### HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise not only as a Member of Congress but also as a member of the Board of Visitors for the United States Air Force Academy, to acknowledge the contributions to freedom made by the famous Tuskegee Airmen during World War II.

Each year at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, people gather to remember and honor the African-American airmen, and their families, who sacrificed so much as part of their service in the formation of an all-African-American fighting unit known as the “Tuskegee Airmen.” From across the country and all walks of life, these young volunteers were trained at the Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. They were among the most decorated and successful fighter pilots in American history.

My father, Mo Udall, also served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. He was not engaged with the Tuskegee Airmen, but he commanded the 75th Air Squadron, an African-American unit. His experience with these men led him to a lifelong and passionate commitment to racial equality, and I know that if he were alive today, he would want to join me in keeping the flame of remembrance alive for the brave African-American aviators and soldiers who fought for their country when their country still denied them equal rights.

As people gather in Colorado Springs at the Air Force Academy in a few days to rededicate the Tuskegee Airmen Memorial and honor the memory of men like Clarence Shivers, who was not only a member of the unit but also the sculptor of the memorial, I believe they should attend this ceremony with the full support and appreciation of Congress.

Let us also use the occasion of this event to rededicate ourselves to building a nation that honors duty, service, and sacrifice and works for the preservation of civil rights and liberties for all people.

#### CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE TOWN OF BROADWAY, NORTH CAROLINA

##### HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 2007*

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the centennial celebration of the town of Broadway, North Carolina, in my congressional district. Broadway was settled in 1870 and became a charter town in Lee County in 1907.

When Broadway was settled in 1870 it was an area of houses, a few stores, and small businesses. Two of the first people to settle in Broadway were Hugh Matthews and Grissom Thomas, and their descendants still reside there. In March 1905, the Atlantic and Western Railroad system connected Broadway to other towns and cities throughout the state of North Carolina. In 1907 M. A. McLeod became the first mayor of the town, followed in 1912 by A. P. Thomas, who established streets and street lights in Broadway. The Town's longest serving mayor was Ralph Hunter. He was a write-in candidate in the 1963 election and served until 1993. While under Mayor Hunter's leadership, Broadway began using a modern water system as well as a sewage plant that was completed in 1986. Mayor Hunter was a dedicated public servant who worked hard for the town of Broadway and its residents.

After the tragedy of September 11, 2001 the city of New York wanted to give back to the country. Organizers planned “New York loves America,” a tour of stage actors. It was a

show that made stops in major U.S. cities as well as Broadway, North Carolina. During the performance the organizers gave a fire hat signed by firemen from New York, former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani, and Mayor Michael Bloomberg. It was given to the town and is on display in the Broadway Town Hall.

Madam Speaker, the town of Broadway has always been dear to my family since it is the hometown of my lovely wife, Faye Etheridge. It is fitting that we take a moment today to honor the centennial celebration of the town of Broadway.

#### TRIBUTE TO MS. DESIREE PILGRIM-HUNTER

##### HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 2007*

Mr. SERRANO. Madam Speaker, as we give pause to commemorate the innumerable contributions that African Americans have—and continue to make—to our Nation, it gives me great pleasure to rise in honor of a Bronx activist, organizer and impassioned voice for community empowerment, Ms. Desiree Pilgrim-Hunter.

Born in London, England, by the age of twenty, Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter had lived in six countries across Europe, Africa and North America. The roots of Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter's activism in the Bronx date back to 1995, when she first attended community meetings surrounding the redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory in the Bronx. In the twelve years since first taking an interest in this project, Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter's passion for the Armory has resulted in her emergence as a local leader on the issue.

In January of 2006, Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter began to lead Community Action Meetings in her Fordham Hill neighborhood regarding the redevelopment plans, and later that year she participated in the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance's Community Forum. Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter was present when New York City Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff announced the formation of the Kingsbridge Armory Task Force, and not long after this announcement, Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter was invited to serve on the Task Force as my Community Representative.

In addition to her work around the Armory, over the years, Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter has also been an advocate for issues ranging from fair labor standards to improving Bronx public schools; she has even founded a group known as Concerned Shareholders of Fordham Hill—a coalition of area residents organized around the idea of ensuring that their building management company acts in the best interest of its tenants.

Madam Speaker, the esteemed author Alice Walker writes, “The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any.” On behalf of the many individuals in the Bronx who look to Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter to provide leadership, I am very proud to be able to acknowledge and honor the power, conviction, and selflessness behind Ms. Pilgrim-Hunter's continuing efforts to advance meaningful social change in the Bronx. I am therefore pleased to recognize Ms. Desiree Pilgrim-Hunter.