

RECOGNIZING AMY DAVIS AS THE HURLBURT AFA CHAPTER 398 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 25, 2010*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Amy Davis upon receiving the Hurlburt Air Force Association Chapter 398's Elementary School Teacher of the Year Award for 2010. Ms. Davis' students have truly benefited from her inventive lessons and the passion she exudes for her profession. I am honored to acknowledge her contributions today.

Amy teaches third grade at Kenwood Elementary School in Okaloosa County, Florida. In her six years of teaching she has enthusiastically pursued opportunities to develop lessons that motivate student learning. For instance, Amy was inspired to introduce aviation sciences into her classroom after attending a Teacher Workshop hosted by the Hurlburt Air Force Association. Amy thoughtfully incorporated flight charts into her lessons in order to teach her students how to measure distances and angles. Likewise, Amy enhances her lessons with space-related material inspired by a Space Camp for Teachers she attended in Huntsville, Alabama. Her method of combining tangible materials and advanced concepts in every lesson has greatly promoted student success. Amy has recently received her certification as a Gifted Instructor and is working toward her National Board Certification, with which I wish her the best of luck.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I proudly recognize Amy Davis as the Hurlburt AFA Chapter 398 Elementary School Teacher of the Year. Her passion for learning truly makes her a great asset to her students and colleagues. Vicki and I wish Amy and her family all the best for the future.

**ENERGY JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT**

SPEECH OF

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 22, 2010*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of our brave men and women in the Armed Forces who are returning to our nation in increased numbers to find that their prospects are limited because they have chosen to fight for our security and safety. I would also like to commend the Honorable BOB FILNER in the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for his commitment to recognizing the importance of our veterans' military sacrifices and patriotism.

It is our duty as a nation and government to protect those who have so valiantly fought for our freedoms. Our objectives should be to ensure that they are included in the process of growing our economy in the most vital way possible: procuring employment. Not only should we fight for their inclusion but also provide them tools they need to compete in the job market, whether it be psychological counseling for the traumas they experience while in

combat or job training to bolster the unique skill sets they have acquired during their time in the service.

The House Veterans' Affairs Committee has embarked on the process of increasing the employment prospects for our veterans through the National Guard Employment Protection Act of 2009 and H.R. 4592, which funds the establishment of a pilot program encouraging veteran employment in energy-related positions. Not only do these pieces of legislation affect veterans but also their families and those that depend on them. The cost of living in this country is on the rise, and important pieces of legislation like the Veterans' Compensation Cost of Living Adjustment Act of 2010 would make sure veterans' compensation keeps apace. Our veterans are men and women who have chosen to give up their lives, jobs and seeing their families for the sake of serving and defending our nation. It is unseemly that when they return they face unemployment.

The fact that unemployment is currently at an all-time high has not been lost to our veterans returning home. Instead of being welcomed with open arms by this country, they are faced with the double fear of not finding employment while worrying about how to keep their homes and pay their mortgages. The Veterans' Affairs Committee has sought to remedy this situation by introducing the Helping Heroes Keep their Homes Act of 2009, which aims to stem the tide of veterans losing their homes, and worse, ending up homeless.

At any given time, our nation is faced with 107,000 homeless veterans. While this number is considerably lower than it was a few years ago, any one homeless veteran is one too many. It is a disservice to our veterans for us not to assist them in acquiring permanent homes. The End Veteran Homelessness Act of 2010 seeks to rectify this important issue by increasing the funding available for helping our homeless veterans. I believe that the passage of this legislation would substantially improve the plight of our homeless veterans and potentially place them on the track to having a place to call home. Our veterans deserve the most from us and I am committed to working with Congress to get the job done.

**HONORING LOIS JONES**

**HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 25, 2010*

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable woman who has dedicated her life to public service and political activism, Ms. Lois Jones.

Educated in Kingston, Jamaica, Ms. Jones then made California her home, serving 23 years in the California Legislature. During her tenure, she was a liaison to the African American Community and played an active role in exposing high school and college students to the legislative process through internships. Years later she moved to Florida where she has been involved in a number of issues ranging from small business development to public relations and international trade. She is very active in our community, always engaging with minority groups, religious groups and civic

leaders, and working to help advance their priorities.

For nine years, Ms. Jones served as Jamaican Honorary Consul in California. She was appointed by the Prime Minister of Jamaica and worked on several issues including international trade. Ms. Jones is also a featured writer, frequenting opinion pages in newspapers across the country and expressing her views on community empowerment and public policy issues.

Currently Ms. Jones serves as a member of the City of Homestead Charter Review Committee and is involved in various community organizations including the City of Homestead Education Committee, the City of Homestead Mayor's Youth Council, the State Partnership for School Safety & Security, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, and the Association of Women Business Owners, to name a few.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, I ask you to join me in congratulating Ms. Lois Jones for her invaluable contributions, dedication to and leadership in our community.

ON THE PASSING OF SAM HAMILTON, 15TH DIRECTOR OF THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

**HON. JOHN D. DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 25, 2010*

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Sam Hamilton, the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, who we lost on February 20, 2010. Sam's work was that of a champion—the guardians of our environment are the stewards of what we leave to our descendants and they deserve unending praise. I never knew or needed to ask if Sam was a Democrat, Republican, or Independent because he worked with everyone and was a biologist first. If I can try to sum up his character, I will have to quote the man himself when he said:

My greatest challenge is to help bring conservationists, hunters, anglers, landowners, state and federal agencies, and business people together to help us conserve and enhance what makes America great—our treasured wildlife resources.

His work for conservation and collaboration was driven by sound science, and his affection for the environment was unrivaled. Sam Hamilton devoted his career and over 30 years of his life to service within the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. In fact, Sam's first involvement with the agency came when he was 15 years old as a member of the Youth Conservation Corps in Mississippi. Near Starkville, Mississippi, where he grew up, Sam learned the importance of managing a wildlife habitat while banding wood ducks and Canadian geese to build waterfowl pens.

In 1991, Sam became the first Fish and Wildlife Service State Administrator in Austin, Texas. While there, Sam held strong in his commitment to protect the golden-cheeked warbler from further endangerment. Years later, Sam went on to work on the restoration of the coastal wetlands and wildlife habitats along the Gulf Coast after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Sam was nominated in June 2009

by President Obama to be the 15th director of the Service. Three months later, as he was being sworn in, he reaffirmed his commitment to addressing the threat of climate change, habitat fragmentation, invasive species, limited water supplies, and the illicit trade of wildlife. Perhaps he put it best when he said, "as wild-life goes, so goes the nation."

Sam Hamilton was loved by all conservationists. He leaves behind his wife, Becky; two sons, Sam, Jr. and Clay; and grandson Davis. I am proud to have known Sam D. Hamilton, and to be able to help carry on his vision here in Congress. I ask my colleagues to stand and join me in celebrating his achievements and remembering his legacy as a person who embodied the very best of the American spirit.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF  
COMMISSIONER DUPONT L. DAVIS

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 2010

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of DuPont L. Davis who served the people of Hertford County, North Carolina for many years as County Commissioner and civic leader. Well known for his passion, deep caring and unapologetically speaking his mind, DuPont Davis helped make a difference in the lives of countless citizens.

Commissioner Davis was first elected to the Hertford County Board of Commissioners in November of 1988. Since that time he has often served as Chairman of the Board, been recognized as North Carolina Commissioner of the Year and served as President of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Davis was a person of faith. He was an active member of Zion Grove Missionary Baptist Church of Aulander, North Carolina. He was also a member of Jerusalem Lodge No. 96 of Prince Hall Masons, Ahoskie, North Carolina and was past Master of the Lodge.

Commissioner Davis was my dear friend of many years and I am saddened by his loss. Without question, he was a devoted public servant with an unsurpassed drive and passion to improve the lives of people in his community. He was an irreplaceable asset to Hertford County and to the state of North Carolina.

Commissioner Davis is survived by his wife Earline Powell Davis, and sons Derrick Davis and Dexter Davis, and daughters, Donica Davis Thompson and Dedria Davis King.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing remorse at the passing of one of North Carolina's finest public servants, a man who was one of the State's most admired and respected elected officials. His passion, perseverance and dedication should serve as an inspiration to us all.

AMISTAD SAILS TO HAVANA  
HARBOR

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 2010

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today is a proud day for the Mystic Seaport Museum and the city of New London, as our freedom schooner *Amistad* prepares to sail into Havana Harbor as a floating goodwill ambassador. The *Amistad*'s visit to Cuba culminates its current Caribbean Heritage Tour to help commemorate the United Nations-designated date of March 25 as a Day of Remembrance for the victims of the Atlantic slave trade.

The 19th century *Amistad* Incident ultimately led to a profoundly important U.S. Supreme Court decision that arguably turned the tide against slavery itself. The ship serves as a global icon of racial tolerance and a platform for serious examination of shared history across Africa, Europe, the Caribbean and the United States. Today, the world is watching as the *Amistad* sails into Havana Harbor to set new milestones for diplomacy and remembrance. Today, from New London to the Caribbean, we honor our common heritage and wish the *Amistad* fair winds and following seas.

The following is a story from the New London Day:

AMISTAD IS SAILING BACK TO WHERE ITS  
STORY BEGAN

(By Ted Mann Day)

HAVANA.—Over a breakfast of melon, eggs and thick, dark Cuban coffee, Quentin Snediker, Maureen Hennessy and William Pinkney seem barely able to stand the wait for the coasting schooner *Amistad* and its crew to arrive in Cuba.

It is a wait older than the ship itself, says Snediker, who was the project coordinator of the design and construction of the *Amistad* for Mystic Seaport.

"To complete the story, we always felt the vessel had to return here," he said on Sunday morning, as he and Pinkney, who was the first in command of the ship when it launched nearly 10 years ago, prepared for a press conference at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes to announce the *Amistad*'s impending historic visit to Cuba.

"Here" means Havana, the Cuban capital and trading center, where the African captives who would make the *Amistad* famous were auctioned illegally in 1839 as slaves in violation of the Spanish and English treaties banning the international slave trade, and bound for the eastern agricultural districts that made Cuba a power in the sugar and coffee trade.

Brought to Havana on a slave ship after being taken captive in Sierra Leone, the 53 men and boys were transferred to the *Amistad*, a modest vessel that transported goods and freight along the Cuban coastline.

In an ornate, wood-paneled room at the Museo Nacional, Cuban historian Miguel Barnet, Pinkney and Snediker took turns reviewing the subsequent twists of the *Amistad* story for a crowd of about 45 journalists from the Cuban national press, American TV networks and the BBC.

Despite the 1807 passage of the Wilberforce Act—whose anniversary, now the United Nations' international day of commemoration for victims of the slave trade, the *Amistad* will mark with its formal arrival in Havana on Thursday—Cuba's booming sugar and cattle businesses precipitated a dependence on human slavery.

It was a case of "negocios sucios," or "dirty business," Barnet said, but one into which leaders in Cuba and in its colonial patron, Spain, felt driven by necessity. "Both the Spaniards and the Cubans needed fresh hands," he said.

The *Amistad* never reached its destination. The leader of the captives, known as Cinque to his Spanish-speaking handlers, led a revolt that would change not just the history of slavery in Cuba and the Spanish empire, but also in the United States.

Picking the locks of their shackles with a nail, the captives seized the ship and killed most of the crew, including Captain Ramon Ferrer, with machetes. The remaining crew members were ordered to steer the *Amistad* back to Africa—away from the setting sun.

But as those crew members tried to sabotage Cinque and the Africans, the *Amistad* zig-zagged up the east coast of the United States until it was captured off Montauk and towed into the Custom House in New London.

The captives, initially put on trial for the killings, would eventually be freed, after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that since they had been taken from Africa in contravention of international treaties banning the slave trade, they could not be property.

Instead, the court ruled, Cinque and his countrymen were necessarily men, with a right to defend themselves against those who kept them captive.

The *Amistad*'s visit resonates not just with its historical legacy; it is also, Hennessy noted, a rare opportunity for open interchange between the Cuban and U.S. nations, at a time when their respective governments remain at uneasy odds. Hennessy, who, like Snediker, was taking time off from her work at the Mystic Seaport to meet the *Amistad* and its crew as they arrive in Matanzas today, said the group met over the weekend with officials from the Cuban Ministry of Culture.

The ministry plans to broadcast Steven Spielberg's 1997 film "Amistad" on one of the state-run television channels Tuesday night, in an attempt to drum up popular interest in the ship's visit.

As the press conference concluded Saturday morning, journalists descended on the *Amistad* representatives, particularly Pinkney, wanting to know if this combined diplomatic effort of the State Department, United Nations and Cuban officials represented a new thawing in mutual relations.

The visit comes months after the incoming Obama administration relaxed travel restrictions and other facets of the nearly 50-year U.S. embargo of Cuba, but significant tensions still persist. Billboards on the highway into Havana from Jose Marti International Airport depict the mug shots of Cuban prisoners held in the United States—without cause, according to the Cuban government. And U.S. commentators continue to raise questions about the Cuban government's policies, including its economic system and approach to dissidents.

But the *Amistad* represents shared strands of history, said Barnet, the Cuban historian and writer, and the American visitors agreed.

While interviewers continually asked him variations of the question "can this be a step" toward normalization, Pinkney said, this visit transcends the political considerations that have divided the two countries.

"Now they're completing the *Amistad* story by coming into Havana, where it all started," he said. "Here, we have nothing to express but the solidarity of humankind."