

and into the next morning to make their way to the survivors.

A February 20th editorial in the Beckley, WV, Register-Herald newspaper titled, "Our Nature," perhaps tells this story best:

When a crisis strikes, West Virginia responds. Time and time again. We've seen it this winter during all the snowstorms that have paralyzed different regions of the state. We've seen it during all the major floods. We've seen it in the aftermath of major accidents. We've seen it beyond our borders, like helping with the relief effort following Hurricane Katrina, like battling western forest fires.

West Virginians are ready to help in a moment's notice, often without being asked. Paid responders. Volunteer responders. Neighbors. Even those who may not be physically able to provide aid will show up with food, drink and supplies for those who are.

And now we've seen it again with what are being described as "heroic" efforts on the part of many who rescued 17 military personnel aboard a Virginia-based Navy helicopter that crashed during a training exercise Thursday on a rugged, snow-covered mountain on the Pocahontas-Randolph county line.

"I'd like to thank the West Virginia National Guard and the local responders for their heroic work," Navy Capt. Steve Schreiber said. "Their efforts were extraordinary and took place under the most difficult of situations. The rescuers had to traverse more than three miles from the nearest road through heavily wooded and mountainous terrain to reach the crash site."

"A special thanks to the Snowshoe Mountain Ski Resort for providing Snowcats that enabled first responders to reach the site."

The West Virginia National Guard and first responders around the state have a way of turning the extraordinary into the ordinary. In other words, we've seen it enough times to still marvel but not be surprised by what they do, even as they take rescue efforts to another level.

And this one reached another level, literally and figuratively. "... we've never had anything quite this big," said Shannon Boehmer, chief of the Shavers Fork Volunteer Fire Department.

After rescuers went as far as they could with special equipment along a railroad grade, Boehmer said, "it was still about a 45-minute hike in five feet of snow, straight up the side of a mountain. . . . It was probably a 50-degree pitch or so. The guys described it as like climbing a 'snow ladder.'"

Have you ever tried to walk in 5 feet of snow? Even on flat ground, just a few steps can wear you out.

Sometimes we may not realize what we have here in West Virginia. We have the finest National Guard unit in the country, first responders to match and a general willingness by everyone to help.

One thing is for sure: The US. Navy now knows.

And, now Madam Speaker, as I share this with our colleagues, the world now knows the courage, ability, incredible determination, and willingness to lend a neighborly hand of West Virginians—from those who serve in and lead our West Virginia National Guard, to our local fire, rescue and first responder units, and the countless volunteers, families and neighbors nearby.

MELANIE SHOUSE

HON. RUSS CARNAHAN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincere condolences to the family and friends of an individual I was just beginning to get to know last year during the height of the intense debate over health insurance reform—Melanie Shouse. It is with sadness that I inform you that we have lost Melanie earlier this month entirely too soon.

Melanie was diagnosed with breast cancer years ago and was unable to afford a doctor. After being diagnosed she became one of the St. Louis area's strongest advocates for health care reform, but sadly wasn't able to see her hard work come to fruition.

Last year, she was kind enough to share her story with those for and against health insurance reform at one of my town hall meetings. Melanie handled herself with great poise and distinction as she had throughout her time advocating for reform and I could not thank her enough. She so successfully made the case for reform. Despite our loss, she continues to give us hope that health insurance reform can become a reality.

My thoughts are with Melanie's partner Steve, her parents, sisters and grandmother. Melanie served as an inspiration for so many and will be sorely missed.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICE OF ROBERT BOWMAN

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and public service of Mr. Robert F. Bowman, a life-long farmer and agricultural leader, well known throughout the San Joaquin Valley, California and the nation.

Robert served in the U.S. Army as a second lieutenant, stationed in Okinawa, Japan during WWII. He later graduated from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo in 1950 with a B.S. in Animal Sciences.

From very meager beginnings, at age 15, Robert and his parents formed a farming partnership that would grow from Kern to Tulare County. With a legacy that began in the depths of the Great Depression, Robert ran a successful farming operation for nearly 70 years.

While Robert's impact on the agricultural industry is immeasurable, perhaps his greatest contribution was to the student-leadership organization, Future Farmers of America, FFA, where he was elected as the first national president from California in 1941. His dedication to vocational agriculture was exemplified by his continual support of the organization through his help in establishing the first California FFA center in 2005 in Galt, California.

First and foremost, Robert was a husband and father; patriarch to a family devoted to serving the agricultural industry. He believed in family and education and was known to tell people; "that his six girls were his greatest in-

vestments". Today, Robert's wife Gloria Bowman, his six daughters, sixteen grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren, continue to live out his legacy.

Robert Bowman was someone whom I knew personally. I valued his judgment and guidance. At heart, he was always a farmer, with an undeniable belief in the agricultural industry, inspiring all those who knew him. Robert's impact will not end today. His life's values, devotion to the agricultural industry, and commitment to education will live on through his family, friends, and community.

IN HONOR OF MRS. MINNIE L. JONES

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mrs. Minnie L. Jones in celebration of her 90th birthday.

Mrs. Jones has been blessed over her lifetime with faith, family and friends. She is known for her positive outlook and for seeing the good in others. She lives every day with a grateful heart and warm smile.

Mrs. Jones' abiding faith continues to be a source of strength and joy. She is a life-long member of and missionary with the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Cleveland, Ohio, where she volunteers her time. Aside from her time at the church, Mrs. Jones' greatest joy in life is spending time with her family and friends. She remains close with her grown children—Billy, Patricia, Mabel, Kenneth, Stafford, Sandra, Larry and Cindy. She is also a doting grandmother and great-grandmother. Mrs. Jones loves to cook and share memorable holiday and Sunday meals with family and friends, and welcomes everyone with hospitality and friendship.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor of Mrs. Minnie L. Jones upon the joyous occasion of her 90th birthday. Her love of family, love of life, service to others and youthful spirit have all served as an inspirational example for all of us to follow. I wish Mrs. Jones abundance of peace, health and happiness today, and throughout the years to come.

HONORING BILLY DILWORTH FOR HIS FIFTY YEAR CAREER IN BROADCASTING AND JOURNALISM

HON. PAUL C. BROWN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Billy Dilworth, a legend in Georgia broadcasting, and an award winning journalist who is known by thousands in northeast Georgia for his newspaper articles as well as his television and radio shows.

Just after graduating from the University of Georgia, his career got off to a great start. His first interview was with a rising star in the music world named Elvis. His second interview was with a well-known politician, Harry

Truman. In fact, during his time as a journalist and radio personality, Billy would interview five presidents and several country music stars. But most importantly, he always made time for folks in the community.

Over the past twenty years, Billy has hosted "The Billy Dilworth Show" on WNEG-TV. During the show, he and co-host Michelle Austin have entertained viewers with their great humor, music selections, and updates from political, civic, and religious leaders. One of their regular segments that I can certainly relate to was named "Doctor's House Calls" and allowed live call-in questions.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this Georgia legend. Though he is stepping away from the limelight, he can never be replaced. I, along with the rest of his viewers, will miss him. His talent and work will not be forgotten.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I regret that yesterday a prior engagement prevented my timely return to Washington. I was, therefore, unable to cast a vote on a number of roll-call votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on H.R. 4425, designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2-116th Street in North Troy, New York, as the "Martin G. 'Marty' Mahar Post Office." I also would have voted "yes" on H.R. 4238, designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 930 39th Avenue in Greeley, Colorado, as the "W.D. Farr Post Office Building."

TRIBUTE TO VERNON HUNTER

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an American hero. Vernon Hunter was an unsung hero who was thrust into the national spotlight when his life was tragically cut short last week in the senseless attack on his office in Austin, Texas.

Mr. Hunter was a model citizen who spent his life in the service of his country. He served in the Army for 22 years, including two combat tours in Vietnam. After his service ended, Mr. Hunter spent several years in the private sector before starting work at the IRS where he was employed for 27 years.

Friends and family indicate that Mr. Hunter was a loving father and husband who remained fiercely committed to public service and those around him for all his days. They report that Mr. Hunter was considering retiring from the IRS to start a new career as a special education teacher.

Mr. Hunter was born and raised in Orangeburg, South Carolina, a city I am proud to represent. He grew up there and graduated from Wilkinson High School in 1959.

He is survived by his wife Valerie and their six children. The citizens of South Carolina,

Texas and Americans everywhere mourn his tragic loss.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in expressing our sincere condolences to Vernon Hunter's family and to recognize his heroic contributions to his country. Mr. Hunter represents the unsung American heroes who dedicate themselves every day to serving their country and their fellow men and women. We owe them all a debt of gratitude.

RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 22, 2010

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1046, "Recognizing the significance of Black History Month" and for other purposes, introduced by my distinguished colleague from Texas, Representative GREEN. "Black History Month," recognizes, reflects, and honors the many contributions, achievements and works of African-Americans who have influenced American history through their selflessness and sacrifices. The origins of "Black History Month" derived from Negro History Week, in efforts to enhance the knowledge of Black history started through the Journal of Negro History, published by Dr. Carter G. Woodson's Association for the Study of African-American Life and History. The birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist Frederick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week.

Negro History Week is the precursor to Black History Month, and the month of February has been celebrated as Black History Month since 1926 when a special period of time was set aside to recognize and celebrate the heritage and achievements of African-Americans. Whereas the first African-Americans were brought involuntarily to the shores of the America as early as the 17th century and despite being held in slavery, African-Americans in all walks of life have made significant contributions throughout the history of the United States. Significant contributions made by African-Americans include the—

(1) Writings of Booker T. Washington, Phyllis Wheatley, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, Ralph Ellison, Zora Neale Hurston, and Alex Haley;

(2) Music of Mahalia Jackson, Billie Holiday, John Coltrane, Bessie Smith, and Duke Ellington;

(3) Resolve of athletes such as Jackie Robinson, Althea Gibson, Jesse Owens, Wilma Rudolph, and Muhammad Ali;

(4) Scientific advancements of George Washington Carver, Charles Drew, Benjamin Banneker, and Mae Jemison;

(5) Vision of leaders such as Frederick Douglass, Mary McLeod Bethune, Thurgood Marshall, Martin Luther King, and Shirley Chisholm; and

(6) Bravery of those who stood on the front lines in the battle against oppression, such as Sojourner Truth, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Rosa Parks.

In the face of injustices, United States citizens of good will and of all races distinguished

themselves with their commitment to the noble ideals upon which the United States was founded and courageously fought for the rights and freedom of African-Americans, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. lived and died to make real these noble ideas. He is most known for his "I Have A Dream" speech.

The Honorable Barack Hussein Obama was elected the 44th President of the United States, making him the first African-American Chief Executive. President Obama's election to the U.S. Presidency broke one of the last racial barriers in politics in this country. President Obama has inspired hopes in the lives of many Americans across the country and to people across the globe.

Black History Month is an important time that we recognize the contributions of African-Americans in the Nation's history and encourages the continued celebration of February to provide an opportunity for all peoples of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have helped shape the Nation.

HONORING REVEREND RANDOLPH BRACY, JR.'S SERVICE TO THE FLORIDA COMMUNITY

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Mr. GRAYSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Reverend Randolph Bracy, Jr. for his dedicated service to his church, our central Florida community, and our great State of Florida. Born on November 4, 1944, Reverend Bracy, Jr. is a native of Jacksonville, Florida and has since given a great deal back to our community.

Reverend Bracy, Jr. graduated from Bethune-Cookman College, Daytona Beach, Florida in 1967 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology. In 1970, he pursued graduate studies in Guidance and Counseling, and graduated from Florida A&M University with a Master's of Education Degree. Later in 1974, he earned the Doctor of Education Degree from the University of Florida in Higher Education Administration. In 1982, he received the Master of Divinity Degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, New York. In 1999, he earned a certificate at the Center for the Study of Values in Public Life at the Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts with the Summer Leadership Institute. In 2004, he presented a paper at the Oxford Round Table on Religion, Education and the Role of Government at the University of Oxford in England. Reverend Bracy's educational accomplishments are only surpassed by his commitment and work in the community.

In 1991, he joined the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church of Orlando, Florida. In August 1992, he and his wife, Dr. LaVon Wright Bracy, led the organization of the New Covenant Baptist Church of Orlando. The New Covenant Church has grown to a membership of more than 2,000. The New Covenant Church has created a charter school to educate and mentor hundreds of youth. They have created a community development corporation that has rehabbed neighborhoods, created safe havens for after-school and community activities, and provided financial and housing counseling.