

A STATEMENT HONORING THE
TUSKEGEE AIRMEN**HON. DAVID SCOTT**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2008

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor one of America's most courageous groups of men who fought during World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen. These brave African American men refused to let discrimination topple their dreams as they fought to defend America during World War II and protect our freedom. They are nationally known for being the first group of black military airmen at a time when people believed all blacks lacked intelligence, skill, courage, and patriotism.

It was not until 1941 when the Tuskegee Airmen were given an opportunity to learn about aviation at Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama, founded by Booker T. Washington. There is no greater story of freedom and American democracy than that of the Tuskegee Airmen, who with bravery and courage fought for the freedom of this country and the world, while at home African Americans were second-class citizens.

Coming out of the Tuskegee Institute as some of the best and brightest of their programs, they went on to fight against all odds. These men were a vital part of the battles against the Luftwaffe in Austria, Hungary, Poland, and Germany. They flew more than 15,000 sorties, escorted bombers in raids against enemies over Europe and North Africa, and destroyed enemy targets and supply lines in Germany. Their efforts and successes in the Air Force directly influenced President Truman's decision to desegregate the U.S. military. Due to their patriotism and valor in World War II, on March 27, 2007, they received one of the highest honors in the United States, the Congressional Gold Medal.

So when anyone talks about the Tuskegee Airmen, it is more than just their flying. It is their extraordinary stand for courage in the face of difficulty. This month I salute the Tuskegee Airmen.

TRIBUTE TO JACK B. WEIL

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2008

Ms. DeGETTE. Madam Speaker. I rise to honor the extraordinary life of Jack B. Weil. This exceptional citizen merits both our recognition and esteem as his impressive record of civic leadership and invaluable service has improved the lives of many Coloradans.

Sadly, Jack Weil was taken from us by esophageal cancer and he will be greatly

missed. His passion for art, politics, business and his capacity for community service were immeasurable. He molded a life of genuine accomplishment and his passing is a great loss to our entire community.

Jack Weil was born November 13, 1928 at Denver's Mercy Hospital. He attended the University of Colorado and ultimately graduated from Tulane University in 1952. He joined the United States Army and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. After two years of service, he returned to Denver to join the family business, Rockmount Ranch Wear Manufacturing Company, a company founded by his father, the indomitable Jack A. Weil. Jack Weil was a businessman and a gifted artist whose vision and talent for textile designs helped expand the reach of the company beyond the Mississippi River. He created some of Rockmount's most iconic designs, including the shirt John Travolta wore in the movie "Urban Cowboy." Rockmount shirts have been worn by Bob Dylan, President Reagan, Elvis Presley and Robert Redford, among others. Jack Weil was a major force at Rockmount for fifty years and it has grown from one of the original early mercantile businesses in lower downtown Denver to an international company with clothing sold throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia and Australia.

Jack Weil was also a well-known abstract impressionist painter and his son, Steven Weil, noted that "There was nothing straight and narrow about him." He developed his own abstract style and he loved to share the art he created as well as the art he bought. In the 1960's, the Denver Art Museum hung one of Jack Weil's forward looking collages and his most recent exhibition was a twenty-canvas show at the Berkeley Park Art Gallery in north-west Denver last December.

Jack Weil was extremely active in politics and in the community. He was a party leader and held various posts in the Republican Central Committee and was a past secretary of the Colorado Republican Party. But Steven Weil noted that he "could not be cast into the mold of a classic conservative" as he served on the board of Colorado Republicans for Choice. In addition to being a leader in Western wear and equipment industry associations, Jack Weil was also very involved in education serving in various roles, including chair, of the Community College of Denver Foundation. Historic preservation was also an abiding interest and he served on the planning commissions for the Humboldt Island Historic District and Cheeseman Park. He also served on the board of the First Universalist Church and the membership committee of the Denver Athletic Club. In 2002, Jack Weil was the recipient of Tulane University's Alumni Recognition Award.

Please join me in paying tribute to Jack B. Weil, a distinguished citizen. His leadership has been exemplary and his contributions are rich in consequence. On behalf of the citizens of the 1st Congressional District, I wish to express our admiration and gratitude for the life of Jack Weil. Our thoughts are with Jack Weil

Sr., Steven Weil, Jane Romberg, Judy Oksner and his three grandchildren.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT
WALTER DEACON**HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2008

Mr. McCOTTER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Robert Walter Deacon, a beloved coach and community leader, and mourn him upon his passing at age 78.

Robert Deacon was born in Brooklyn, NY, on May, 30 1929. An accomplished athlete, Robert earned nine varsity letters in high school before attending Georgetown University and playing quarterback for their football team. When Georgetown discontinued their football program in 1953, Robert transferred to the University of Vermont where he played football and baseball, eventually earning a place in the school's Sports Hall of Fame for football.

After school, Robert dedicated his life to teaching children the values he cherished including hard work, sportsmanship, and fair play. Mr. Deacon served as a city parks and recreation commissioner and became a fixture of the Livonia baseball fields and basketball courts for decades, where he often found time to heckle opposing players, like me. Robert coached his five sons in little league baseball and basketball from the 1960s through the 1980s. While very competitive, as a coach, Robert always made sure to stress sportsmanship among his players and helped them learn from their mistakes. Following his retirement Robert worked as a field manager for many years on Livonia's Ford Field baseball diamonds and on basketball courts at George N. Bentley High School and then the community recreation center.

Regrettably on February 13, 2008, after a battle with lung cancer, Robert passed away. He will be remembered as a kind supportive man who was devoted to his family, especially his grandchildren. To his wife, Marjorie; his children Bob (Julie), Bill (Christine), Tom (Patricia), Tim (Caroline), and Kevin (Sue); his grandchildren David, Michelle, Andy (Christine), Jimmy, Peter, Hannah, Jackie, Mitchell, Matt, Caileigh, Rachel, Laura, and Charlie; his sisters Dorothy MacNaughton and Eileen Hartke; and to everyone who knew and loved him, he was a dedicated member of his community who will be truly missed.

Madam Speaker, during his lifetime, Robert Walter Deacon enriched the lives of everyone around him by serving as an exemplary role model and teacher. As we bid farewell to this extraordinary individual, I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning his passing and honoring his years of loyal service to our community and country.