

our Nation's history. A President had been assassinated, we were divided by Vietnam, there were riots in our cities over desegregation.

But she understood nature belongs to every single one of us, and we have an obligation to pay nature back. As President Johnson said, when he signed the law:

There is a part of America which was here long before we arrived, and will be here, if we preserve it, long after we depart.

As Mrs. Johnson departs, we thank her for her preservation. We thank her for lining every corner of the country with flowers that we all enjoy.

And we thank her for teaching us that preservation and beauty go beyond the wildflowers, to the need to deal with pollution and urban decay and other problems that are too prevalent in our country and world today.

Jill and I are thinking of her daughters, Lynda and Luci, their families—and, in particular, Senator Robb, who served this body so well.

CONGRATULATING CAL RIPKEN, JR.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, today I honor and congratulate Cal Ripken, Jr., on his induction to the Baseball Hall of Fame. Throughout his storied 21-year career, Cal has been the epitome of an "Iron Man," both on and off the field.

I watched Cal go from being unknown to being the best known baseball player from Baltimore since Babe Ruth. I was there on the last day at Memorial Stadium and the first day at Camden Yards, and I will watch him when he is inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame on July 29.

For we Orioles fans, it was never if we would be celebrating such an amazing feat but when we would be celebrating it. All baseball fans know about "The Streak." We fans remember the victory lap he took around Camden Yards. And the countdown—where the numbers were displayed not just at the Camden Warehouse or in the Baltimore Sun but also at my office in Hart Senate Office building: 2,632 consecutive games, 431 home runs, 19 All-Star game starts, two American League Golden Glove awards, eight Silver Slugger Awards, two American League MVPs, and on and on.

But the most important thing we remember, which the numbers cannot fully reflect, is the strong, dependable presence of Cal—night after night, day after day—through broken bones, through the wide range of emotions and pressures he experienced as a major leaguer, as a father, and as an active citizen in our community. Every game there he was—at third base and shortstop, smiling, and doing his job. And doing it well.

I remember that fateful night when Cal broke Lou Gehrig's long-standing consecutive game record. To see that banner drop from 2130 to 2131, and to hear the admiration and jubilation

from the crowd in Baltimore, was something I will always remember. The sustained cheers were never-ending as Cal, urged by Rafael Palmeiro, took a lap around the field. It was a proud night for the Ripken family, for the Orioles, and for Maryland. It was such a magical night. Families from all over came with their kids to celebrate the "Iron Man" and his achievement. The evening had as much dignity as the player himself.

Cal's accomplishments transcend well beyond the baseball field. His character and demeanor is reflected in the success he experiences every day off the field. He shows up and gives maximum effort in every aspect of life. He puts his family above all, he is a consummate community activist and is committed to living and teaching the "Ripken Way."

The "Ripken Way" is simple, really, but its wisdom is enough to build great players and bind generations together. It states: "Keep it Simple, Explain the Why, Celebrate the Individual, and Make it Fun." This style emphasizes clarity and simplicity, while also stressing empathy and interest.

I have certainly used the "Ripken Way" in my life and I believe many Marylanders and Americans also use it. In Maryland, I can tell you the "Ripken Way" is not just on our ballfields. It is in our factories. It is in our homes. It is in the bread we serve our families. It is in our hospitals in Baltimore, where Cal has contributed so much to children in need of hope and a smile. And it is in our hearts today as we salute Cal Ripken, Jr., and this wonderful honor he is receiving.

Cal applies the "Ripken Way" both on and off the ballfield, particularly in his philanthropic work at the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation. The Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation was established in 2001 in memory of Cal's father. To this day, Cal carries the torch and legacy of his father. It is a legacy that has shaped Cal's life and a legacy that has shaped the entire Orioles' organization.

By emphasizing work ethic, playing by the rules, putting the team first, and showing up every day, the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation serves disadvantaged youth across the country. The foundation has even built a beautiful state-of-the-art stadium in Aberdeen, MD, where kids can play. Cal has put much of his own money into the foundation and the stadium's construction, while also working to secure private donations.

Cal may be a local boy, but he is no ordinary man. There is no question that Cal has earned his way into the Hall of Fame, the respect of the world, and the admiration of generations to come.

Baltimore may have lost the powerhouse company Bethlehem Steel, but it will always be home to "Iron Man" Cal Ripken, Jr. I congratulate Cal on his stellar career, his strong work ethic, his commitment to family and community, and for the well-deserved, wonder-

ful honor of being inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

While he has already achieved so much, I can't help but think that the best is yet to come.

CONGRATULATING TONY GWYNN

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Tony Gwynn on his induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame on July 29, 2007. During an illustrious 20-year career spent entirely with the San Diego Padres, Tony Gwynn was a consummate sportsman whose excellence at the plate earned him the recognition as one of the greatest hitters in the game's long and storied history.

A native Californian, Tony Gwynn was a standout student-athlete at San Diego State University, where he excelled on the school's baseball and basketball teams. Tony remains the only athlete in Western Athletic Conference history to be recognized as an all-conference performer in two sports. His talents on the baseball diamond and the basketball court would lead to his selection by the San Diego Padres and the National Basketball Association's San Diego Clippers on the same day in 1981.

Tony Gwynn made his major league debut on July 19, 1982. Over the course of the next 20 years, he would compile one of the most accomplished resumes in baseball history. A remarkable model of consistency, Tony batted over .300 for 19 consecutive seasons, leading to 3,141 career hits. A 15-time All-Star, he won 8 batting titles during his career, tying the National League record held by Honus Wagner. He is the only player in major league history to win four batting titles in two separate decades. A true all-around player, Tony also won five Gold Glove Awards in recognition of his defensive excellence in the outfield.

In addition to his accomplishments on the field, Tony Gwynn has also been widely recognized for his passion and commitment to make a positive impact in the community. In 1995, he was presented the Branch Rickey Award as the top community activist in Major League Baseball. He received the prestigious Roberto Clemente Man of the Year Award in 1999 for combining sportsmanship and community service with excellence on the field. That same year, he was inducted into the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame in Boise, ID.

Affectionately known as "Mr. Padre," the Padres retired his No. 19 jersey and named the street on which its beautiful downtown stadium is located "Tony Gwynn Drive" in his honor. Judging from his excellence on and off the field, it is clear to see why Tony Gwynn is one of the most admired and beloved sports figures in America.

As his teammates and fans would attest, Tony Gwynn is a deserving inductee into the National Baseball Hall

of Fame. Throughout his career in baseball, Tony has consistently conducted himself with integrity, character, and a commitment to community service, all the qualities that embody the best ideals of our national pastime.

I congratulate Tony Gwynn on his induction in the National Baseball Hall of Fame and wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN MEMORIAM: ELMA PHYLLIS STERLING

• Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of the late Elma Phyllis Sterling, a devoted mother and pioneering community leader in Fresno. Mrs. Sterling, a long-time Fresno resident, passed away on July 4, 2007. She was 94 years old.

Elma Phyllis Sterling was born on November 22, 1914. She attended high school and college in New Orleans. Upon her graduation from Xavier University, Mrs. Sterling served as a schoolteacher in Louisiana before moving to Oakland, CA, in 1944. Three years later, she married her husband, Feltus LeRoy Sterling, Jr. The couple eventually moved to Fresno, where they founded a successful funeral home that remains family-operated today. They raised four children, Consuelo Sterling-Meux, Cynthia Sterling, Feltus Leroy Sterling, Jr., and Alphonse Christopher Sterling.

In addition to operating a family-owned business and raising their children, Mrs. Sterling generously offered her time, considerable energy, and many talents to a number of civic organizations. At one time, she was involved with 15 different civic causes that were committed to make her community a better place for everyone.

A former president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Fresno, Mrs. Sterling led a group of local civil rights activists to Alabama to march with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1963. She also played an instrumental role in the establishment of the National Council of Negro Women in Fresno. Through her devotion to community service, Mrs. Sterling demonstrated an admirable and unyielding commitment to civil rights and social justice.

A renowned and widely respected community leader, Mrs. Sterling made history when she became the first African American to hold a seat on the Fresno City Council after she was called to public service by filling a vacant seat on February 27, 1969. As she had done throughout her life, Mrs. Sterling handled her tenure on the Fresno Council with her usual grace, dignity, and keen sense of fairness and justice. Although she did not seek to keep her seat beyond her appointed term, it is fair to say that the impact

of Mrs. Sterling's tenure on the Fresno City Council is still being felt today. Mrs. Sterling's example has inspired succeeding generations of Fresno residents to become involved in community service regardless of their race, creed, or color. In a fitting testament to her legacy, Cynthia Sterling, Elma Phyllis Sterling's daughter, became the first African-American woman to be elected to the Fresno City Council in 2002.

Throughout a rich and fulfilling life, Elma Phyllis Sterling gave her genuine compassion and precious humanity to protect, uplift, and empower those who are most often neglected in our society. Mrs. Sterling has left behind a legacy of service and the admiration of those whose lives she touched over the years. She will be sorely missed.●

RECOGNIZING DEBRA BROWN STEINBERG

• Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I wish to recognize Debra Brown Steinberg for receiving an Ellis Island Medal of Honor from the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations. This award acknowledges her work representing immigrants whose family members died in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. As a recipient of the award, Debra joins an elite group of distinguished Medal of Honor recipients such as Lee Iacocca, former Chrysler CEO and author of "Where Have all the Leaders Gone?", as well as several former U.S. Presidents including Gerald Ford, George H.W. Bush, and Bill Clinton.

Ms. Steinberg, moved with compassion, responded to the attacks by playing a vital leadership role in creating the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest 9/11 Project in early October 2001. She also played an important role in the creation of the 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund, which awarded a total \$7 billion to family members of individuals killed in the 9/11 attacks, by drafting the New York City Bar Association's comments on the interim and final regulations for the fund. Since that time, she has worked selflessly to ensure that the family members of victims of 9/11 are cared for.

Nearly 6 years after the 9/11 attacks, Debra Brown Steinberg is still fighting for the families of victims of the terrorist attacks—specifically immigrants without legal status in the United States who, after facing the traumatic loss of a family member on 9/11, now face potential deportation. As our Nation continues to mourn the loss of friends and family members who died in the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Ms. Steinberg has set an example for all of us by helping families that have suffered greatly. Her selfless and persistent efforts have given these immigrant families hope that one day they will be able to grieve freely.

In addition to her work representing these immigrant families through the

9/11 Compensation Fund process, she has helped to draft the September 11 Family Humanitarian Relief and Patriotism Act, S. 615, which I introduced with Senator LAUTENBERG on February 15, 2007. This legislation would help immigrants whose family members were killed in the attacks heal from the tragedy as our Nation continues to do the same.

Our tradition teaches us to have compassion for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger among us. Ms. Steinberg's action representing the families of immigrant victims of 9/11 exemplifies such compassion.

We have much to learn from Debra Steinberg, and I am proud to honor her achievements before my colleagues in the Senate.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF STERLING, NORTH DAKOTA

• Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I am pleased today to recognize a community in North Dakota that celebrated its 125th anniversary. On July 13 to 15, the residents of Sterling gathered to celebrate their community's history and founding.

Sterling is a community in central North Dakota, only a short drive from Bismarck, the State capital. Sterling began as a railroad depot named Sixteenth Siding in 1873 and became home to settlers in 1880, who renamed it Ballville. In 1882, the post office was established with Oscar Ball serving as its postmaster, and the town then was renamed Sterling.

Sterling has always been a quiet, small town, maintaining a population of fewer than 250 people since its founding. It has nonetheless been home to many notable establishments over the past 125 years—the bank and hotel buildings still stand as a testament to the life of the town over the past century and a quarter.

Though the town may be small, the anniversary celebration was not small by any means. Over 1,000 people attended the festivities, a crowd comparable to the one at Sterling's centennial celebration 25 years ago. The celebration included dances, live music, a quilt show, a pickup mud run, and a parade, at which onlookers were showered with free gifts and wowed by the 100 horses that walked together at the rear of the procession.

Madam President, I ask the Senate to join me in congratulating Sterling, ND, and its residents on their first 125 years and in wishing them well in the future. By honoring Sterling and all other historic small towns of North Dakota, we keep the great pioneering frontier spirit alive for future generations. It is places such as Sterling that have helped shape this country into what it is today, which is why this fine community is deserving of our recognition.●