

served as a clinical supervisor at Mercy Hospital in Brownsville, Texas until 1973. She then went on to serve as a staff nurse for another year until she went off to Incarnate Word College in San Antonio, Texas to receive a second degree in Bachelor of Science in Nursing. It was in that same year that she became the Director of In-service Education at Mercy Hospital in Laredo, Texas. In 1978 Sister Maria Luisa Vera was made Emergency Department Supervisor and served in that position for three years. She later became certified in Ministry Training Services, focusing on leadership programs in Denver, Colorado in 1981. Thereafter, she would spend the next four years serving as Pastoral Assistant at the San Martin de Porres Parish in Laredo, Texas. It was there that she had the opportunity to understand church from the “people in the pews”. During these years she was also able to serve as a member in other ministry centers such as the St. Louis Province Advisory Board and St. John’s Regional Health Center.

For the next two decades, Sister Maria Luisa Vera would come to serve, and actively continues to serve, on many different boards of trustees, committees, commissions and networks alike. Included, are the presidencies of Sisters of Mercy of St. Louis Regional Community and most recently, the Republic of the Rio Grande, trustee of the Mexican American Cultural Center, among many others.

Although “many of [her] transitions have been challenging and most enriching” she continues to serve the community passionately through ministry. Her contributions to Laredo, Texas have demonstrated dedication and devotion to the community. Moreover, as the current President of Mercy Ministries of Laredo, she is committed to help the religious community grow and continue making a difference.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the dedication and contributions of Sister Maria Luisa Vera, and I thank you for this time.

**HONORING SENATOR JOHN BROOKS HENDERSON**

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 26, 2013*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the late Senator John Brooks Henderson, a native of the Sixth Congressional District town of Louisiana and co-author of the Thirteenth Amendment, on this 100th anniversary of his death.

Sen. Henderson was a quintessential pioneer man. Having moved with his family from Virginia to Missouri, he studied law while working as a farm hand and gained admittance to the Missouri Bar at the age of 18. He served two terms in the Missouri State House, and was commissioned as a brigadier general of the Missouri State Militia at the onset of the Civil War before being appointed a United States Senator in 1862. There, as a slave-state senator, he co-authored the Thirteenth Amendment, abolishing slavery throughout the United States. Sen. Henderson subsequently made an impact by joining seven other Republican Senators in voting against the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson, supporting women's suffrage, and by prosecuting tax cheats in the Whiskey Ring in St. Louis in 1875.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Senator John Brooks Henderson for his many contributions to the State of Missouri and the United States that ultimately changed the course of history for this nation.

**BILL GRAY TRIBUTE—DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH BILL AND ANDREA GRAY FROM BILL AND CAROL CLAY**

**HON. WM. LACY CLAY**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 26, 2013*

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, Bill Gray was very special to many people. Andrea, you were gracious enough to share Bill's special talents with Carol, me, and indeed many others around the world.

I am sure that thousands had the privilege enjoyed by Carol and me of really getting to know this unique individual and benefited by the association. We have met hundreds of persons whom we are certain they too can relate the kinds of stories that still linger with us about the good times experienced with him. He was not only a remarkable, affable individual but had a gift for touching many lives in a very special way.

We in the Congressional Black Caucus knew or suspected that he was going to be something exceptional by the “attention” he generated before we ever met him. He won the Democratic Primary by an overwhelming margin and had just coasted to victory in the general election when CBC members requested an urgent meeting with Norman Lear, producer of “All In The Family.”

However, our meeting was not to commend him for highlighting the kind of insidious raw, racist views exposed in his portrayal of the Archie Bunkers of America but to prevent him from maligning black members of congress in making fun of one of us. The session was painful because Lear had been a supporter of the CBC from its inception and was a personal friend of several members.

The meeting was to discuss his publicly announced plan of another television weekly. It would caricature an African American as a buffoon who was just elected to congress from Philadelphia. Although each CBC member believed in the right of free expression and free speech, the contentious encounter was necessary because the collateral damage done to the image of the few black members in Congress, would have been devastating.

Lear presented his side and contended that working on the concept started long before Bill Gray's election. But he was not persuasive. It was obvious to us in the Caucus what the negative impact of the show would be when viewed nationally. He shared with us some of the scenes scheduled for showing. They were horrible and certain to be interpreted by a substantially naive white public as factually representative of black elected officials.

After more than a hour of back and forth, it was obvious to Parren Mitchell that nothing was being resolved. He rose and announced in departing that his intention was to organize a nationwide boycott of Mr. Lear's production. The issue was resolved quickly as Norman Lear stated, “I intend to announce upon leaving this session that the show has been cancelled.”

Norman Lear continued to be a supporter of the Caucus and the organization's agenda.

Immediately after Bill was sworn into office, he began displaying the natural leadership abilities that eventually led him to become the first African American elected to leadership positions in the U.S. House of Representatives.

You and Bill became good friends with Carol and me. You guys were the ones that introduced us to the great seafood dining provided by the famous Bookbinder's Restaurant in Philadelphia. It was a great evening and a real learning lesson from you and the master storyteller.

Hey! What about those great parties at your house! You reigned as Queen and little Billy as the Crown Prince-in-Charge of all Operations. Everybody knew who ran that shop and it wasn't some ole big city professional politician.

How about the televised show that Bill and I did with Charlie Rose, to discuss my recently published book “Just Permanent Interests” It documented the history of black members of Congress from 1870 until 1992.

But the after show was the best. Bill and I went to get a drink to celebrate a great T.V. appearance. I ordered a beefeater martini with two olives. Bill told the waiter to cancel my order and bring two bombay sapphire martinis with lemon peels and very dry.

He guaranteed that I would like it. If not, he said that he would let me pay the tab. Bombay sapphire martini became my drink of choice from then on.

Martha's Vineyard in August capped many summers for us. The whole gang from the east coast all the way down to Florida usually showed up. Do you remember that great tennis match between Bill and James (Jim) Brannon? It was a close, hard fought contest that went on and on.

As an aside, Bill Giles was in the stands cheering his favorite player on to victory. At one point it was him shouting, “come on Bill”. The next, it was “Jim, my man, you can do it”. Giles was determined to be on the winning side, no matter whom that might be.

You knew Bill Giles always with a winner.

Speaking of Bill Giles—he was a great guy with hundreds of friends and a heart as big as a 747 airbus. He donated heavily to charitable organizations, and raised more in fundraising events. One of his favorite fundraising events was The Evening of Elegance dinner that through the years raised more than a million dollars for the United Negro College Fund.

Once Bill Gray was invited as featured speaker at the “Evening’s” gala affair held at a prestigious ballroom in Manhattan. Somehow there was a mix up in communication and Gray was not informed that it was a formal affair.

Giles was a stickler for procedure and had never permitted anyone, regardless of his check size to enter without tuxedo and black tie. His stern rule presented a chaotic situation of some embarrassing proportion. However, I happened to have brought an extra formal shirt and black tie. Bill was the same size as I. He wore the shirt and tie under his usual dark blue suit and nobody knew the difference.

Bill Gray gave a fantastic speech. Bill Giles was impressed and showed it as he presented him with a check for \$120,000 for the United Negro College Fund.

Carol and I are still talking about the congressional trip that Bill organized and invited members of the CBC to travel with his CODEL. You and Bill were wonderful, gracious host and hostess. We saw the Mideast in style with that old gang of ours in the Congressional Black Caucus.

The Pyramids in Egypt and the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem had special meaning to us. Who could ask for more history in one region? But there was more—sitting with President Hosni Mubarak at his home in Alexandria and meeting with Prime Minister Menachem Begin in Tel Aviv.

Sailing down the Nile. Shopping in the ancient markets. Meeting with the Knesset. Seeing the Dome of Rock, the 3rd holiest of spot of the Muslim world where Mohammad allegedly ascended into heaven.

The Israelis and Egyptians watching the CODEL led by Bill and you were left in a wonderland. The warring factions paused while going to the Torah and Koran to answer, "What kind of threat is this band of desperadoes raiding our land?" The invading "posse" included such noted rabble-rousers as Charlie and Alma, George and Modean, Bill and Carol, Ed and Gwen, Jehovah and Allah, Abraham and Ishmael were in awe at the sight of such celebrities.

An eerie silence fell over the land. All hostilities ceased as the delegation rushed into the restaurants, markets and shops splurging U.S. Aid on receptive merchants. There was a great calm even though none laid down their arms. But it was obvious that Bill and Andrea had brought a temporary peace to the Midwest.

How can Carol and I forget my 50th birthday celebration sailing down the Potomac on a very large yacht? There was Bill donned in a naval officer's dress jacket, including a captain's garrison hat. It was almost an official outfit except his chest was only filled with imaginary combat medals.

As usual, he was the life of the party, giving orders and telling old salt's tales about the adventures at sea.

#### THREE DEGREES OF SEPARATION

I introduced Bill to Perry Jones, the first black captain with Pan Am. He later became a captain with Delta Airline when Pan Am went out of business. Jones was a co-founder of the Organization of Black Airline Pilots (OBAP).

Perry and Bill became close friends. Perry invited Bill to speak at an annual convention jointly sponsored by OBAP and the Tuskegee Airmen.

Talk is usually about 5 degrees of separation but the more I meet people the more I believe it is now only 3 degrees. I find that people have more in common than thought and if the conversation lasts long enough a personal relationship is established that neither knew existed.

In this one case, I had a conversation with Bill years later. It might have one of the last ones we shared. I happened to mention being in the first church he pastored after finishing theology school. I told of meeting the minister in Montclair, New Jersey, at the Union Baptist Church.

Of course he asked under what circumstances and I responded at the funeral of a friend's mother. He remembered her and inquired who was my friend. When I said Perry Jones, he was stunned, replying, "I have

known him all these years and he never mentioned his mother was a member of my old church."

In closing this short journey, Carol and I would like to reference a poem by Bob Schieffer that surely was written with Bill in mind. He wrote,

Yes, the Pearly Gates had two lines—first class to the left, everybody else on the right . . .

I didn't see a bold face name . . .  
But the gate keeper knew all their faces . . .

He was on first name basis  
With those he waved through heaven's door

The second line was mighty long,  
Cheaters, schemers, lying lovers,  
A creep, a con, an operator.

This line has not moved in years.

It must be of great comfort for you to know that Bill Gray didn't have to show ID. He had a special place in line right up front. The gates automatically opened upon his arrival. He was escorted into the Promised Land by a delegation of distinguished freedom fighters. The entourage led by Martin and Rosa included Tip, Barbara and Shirley. There stood Frederick, Harriet, and Eleanor. Abe, Harry, and Lyndon were nearby. Of course who would omit Garrison, and Sumner?

A host of others who fought the good fight for equal rights and human dignity made up the multitude of well-wishers.

Bill traveled the gold paved streets as cheering crowds chanted, "Well done. Well done my son."

Yes, there were a few big named celebrities, but the vast majority in the chorus singing Hallelujah—Glory Be To God were custodians, secretaries, school teachers, Pell Grant students, welfare recipients, Nobel Peace Prize winners, truck drivers, minimum wage workers, and the list goes on and on with the hardworking poor, underfed children from numerous third world countries, and neglected ghetto residents constituting a major part of the welcoming party.

Bill Gray was so honored because he was a minister who believed that God's grace was meant to exist on both sides of the River of Jordan. He was a leader who followed the recommendations of the greatest prophet of all time as outlined in His Sermon on the Mount.

#### RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE STUDENTS AND FACULTY AT STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

#### HON. ALBIO SIRES

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2013

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw attention to the accomplishments of the students and faculty at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey and congratulate them on being part of such a prestigious research institution.

Since its founding in 1870, Stevens has created a legacy of innovation and its research projects have garnered federal recognition and funding. It is home to three national research centers as well as joint research programs in a variety of critical fields. These projects help to advance current scientific knowledge and capabilities and provide more understanding to

confront the challenges faced everyday on both a domestic and global scale.

Stevens Institute of Technology has, and continues to, receive grants from numerous federal agencies such as the Department of Defense, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation. The projects that have received grants recently are focused on creating useful and impactful solutions to current issues. One such project, ADVANCE Stevens, aims to increase the representation and advancement of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematic (STEM) careers by providing the environment and resources necessary to foster relationships between underrepresented groups of faculty and students. Projects such as this impact not only students at Stevens, but the nation as a whole by creating a greater understanding about the challenging problems facing our nation and working towards the solution.

Once again, congratulations to Stevens Institute of Technology for their accomplishments.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2013

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, on September 25th I missed two recorded votes. I would like the RECORD to indicate how I would have voted had I been present. On rollcall No. 484, H.R. 1961, I would have voted "no." On rollcall No. 485, H. Res. 354, I would have voted "yea."

#### HONORING LOGAN MCINTOSH LEE JAMES

#### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Logan McIntosh Lee James. Logan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 261, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Logan has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Logan has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Logan has earned the rank of Brave in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and has become a Brotherhood member of the Order of the Arrow. Logan has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Logan made significant landscaping improvements to the Edgerton Christian Church in Edgerton, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commanding Logan McIntosh Lee James for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.