

AgVenture, a program to educate community leaders on the importance of agriculture to Lake County. To address the issue of hunger, Michelle organized a very successful Bountiful Gift Box fundraiser for the county's Hunger Task Force. She brings creativity and solid business ideas to the table of the Regional Economic Development Committee with a style that keeps community members excited and engaged in realizing opportunities. She was a member of the Advisory Council appointed to be a driving force behind the opening of Marymount California University's Lakeside Campus and now serves as the campus's inaugural executive director.

Michelle has weathered storms, professional and personal, with infinite grace and a smile on her face. When she fell and broke her back riding her horse on their ranch, Michelle dragged herself, using only her arms, a quarter mile home where she laid on the floor until her husband arrived and insisted on taking her to the emergency room. Once home from surgery she missed just three lectures of teaching her biology class at Mendocino College, where she is still an instructor. Michelle personifies grit—she is able to work hard, overcome adversity, and bring long-term passions and community goals to fruition.

JIM OBERSTAR

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2014

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as I get on my bike to ride home tonight I'll be smiling, thinking of Jim Oberstar.

There has never been anyone in public life who was more committed to cycling. The joys of the exercise, the power to help people enjoy the freedom, health and advantages of cycling—no one more committed to making it safe for our families.

And that's just the tiniest fraction of the Jim Oberstar story. We could spend the next two hours talking about his contributions to aviation, to a strong rail system, to making our roads and bridges safe, resources to expand infrastructure where we need, and the vision and money to maintain and improve where we need to.

Jim dedicated his life to rebuilding and renewing America. Over the last half century, his fingerprints are on all the major advances, whether he was in a staff capacity, a Committee member, in a powerful leadership position, in the Minority or in the Majority, Jim Oberstar was there, his influence felt, his advice and guidance welcomed, and he made a difference.

As rich and important were his many contributions to rebuilding and renewing America, he was far more than that. He was a kind and caring Member of this Chamber who listened to people regardless of their position in the legislative pecking order.

Jim truly was interested in what they needed, what they thought, and if there was a way that he could help them, consistent with his vision and values. Because he was a consummate legislator, often, he could do both.

Last, but by no means least, Jim Oberstar was a caring family man, driven by his principles, his faith, love for his family, and concern for everyone else's family.

To his beloved wife Jean, thank you so much for sharing this unique human being with us and being his partner helping him do so much, bring so much joy and so much . . . not just progress . . . but joy . . . a man who truly loved his work as he loved his family and he loved his country.

Yes, Jim Oberstar will be missed. But I for one will feel his presence, his commitment, his example, every day I serve in Congress and so it is for many others.

FORMER REPRESENTATIVE JIM OBERSTAR

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2014

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join in honoring our former colleague from Minnesota, Congressman Jim Oberstar.

He was a legendary figure in the House, elected in 1974 as part of the class of Democrats called the Watergate Babies that also included my colleagues from California, HENRY WAXMAN and GEORGE MILLER.

During his service in Congress, he became a well respected voice for transportation and infrastructure issues, earning him the nickname of "Mr. Transportation."

For decades he fought tirelessly to rebuild and renew our country's infrastructure and he eventually rose to chair the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Under his leadership he championed transportation, reinvigorating commerce, and good stewardship of our environment. An avid cyclist, he championed the creation of trails for hiking and cycling. Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, he can be credited with including major funding for transportation and infrastructure projects that put Americans back to work rebuilding our bridges and roads—and rebuilding our economy in the process.

I have very fond memories of Jim Oberstar.

At the time Democrats were in the majority—I was Chair of the Ethics Committee—I enjoyed Jim's wise counsel and perspective on many legislative matters when we gathered with our fellow Chairs during the Leader's weekly Chair meetings.

Jim was a real expert in transportation and infrastructure but his passion was for working people. I appreciate Jim Oberstar as an amazing and multi-faceted person.

He was born into humble roots in Chisolm, Minnesota and he rose to greatness through hard work and higher education:

He earned his Bachelor of Arts from College of St. Thomas (now the University of St. Thomas) in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1956.

He earned his Master's degree in European Studies from the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium in 1957,

And he studied further at Université Laval in Sainte-Foy, Quebec, Canada and Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

Jim even spent four years as a civilian language teacher in the United States Marine Corps, teaching English to Haitian military personnel and French to American Marine officers and noncommissioned officers.

Jim's talents did not go unnoticed and when he served as a Congressional staffer he quick-

ly rose to Chief of Staff for Congressman John Blatnik (D-Minnesota-8).

Later, he was elected to represent his beloved Minnesota as the Congressman from the 8th District, ultimately being reelected for 18 terms—the longest tenure in Minnesota history for a Member of Congress.

Many of us will remember Jim Oberstar as a modern renaissance man of many talents and an amazing intellect but—he never forgot his hardworking roots, or stopped fighting for the hard working people of his state and our country.

Like many of my colleagues, I join in praising Jim Oberstar and send my deepest sympathy to his wife Jean, his children and his grandchildren. We share your feelings of loss and send our sincerest gratitude to you for sharing this great man with our country.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN JIM OBERSTAR

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2014

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of the former Congressman from Minnesota's 8th Congressional District, Jim Oberstar, who passed away on May 3 at the age of 79.

I had the privilege of serving with Jim Oberstar for four years, and will always remember his mastery of multiple foreign languages. It was a remarkable talent.

Jim was a dedicated representative who will be remembered for devoting 36 years of his life in service to Minnesota and the country in the U.S. Congress. We joined our hearts, efforts, and voices in the protection of the unborn and I am especially grateful for his work as the co-chairman of the House Pro-Life Caucus.

My prayers are with his family, particularly his wife Jean, and friends during this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body join with me in honoring the life and legacy of the late Congressman Jim Oberstar. May he rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING THE SIXTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF JOHN AND CHRISTINA BROXSON OF GULF BREEZE, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Sixtieth Wedding Anniversary of John and Christina Broxson of Gulf Breeze, Florida. I am proud to honor the Broxsons and congratulate them on this remarkable milestone.

John and Christina met in 1953 at Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) in Waxahachie, Texas where John earned his Bachelor of Science degree in May 1954. They were married the following month on June 4, 1954 and spent the early years of their married life in pastoral ministry as well as missionary evangelism.

In 1959, John was appointed by Florida Governor Leroy Collins to complete his father's term as Santa Rosa County Sheriff, and in 1962, John was elected to the Florida House of Representatives. John and Christina moved to Gulf Breeze, Florida, with their family in 1964 to begin their business, John Broxson and Associates, Inc., an Independent Insurance agency and real-estate brokerage company. Committed to public service, John also served in other various roles to include, Florida State Senator and Santa Rosa County Commissioner.

Both John and Christina have lived a life of service to God and country, while raising five children: Sylvia, Bob, Cheryl, Bart, and Angela. John and Christina are loving and devoted parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is my pleasure to join John and Christina Broxson; their children; grandchildren; great-grandchildren; and the entire Broxson family in celebration of their sixty years of marriage. My wife, Vicki, and I wish John and Christina many more years of happiness and all of God's blessings.

CHAIRMAN OBERSTAR

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2014

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, several years ago, they sent us to a civility conference because they didn't think that Democrats and Republicans were getting along well enough in the Congress, and I have never forgotten something our first speaker said.

David McCullough, the great historian, told a story about a Russian visitor who came up into the House gallery in 1948 and watched for a while, and then he went out and shook his head and he said, "The House is a strange place." He said, "A man stands up and says absolutely nothing, no one pays any attention, and then everyone disagrees."

They say there is a little bit of truth in the best humor, and I guess there is some truth in that humor. But David McCullough was kind enough to go on from there and say, but if he had a chance to live his life over again and he could choose what he wanted to do, he would choose to be a member of that wild and raucous bunch known as the United States House of Representatives.

I think today, because of some of the television talk shows, that many people around the country think that we all dislike each other or that we hate each other at times, or that Democrats and Republicans just don't get along at all. But that is not true at all, and I think for the great, great majority of Members, all of us get along really well with everyone, regardless of party, and all of us consider it a great privilege and honor to serve in the United States House of Representatives.

We are losing many, many good Members from both sides of the aisle this year because of retirements, running for other offices, or for all sorts of reasons, and there are many other Members, both Democrat and Republican, who are good friends of mine who are leaving to whom I should pay tribute. But I rise tonight

to pay special tribute to a very special man, and that is Congressman Jim Oberstar from Minnesota.

In my entire 22 years in this Congress, I have served on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. I had a couple of chances in my early years to move to other committees, and I think people were surprised that I didn't take either one of those offers. But I enjoyed serving on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, originally called the Public Works and Transportation Committee, in part because it was considered to be the most bipartisan, or nonpartisan, committee probably in the Congress. It was often said that there is no such thing as a Republican highway or a Democratic highway; and on many, many things people on both sides of the aisle on that committee worked together to help build America.

Certainly, Congressman Oberstar was one of the great leaders of that committee through his entire time in the Congress. Jim Oberstar served for 11 years on the committee staff, rising to the position of staff director. He then began his service in the House and continued to serve for the past 36 years.

It is an astounding figure to think that a man worked on this one committee for 47 years of his life, but he has done so with great honor and distinction. In fact, I think almost everybody knows that there is no one in the Congress and probably never has been anyone in the history of the Congress who has known transportation issues and understood them and worked on them longer and harder and with more effectiveness than Jim Oberstar has.

At one point, he was chairman of the Aviation Subcommittee. In 1994, after the election, the Republicans took control and I had the honor of becoming the chairman of the Aviation Subcommittee, and I served for 6 years in that position, which was the maximum allowable on our side.

When I took over as chairman of the Aviation Subcommittee, I had frequently heard Jim Oberstar referred to as "Mr. Aviation." So I went to him and asked for his help, and he helped me and guided me and gave me advice that to this day I appreciate very much, and he did that in a very kind and humble way.

Then, of course, in the last 4 years, he reached the pinnacle and became chairman of that committee, a committee that he loves. He has been a great chairman, and I think he has tried to help everyone on both sides of the aisle.

So I just wanted to rise and pay tribute to a man that I consider to be a great American and a great Member of Congress, Congressman James Oberstar.

JIM OBERSTAR

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2014

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, what an honor it is for me to convene this special order for our friend and colleague—Minnesota's longest serving Member of Congress and my predecessor in representing our state's Eighth Congressional District. . . . A giant of a man—the

truly great former Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure—Jim Oberstar.

We can all take comfort—and some pleasure as well—in knowing that Jim was well aware of the respect and esteem we ALL had for him—Republicans, Democrats, liberals and conservatives.

That was evident when he quietly entered this chamber in January of last year—for the first time as a former Congressman.

First one member spotted him—then another and another—and within a few seconds everyone was standing, cheering, and applauding spontaneously.

It was a truly unforgettable moment—a gesture I haven't seen in this historic place since Hubert Humphrey addressed a joint session of Congress shortly before he passed away some 36 years ago.

When I think of Jim Oberstar, four big words come to mind. The first word is accomplishment.

He was the son of a miner who grew up in a little House in Chisholm, Minnesota—whose career in public service and as a leader on the Transportation Committee touched every great city, every town, and every small community in our great nation

With a road—a bridge—a park—a harbor—an airport—a public building. Tens of millions of people have a better, safer quality of life thanks to Jim Oberstar.

And those accomplishments were genuinely bipartisan in nature.

As Chairman, Jim believed a good idea is a good idea regardless of who proposes it.

So Committee debates were wide open, with plenty of give and take. If you had an idea, Jim made sure it was heard and debated—and that it received an up or down vote after all was said and done.

The second big word that applies to Jim is work—hard work.

Regardless of how early you showed up—you couldn't arrive early enough to beat Jim to the office every morning. And his light was always the last one to go out after the rest of us had left for the night.

Of course, Jim didn't worry about DC traffic.

This man, who presided over hundreds of billions of dollars in transportation projects—and who understood more about the intricacies of transportation policies than most of the rest of us combined—just wove through the traffic jams riding his bike to work every morning.

And by the way, thanks to Jim's "Safe Routes to School" program, millions of kids are walking and biking to work every day across our nation.

The third word for Jim is intellect. To paraphrase President Kennedy—Thomas Jefferson was the smartest American to ever dine alone—except perhaps when Jim Oberstar was grabbing a bite to eat in the Rayburn cafeteria.

Jim was simply brilliant. He spoke six languages fluently—from French to Creole to that strange combination of Finnish and English we call "Range Speak" up north on Minnesota's Iron Range.

There was no detail too small—and no vision too grand—for Jim to comprehend—and then articulate in a manner everyone else could understand as well.

Last but not least—when I think of Jim, I think of home.