

Donald Elementary School was built in 1989. Although relatively new, the school has made a significant impact on the local community and has unique attributes including a P.E.P. Squad (Parents as Educational Partners Volunteer Program) as well as a publishing company, "Dolphin Tales," to assist students in taking their writing to the complete published stage. Donald Elementary received Gold Performance Acknowledgments from the Texas Education Agency in the 2004–2005 school year for attendance and was commended for its work in the fields of Reading/ELA, Mathematics and Science.

The National Blue Ribbon Award acknowledges the hard work of students, staff members, families, and the community in raising student proficiency and closing the achievement gap. I extend my sincerest congratulations to Principal Cheryl J. Close, the Lewisville Independent School District, and the community of Flower Mound. I also want to congratulate the fine students of Donald Elementary for this outstanding achievement.

I wish them the best of luck as they continue to strive for excellence. I am very proud and honored to represent them in the 26th District of Texas.

TRIBUTE TO MR. FRANK AMARAL

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Madam Speaker, today I wish to remember and honor a man who was a businessman, community leader and icon in Northern California, Mr. Frank Amaral. After a lifetime of dedication to his family and community, Frank passed away on March 5, 2007. He was 88 years old.

Frank Amaral was one of Nevada City's most successful real estate investors. Mr. Amaral displayed astute skills of negotiation and business savvy, many of which he honed earlier in his career in the lumber industry, working as managing partner of the Oregon Creek Lumber Company in Camptonville, California.

Frank Amaral was also one of Nevada County's early developers and helped transform Grass Valley and Nevada City from unknown destinations to the wonderful communities they are today. However, Frank's success as an adult contrasted with his humble roots.

Born on June 19, 1918, in Orland, California, he was the youngest of four children. Frank's parents, Cardoza Amaral and Rosa Julia Bettencourt Amaral, were Portuguese immigrants from the Azores Islands. Frank lost his father when he was 6.

As a 13-year-old farm laborer who supported his family during the Depression, Frank hated being poor and worked diligently to better his social status.

A rough upbringing did not deter Frank from a long list of impressive life achievements. Mr. Amaral bought the Oregon Creek Lumber Company in 1958 and started buying timberland all throughout Northern California, Oregon and Idaho. At the height of his career in the lumber business, he owned over 100,000 acres of timberland, according to a recent publication.

He also bought local properties during the 1950s. Frank's holdings included property at Jackson Meadows, Milton Reservoir, Lake Olympia, Brunswick sawmill, the Murchie Mine property, Deer Creek Park, Stonebridge and the North Star Mine, which he co-owned.

In 1966, he retired from the lumber business, developing the properties he owned and selling them off as parcels. He diversified his interests, buying farmland in Los Banos and commercial properties in Southern California.

Frank Amaral was also a thoughtful and civic-minded philanthropist who made great contributions to his community and region.

For example, the Nevada County Fairgrounds has seen the impact of Mr. Amaral's work in the community for years. The Amaral Family Festival Center was named in his honor after the family made a large donation for its renovation. But, for years before that, the Amarals donated land, money and time to many causes behind the scenes, proving to many their dedication to helping others.

The site of Nevada County's first Juvenile Hall and the land where the Madelyn Helling Library sits both were gifts from the Amarals.

Most importantly, Frank Amaral was devoted to his family and was committed to acts of charity. For years, Frank and LaVonne Amaral donated money anonymously to local organizations following their Catholic belief that charity should not be publicized.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, LaVonne, and his two children, Lance Amaral and Julia Amaral.

May he rest in peace.

COMMITTEE FUNDING
RESOLUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 8, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague JOE BARTON, Ranking Member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, in requesting the resources necessary to ensure the effective operations of this Committee over the next 2 years.

The budget we have submitted reflects the significant increase in workload for the Committee on Energy and Commerce, as well as the need to attract skilled staff members and provide our personnel with the tools required to perform their jobs. The requested sums are not merely desirable. They are necessary. The Committee has wide jurisdiction and each of its 6 subcommittees has a lengthy "to do" list.

One of our top priorities is developing a substantive, balanced, thorough record on climate change. Our comprehensive examination of climate change is already underway. To date, we have conducted 5 hearings on this issue and we expect to conduct 6 more this month. I am pleased to report that a variety of industry leaders and issue experts, including Vice President Gore, who will testify before the Committee on March 21, will continue to provide their insights to the Committee. We are confident that this focus on climate change will produce thoughtful, fair legislation.

Other priorities include addressing issues in energy policy, health care, consumer protection and privacy, environmental programs,

telecommunications, and a host of other legislative matters. We are also committed to fulfilling our oversight responsibilities. Already, the Committee has launched inquiries into nuclear security issues, food and drug safety, and the health care situation in New Orleans post-Katrina.

Since the 110th Congress convened in January, we have moved forward quickly on an exceedingly ambitious agenda that covers a wide range of topics of concern to Americans. To date, the Committee has held 19 hearings, in addition to its role in the "First 100 Hours"—during which this Committee contributed significantly to the Stem Cell Research bill, the prescription drug negotiation legislation, and the implementation of the 9/11 Commission recommendations. In this month alone, the Committee has planned 28 hearings and 6 markups and meetings. We expect a combined total of 42 hearings and meetings before we reach the Spring District Work Period.

In light of this very heavy workload and considering the pressing importance of the issues facing the Committee, I ask that you fund our request for the 110th Congress and thank you for your support.

FIVE OUTSTANDING CITIZENS

HON. ALBIO SIRES

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, I rise here today to honor five outstanding citizens of Bayonne for their contributions to preserving their Irish heritage, which have enriched and united our community and earned them the praise of their countrymen. They are all being honored at the 2007 Bayonne St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Mickey McCabe, Grand Marshall 2007, a Bayonne native, is a founding member of the Bayonne St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee. As founder and president of McCabe Ambulance Service and the McCabe Institute of Emergency Preparedness, Mr. McCabe is well aware of the medical emergency needs of his community. Mr. McCabe serves in various state and county agencies including the New Jersey State EMS Homeland Security Task Force Planning Agency.

Virginia "Ginger" Boele Kemp, a member of Ireland's 32, is the President and owner of Four Season's Travel. A community activist, Ms. Kemp founded the Bayonne Hometown Fair. A member of the Rotary Club of Bayonne, Ms. Kemp was the club's first woman president. Ginger Kemp helped raise over \$30,000 as a member of the Bayonne Tsunami Relief Fund and over \$51,000 as co-chair of the Katrina Relief Fund.

Bridget Antczak, County Cork Association Aide, is a lifelong resident of Bayonne. The Environmental Consultant has a rich Irish heritage and is the granddaughter of John O'Connell, who was influential in the building of the County Corkmen's Club. Bridget has been a member of the St. Patrick's Parade Committee since 2004.

Sharon Nadrowsky, Irish American League Aide, serves as the representative to the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee. Mrs. Nadrowski serves on the St. Mary's Star of the Sea Sports Committee. She continues to instill

in her children and her community the traditions of her grandparents, who hail from County Tipperary and County Kilkenny.

Mary O'Connell, born and raised in Bayonne, is past President of the County Donegal Association and remains an aide to the organization. Her mother Nora was born in County Mayo and her paternal grandfather from County Donegal. Mrs. O'Connell also served the patients of the prestigious Hoboken's St. Mary's Hospital for 10 years.

Please join me in honoring these proud members of the Irish Community of Bayonne. Their numerous contributions have enriched the lives of their neighbors, and their love of their heritage continues to preserve the Irish tradition for future generations of Irish-Americans in New Jersey and the United States.

FREEDOM FOR RENÉ MONTES DE
OCA MARTIJA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about René Montes de Oca Martija, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Montes de Oca Martija, Secretary General of the Pro Human Rights Party in Cuba, is a peaceful pro-democracy and human rights activist who has courageously denounced the cruel policies of the dictatorship and demanded freedom for the Cuban people. Although he has been a constant target of the brutal tyrant's machinery of repression, he has remained steadfast in his demands for freedom, democracy, and that the people of Cuba be allowed their inalienable rights.

Mr. Montes de Oca Martija, as early as the age of 8, has been a target of the dictator's villainous regime. On more than one occasion as a child he was persecuted and denied the most basic of human dignity in treatment simply because his mother was a Jehovah's Witness and considered a threat to the totalitarian regime. Although he has been jailed and detained on numerous occasions, Mr. Montes de Oca has always maintained his steadfast opposition to Castro's tyranny.

Most recently, on July 13, 2005, René Montes de Oca Martija was wrongfully arrested during a peaceful demonstration in Havana honoring the victims of the 13 de Marzo tugboat massacre of 1994 in which 72 men, women, and children attempting to flee the Cuban dictatorship in search of freedom, were chased down and attacked by Castro's security thugs, who mercilessly sank the 13 de Marzo. More than half of the unarmed refugees on the tugboat were systematically assassinated by drowning at the direct order of Castro while they were fighting to stay alive in the waters.

On December 13, 2006, Amnesty International reported their concern that Mr. Montes de Oca would not receive a fair trial in totalitarian Cuba since the right to a fair trial is severely limited in Cuba, with the courts and prosecutors under government control. Amnesty International went on to say that they believed that Mr. Montes de Oca had been detained solely for exercising his most basic human rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly.

On February 27, 2007, after being locked in the totalitarian gulag for nearly 2 years, without ever being convicted of any genuine crime, Mr. Montes de Oca Martija was sentenced to 2 years on trumped-up charges of public disorder and locked in a dungeon in deplorable, life threatening conditions.

Mr. Montes de Oca Martija is one of the many heroes of the Cuban pro-democracy movement who are locked in the dungeons of the dictatorship for their beliefs. My Colleagues, we must not stand by in acquiescence while pro-democracy activists are suffering in the depraved prisons of tyrants. We must demand the immediate and unconditional release of René Montes de Oca Martija and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

DEDICATION OF DR. PILLOW PARK
IN NORTH RICHLAND HILLS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce the dedication of Dr. Pillow Park in North Richland Hills, Texas.

This newly refurbished park is named in recognition of Dr. David Pillow who served the city of North Richland Hills and much of north Texas since founding the Pillow-Rush Medical and Surgical Clinic in 1955. As the success of his business grew over the years, additions doubled the size of the hospital. Dr. Pillow also serves as the Medical Director for UT Southwestern University Hospital's Chest Pain Center.

Dr. David Pillow was also the chairman of the board of trustees in 1983, when the North Hills Hospital had its dedication ceremony. On August 28, 2006, the Naming Board of the city of North Richland Hills unanimously approved a resolution for Little Bear Creek Neighborhood Park to officially be named "Dr. Pillow Park."

The new Dr. Pillow Park is a 6.5 acre neighborhood park and has a Texas Mission theme. Included are a hike and bike trail, a covered picnic area, and a playground. I would like to express my best wishes to the Pillow family and the entire North Richland Hills Community on this special occasion. It is an honor to represent a fellow physician in Congress.

PRESERVING PATIENT ACCESS TO
INPATIENT REHABILITATION
HOSPITALS

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. TANNER. Madam Speaker, today I, along with my colleagues Reps. NITA LOWEY (D-NY), KENNY HULSHOF (R-MO), FRANK LOBIONDO (R-NJ) and with 70 co-sponsors, rise to introduce the Preserving Patient Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Hospitals Act of 2007 to ensure that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, does not continue to implement the misguided 75 Percent Rule and unnecessarily compromise the ability of rehabilitation hospitals and units to

continue to provide much-needed critical rehabilitation care.

The 75 Percent Rule is one of seven criteria inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units must meet in order to be paid under the inpatient rehabilitation facilities prospective payment system, IRF-PPS, rather than the inpatient prospective payment system, IPPS, under which general acute care hospitals are paid. The rule was first issued in January 1984 pursuant to the Social Security Act Amendments of 1983, and has faced minimal revision to date. Simply put, to qualify as an IRF under the 75 Percent Rule, 75 percent of a facility's patients must be receiving treatment in one of 13 specified conditions. The result is that inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units are the only Medicare providers that are classified on the basis on patient condition rather than the services provided to patients admitted to their care.

Inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units provide specialized programs and services for patients who have suffered brain injuries, strokes, spinal cord injuries, and other debilitating injuries. However, CMS has consistently refused to update the 75 Percent Rule to reflect medical advances made over the 20 years since the classification criteria were first developed.

It is shocking how many patients have been turned away because of this rule. The 75 Percent Rule functions as a quota system without any foundation in clinical or scientific evidence, which makes it just that much more frustrating to watch the inpatient hospitals and units in my home state struggle to comply with the regulation without jeopardizing patient access to crucial rehabilitative care.

Our legislation will ensure that patients across America will continue to have access to the rehabilitative care they need, and that CMS will take a long, hard look at the impact this policy is having on Medicare beneficiaries and the Medicare system itself. The legislation would freeze the compliance threshold at 60 percent indefinitely, allowing facilities to continue to provide care to Medicare beneficiaries in need of intensive inpatient rehabilitation therapy. The legislation also codifies medical necessity standards and requires CMS to provide Congress with a comprehensive assessment of what is happening to patients that are denied care in this specialized health care setting.

Congress has year after year called on CMS to modernize the 75 Percent Rule. This year we face a time-sensitive imperative. Unless Congress acts by July 1, 2007, the CMS rule automatically imposes a 65 percent compliance threshold. It is abundantly clear that this chamber will have to take legislative action if we hope to stop implementation of this policy and ensure that our constituents have access to intense rehabilitative care in the appropriate inpatient setting.

We urge our colleagues to support this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO THE SOUTH RIVER
RURITAN CLUB

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to the South River