HONORING THREASA MILLER

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the dedication and tireless service of Threasa Miller. Threasa will be retiring from her position as Executive Director of the PACE Center for girls in Immokalee, Florida on March 7th of this year.

Threasa has served troubled girls in Collier County at the PACE Center for 10 years. The Practical Academic Cultural Education program initially served 20 at-risk girls and has grown to reach over 75 girls each year. More than 500 girls have completed the PACE program in Collier County and have become successful young women in our community.

All who know Threasa know she has a special place in her heart for children. Before joining PACE fulltime, Threasa had a career in social services with the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Juvenile Justice. Her life-long commitment to children has not gone unnoticed. I am very grateful for her contribution to our community and honored to call her my friend.

TRIBUTE TO CAROL P.W. WEATHERINGTON

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Carol P.W. Weatherington on the occasion of her retirement from the Miami-Dade County Public School System (MDCPS) after over 30 years of service and dedication.

Mrs. Weatherington's original ambition was to serve her community in the healthcare field as a nurse. Yet, after she interned as a teacher for the MDCPS she quickly realized that she had a gift in uplifting and building positive relationships with young people in an effort to prepare them for a bright future.

A native Miamian, she grew up in Coconut Grove and attended George Washington Carver Senior High School. After graduating from high school, she decided to break her family's tradition of attending Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University and matriculated to Bethune-Cookman College. She then obtained her master's degree in education from Nova Southeastern University.

She complimented her educational achievements with her involvement in various organizations such as Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, Miami Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, Educational Excellence School Advisory Committee (EESAC), Language Arts Chairperson, Eighth Grade Team Leader/Eighth Grade Activities Advisor, and President of the Miami-Dade Chapter of the Bethune-Cookman University Alumni Association.

She began her career as a Language Arts teacher at Brownsville Middle School. During her 15 years at Brownsville Middle, she witnessed her students' reading level scores soar dramatically. Today, many of her students continue to thank her for teaching them their reading fundamental skills. Following her tenure at Brownsville Middle, she went on to continue teaching at Rockway Middle School where she received numerous accolades, including a nomination for ''Teacher of the Year''. Presently, she is teaching Language Arts and Reading at Charles R. Drew Middle School, and is successfully meeting the challenge of educating the needs of her community's young people.

This public servant has shared over 20 years of marriage bliss with Major Arnie Weatherington, and has one daughter, Argatonia. She has been a diligent and dedicated steward at Greater New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church where she devotes countless hours to the Youth Ministry, as a Sunday school teacher and assisting with other church activities and projects.

It is an honor to have the privilege of knowing this valued educator and leader of the Miami-Dade County community and beyond. I salute Mrs. Carol P.W. Weatherington on behalf of a grateful community that she truly loves and cares for. Now, in retirement, she embarks upon new challenges in life and I am certain her legacy of greatness will only grow and develop as she enters this new phase of life. I wish her every happiness and success.

IN HONOR OF ONE OF AMERICA'S LONGEST MARRIED COUPLES

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I am thrilled to rise today and congratulate an amazing Minnesota couple from White Bear Lake.

Clarence and Mayme Vail, ages 101 and 99, just celebrated their 83rd anniversary, making them perhaps the longest married couple in the Nation.

Sixty years ago their marriage was almost cut tragically short when Clarence became severely ill.

But Mayme made a promise to God that if Clarence recovered she would go to Mass every single day. Sure enough, Clarence got well, and Mayme kept her promise.

Clarence and Mayme's marriage has brought much joy to the world and touched many lives—including six children, 39 grandchildren, 101 great-grandchildren, and 40 great-great grandchildren.

Their amazing relationship is a profound testament to love, faith, and the cherished institution of marriage. Madam Speaker, I ask that this body join me in honoring Clarence and Mayme for what is truly a moving and inspiring achievement.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL ROGERS OF CHARLTON, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure and pride that I rise today to recognize Paul Rogers. Paul is an outstanding asset to the entire community and has spent over 50 years sharing his passion for horticulture with the people of Massachusetts. This weekend, Paul is being honored by the Stockbridge Alumni Association with their prestigious ''S'' Award and this year's annual Central Massachusetts Flower Show Dinner has been named ''A Tribute to Paul Rogers.''

An alumnus of the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at UMASS, Paul Rogers received an associates degree in horticulture. Mr. Rogers took time away from school to serve during the Korean War from 1951 to 1954, when he was stationed in East Africa. Upon returning to the United States, Paul Rogers continued his education and earned a bachelor's degree from Clark University in Worcester.

Following his education, he served as a landscape superintendent at Holy Cross College for 20 years. He began his own greenhouse, Stonehenge Gardens, and served as a horticultural consultant throughout the area. He was nominated as the president of the Worcester Horticultural Society, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the Horticultural Club of Boston and was the only person ever to hold all three of these positions.

Currently, Mr. Rogers can be found in a number of places throughout the State, teaching horticulture and inviting others to share in his passion. For the past three decades he has served as the host of ''Gardener's Calendar'' on WTAG radio and as the garden writer for the Worcester Telegram & Gazette. In addition, he is a lecturer at the Landscape Institute of Harvard at the world renowned Arnold Arboretum. And he is a member of many societies, including the Worcester County Horticultural Society, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, the American Horticultural Society, the Horticultural Club of Boston, Garden Writers Association of America, and a Trustee of Old Sturbridge.

Madam Speaker, I am truly appreciative of the work Paul Rogers has done for the residents of the 3rd Congressional district. For his outstanding service, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring Paul Rogers.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ''ALIPIO COCO CABRERA'' ON HIS 25TH ANNIVERSARY ''ON THE AIR''

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor and enthusiasm that I rise to congratulate Alipio ''Coco'' Cabrera in celebration of his 25th anniversary as a radio host and personality. He along with the Univision Radio family will be celebrating this very momentous and joyous occasion with a concert held on February 17th, 2008 at the United Palace Theatre in my district.

''Coco,'' as he is referred to by his fans, has a very rich history that has given him longevity in the radio industry for the past 25 years. His career began in the Dominican Republic as a journalist and writer, for the well known newspaper ''El Nacional.'' Looking for better opportunities, in 1978 he decides to embark on a journey to New York City. As many immigrants

that come to our shores, Alipio had to earn a living by working tough jobs such as a cab driver, tailor, and factory worker.

In 1980, after he was able to enter New York City's rigid media field, his dreams finally became a reality. He was able to demonstrate his talent to popular radio stations such as: WBNX, WSKQ and WKDM where for the first time, he gained the highest ratings for an AM Radio Station during 1984 to 1988. Shortly after, the largest Hispanic radio group in the country, Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation (HBC) gains interest in Coco's talents and hires him to work in various projects and popular radio shows in prime time.

Coco is very well respected by those in the radio industry and also by the thousands of fans that listen to him on a weekly basis. He is a regular guest in Univision Spanish Language Television shows such as: ''Despierta America,'' ''Al Despertar,'' and ''Don Francisco Presenta.''

Alipio Cabrera has received various important awards and recognitions nationally and internationally. After conquering the radio and television industries, Mr. Cabrera decided to journal his triumphs in an autobiography titled ''Abriendo el Coco'' (Opening the Coconut) which narrates his struggles and desire to better himself as a professional and as a human being.

His greatest achievement has been his involvement with many charitable organizations. He was instrumental in the relief effort to assist those affected by hurricane George. Again faced with another tragedy, Coco again became involved in the relief efforts for the affected areas of Hurricane Noel and Olga in the Dominican Republic and the many victims of the earthquake in Peru. Alipio is a faithful supporter of St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in honoring and congratulating Alipio Coco Cabrera on his historic 25th Anniversary. His dedication, commitment, and joyous spirit is worthy of the highest commendation. As New York's favorite Latin radio personalities, just a mere mention of his name brings a smile to all.

CONGRATULATIONS ON SPECIALIST BYERS RECEIVING THE ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, at this time, I would like to recognize one of my distinguished constituents, SPC Russell W. Byers, who has recently been honored with the Army Commendation Medal from the Department of the Army.

SPC Russell W. Byers is attached to the Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion of the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment. He was awarded this citation by the Secretary of the Army for ''Meritorious service during combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.'' The award further commends Specialist Byers, stating ''Your Tactical and technical proficiency, hard work and mission dedication have greatly contributed to the overall mission success of the task force. Your actions reflect great credit upon you, Task Force Panther and the United States Army.''

This is Specialist Byers' first commendation, and was presented to him after a one year tour in Iraq. Duties he performed to receive this high honor include being an expert on the Command Post of the Future (CPOF) computer system, where he gathered, analyzed and developed vital intelligence for the Task Force. In addition, he gathered intelligence from HUMINT, prepared summarized reports and organized data, maintaining a complex database that captured all the significant enemy activity within the Task Force's combat zone.

In the recommendation letter for this medal, Specialist Byers' superior officer wrote, ''SPC Byers' ability to multi-task and present information in a clear and consistent manner is of the highest military standards. He is extremely diligent and competent in accomplishing all assigned tasks with little or no supervision, while producing dynamic results. SPC Byers leads the way with a 'can do' attitude and an outstanding drive to go the distance, even when it requires him to go above and beyond his assigned scope of duties and responsibilities. He is well ahead of his peers in military bearing and fortitude.''

I am well aware that there are thousands upon thousands of soldiers, airmen, Marines and sailors that earn prestigious citations such as this, but I am excited that a proud son from West Texas is among them.

Congratulations SPC Russell W. Byers; you have served your country with distinction. I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of a grateful Nation, and especially your neighbors in the 19th Congressional District. We all sleep well every night, knowing dedicated people like you are defending all we hold dear.

DR. JAMES REDD

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition for Athletic Director, Dr. James C. Redd. On February 10, 2008, Dr. Redd was enshrined into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame.

Jim excelled as a student athlete throughout high school and college, thereby earning First Team Defensive Lineman and Second Team Offensive Tackle awards at Northwest Missouri State University. After graduating with a double major in Physical Education and Social Science, Jim returned to the sidelines, this time as a graduate assistant at the University of Colorado-Boulder. Before returning to his alma mater as head coach of the Bearcats in 1976, Jim earned a master's degree in Physical Education and School Administration. Within three years he was selected as the MIAA Coach of the Year.

In 1986, Jim decided to take a sabbatical from a 17-year coaching career and return to school, this time completing his doctorate in education from Oklahoma State University-Stillwater.

Upon graduation, Dr. Redd returned to Northwest Missouri State to coordinate the graduate program in Health and Physical Education, and eventually to serve as Director of Athletics for Northwest. In 2001, Dr. Redd retired from Northwest State University. However, by May 2002 he was appointed Director of Athletics and Physical Education Chair at William Jewel College in Liberty, Missouri, a position he still holds.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Dr. Jim Redd, as he will be forever remembered for his athletic and educational achievements as a member of the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame.

REMEMBERING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY TRAGEDY

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 25, 2008

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 16th anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy, when on February 25–26, 1992, the town of Khojaly in the Nagorno Karabagh region of Azerbaijan was brutally attacked by Armenian forces. The town of Khojaly, which was home to 7,000 people, was completely destroyed; a total of 613 people were killed, of which 106 were women and 83 were children, and 56 of whom are purported to have been killed with extreme cruelty and torture. Additionally, 1275 were taken hostage, 150 went missing; 487 people became disabled (76 of whom are teenagers); 8 families were wiped out; 25 children lost both of their parents, and 130 children lost one of their parents.

The Khojaly massacre was not an isolated incident. In fact, the level of brutality and the atrocities committed at Khojaly set a pattern of destruction that Armenian troops would adhere to for the remainder of the Nagorno-Karabakh War.

No one has been prosecuted for the crimes committed in Khojaly and, unfortunately, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict still remains.

On January 21, 2008, Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov noted in the Wall Street Journal that it has been almost 14 years since the Armenia-Azerbaijan war ended in a Russian-mediated ceasefire, but Armenian troops remain on Azerbaijan's territory.

Minister Mammadyarov opined: ''The so-called Minsk process, an OSCE-led effort to find a peaceful, negotiated settlement to this conflict, has been helpful in providing the framework for dialogue between Azerbaijan and Armenia. It also gives an international dimension to this conflict. But we need to urgently conclude this process. Maintaining the status quo is just too costly.''

Foreign Minister Mammadyarov contends that diplomacy is Azerbaijan's preferred solution. The resolution of this issue would not only improve bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, it could also improve Armenia's relationship with Turkey.

The resolution of the conflict would ensure regional security and economic growth. As Azerbaijan looks forward, it is also important to look back. While not forgetting the past, Azerbaijan is ready to resolve the conflict and move into the future.