

Red, Omar's favorite color, and many of the Class of 2015 students wore their graduation caps in honor of him.

Omar is survived by his parents, an older sister who previously graduated from Klein Forest High School and a younger brother. He had plans to continue working and hopefully attend Lone Star College after graduation.

Even though Omar did not get to hear his name called and physically walk the stage to take his diploma, the community has not stopped cheering for him.

Omar's memory will live on through his family, friends and classmates in Houston. He will always be a great example of how no matter the circumstances, hard work will always pay off.

Our prayers are with the Rodas family and all of Omar's friends.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HISTORIC DOWNTOWN SQUARE AND PIONEER PARK

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the recent improvements made to the Historic Downtown Square and Pioneer Park of Carrollton, Texas. Downtown Carrollton has been an iconic part of northern Texas since the early 1800's.

These improvements will give people improved space and new scenery to visit and enjoy leisurely time with friends and family. It is important to keep our parks and recreational areas updated to continue and expand their vital role in the community. These renovations will reinvigorate the Historic Downtown Square as well as Pioneer Park and make them alluring destinations for years to come.

There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 27th to officially unveil the new changes. City officials and local leaders will be in attendance to speak about the hard work and effort put into the new developments. I encourage everyone to attend and show support for the time and dedication put into this project. I'm thankful for the people of the 24th district of Texas who strive to make our home a more habitable and enjoyable place.

At the unveiling will be a concert featuring local artists as well as an outdoor movie with the director's wife present to introduce the film. It is this strong sense of community that will serve the people of Carrollton and everyone who visits the historic downtown.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the ever improved Historic Downtown Square and Pioneer Park. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating such an accomplishment.

IN HONOR OF MR. FRANKLIN DOUGLASS

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding commu-

nity leader, devoted public servant, and loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend, Mr. Franklin Douglass. A funeral service to celebrate Frank's life will be held on Tuesday, June 30, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. at Fourth Street Missionary Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia, where he had served as a deacon.

Franklin Douglass was born in Belle Mona, Alabama on July 20, 1936, the third oldest of ten brothers and four sisters. The family made a living by tenant farming in rural Limestone County, Alabama. He enrolled in Tuskegee Institute, joined ROTC, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Physical Education, Health, and Recreation in 1956. Over the next 30 years, his pursuit of personal growth earned him graduate degrees in Personnel Management and Education Supervision and Administration. His passion for education was infectious, and as an educator Frank inspired thousands of students to seek knowledge and growth.

Frank served our nation honorably as an officer in the United States Army from 1959 until 1964, when he was honorably discharged. He then accepted his first teaching post at Marshall Junior High School. After only a year of teaching, Frank was appointed acting principal of Marshall Junior High before becoming a Media Specialist for the Muscogee County School District. His career as an educator in the Columbus area took Frank to several schools and classrooms before his appointment as principal of William H. Spencer High School at the age of 40 in 1976. After a dozen years of serving as principal, Frank became Director of Muscogee County Student Services in 1988, a post he held until his retirement in 1990.

Frank's passion for improving the conditions of those in the Columbus area extended beyond the classroom. As Commissioner and Vice Chairman of the Columbus Housing Authority, Frank fought for three decades to keep living conditions affordable for everyone in his community. An active member of Kiwanis Club, Social-Civic 25 Club, 837 Club, Phi Delta Kappa, and Omega Psi Phi, Frank utilized his smile and amiable humor to advance the interests of Columbus natives. Additionally, as a member of the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders and the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, Frank built ties with educational leaders around the state of Georgia and the southeastern United States.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I will always remember about Franklin Douglass is his steadfast commitment to his family, as well as his community. As father to Franklin Karl Douglass and grandfather to Temple Douglass, he was an inspiration to extended family and countless friends. Moreover, as a husband, there was no limit to his love of his wonderful wife of nearly 55 years, Merrian.

A dear friend to me for more than thirty years, Frank was soft spoken, quiet, and thoughtful. He was one of the cooler heads in dealing with community issues and problems. His demeanor and intuitiveness helped him get things done. We are so blessed that Frank passed this way and did so much for so many for so long.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me and my wife, Vivian, in paying tribute to Franklin Douglass for his servant leadership and his deep commitment to his family, his community, and his country. We extend our deepest

sympathies to the Douglass family and friends during this very difficult time. May they be consoled and comforted by their abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

HONORING DEVON DOWLER OF THE OWENSVILLE DUTCHMEN

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Devon Dowler of the Owenville Dutchmen for his first place win in the 3200 Meter Hurdles at the 2015 Class 3 Track and Field State Championship.

Devon and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Devon Dowler of the Owenville Dutchmen for a job well done.

H.R. 2898—WESTERN WATER AND FOOD SECURITY ACT OF 2015

HON. DOUG LAMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, today, the California Republican Delegation again took action to address our state's water supply crisis, introducing balanced legislation improving water access for Californians around the state by using improved science to time water deliveries, preserve water rights and move forward on new surface storage facilities.

The bill protects the most fundamental water rights of all, area of origin rights, ensuring that Northern Californians who live where our state's water supply originates have access to it.

It uses modern science to improve the timing of water deliveries, allowing the storage of more water during winter storms which makes it available for dry periods like now.

It addresses invasive species that are negatively impacting salmon populations, and allows local water districts to undertake their own habitat improvement projects.

Finally, California's voters have spoken clearly in support of investment in new surface storage projects, and this measure fulfills that promise by advancing projects that would generate over one million acre-feet of water, enough for eight million Californians.

We'll continue to refine this proposal as it moves through the process, but I am proud to cosponsor a bill that addresses both short- and long-term needs of all Californians and support continued economic growth.

TRIBUTE TO PAIGE SEISER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Paige

Seiser from Waukee High School for winning the Class 2A Co-ed Golf Doubles title along with her partner, Parker Howe. I would like to also recognize Paige Seiser for taking home the Class 5A Girls Golf individual title.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by these students demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent them and their families in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the House join me in congratulating Paige and Parker on competing in this rigorous competition and wishing continued success in their education and high school golf career.

HONORING THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks today in honor of the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, which will be celebrating its 125th anniversary on July 7.

Sadly, too often it seems as if lessons from history are overlooked or forgotten. But in Virginia, we are proud of our history, of our love of freedom, and of our dedication to independence. I commend the important efforts of the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution to keep in our hearts and minds American patriotism and the memory of our Revolutionary War heritage.

As a student of history myself, I could spend hours discussing not only the various events preceding and succeeding our nation's fight for independence, but also the crucial role by Virginians. Countless patriots, battles, and events from this pivotal period in our nation's history ought to be commemorated and remembered, battles including but not limited to the Battle of Point Pleasant, which is credited as being the first battle of the American Revolution by the Senate of the United States, to the Battle of Great Bridge, the Burning of Norfolk, etc.

May we forever remain vigilant and committed to preserving and protecting the self-evident truths and freedoms fought for and so carefully outlined in our nation's founding documents by our Founding Fathers.

I extend to all those involved with the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution my best wishes on the occasion of its 125th anniversary, and look forward to this organization's continued success.

BIOGRAPHY OF MARY BROOM-THOMAS

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I submit the biography of Mary Broom-Thomas, a wife, mother and woman of faith who lived to the ripe age of 101 years and who will be missed by many who loved her.

Mrs. Mary Broom-Thomas was born on January 22, 1914 in Lexington, Mississippi to Alberta Garnett-Broom and Cleveland Broom. She graduated from Saints Industrial High School in Lexington, Mississippi and taught there for 2 years.

Mary married Leroy Thomas, Sr. in 1937 and the couple moved to Jackson, Mississippi, where they built a home. They had four children, McKinley, Abraham, Earnestine, and Leroy, Jr.

After Leroy finished military duty in the South Pacific, Mary and Leroy moved the family to Compton, California in 1955. Mary practiced her vocation as a seamstress, making her own patterns and designing clothes, including garments for her children and some specialty sales for friends and family. After the children graduated from Centennial and Locke High Schools and were off to college and building careers, Mary took a job at Newberry's Department Store in downtown Los Angeles. She continued sewing clothing, but later added making handbags and light upholstery to her sewing skills portfolio.

Mrs. Thomas was a member of First A.M.E. Church where Reverend Dr. Cecil Murray was Pastor. They continued to visit at family gatherings after his retirement and by then she became less mobile.

Up until seven years ago, Mrs. Thomas always had an organic garden. She grew an array of vegetables and fruits. She and her family were healthier for it . . . she lived a great 101 years.

She raised her children to embrace the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." She lived the example. She taught the core values of honesty, respect, humility, courage and the necessity of sometimes standing alone as long as you stand for the right thing.

She championed education. Some of her most favorite people: The Honorable Maxine Waters, Congresswoman; the Honorable Barack Obama—she was glad to see the first African-American become President of the United States; the late former Mayor Tom Bradley; Malcom X; Dr. Martin Luther King; Mrs. Rosa Parks; Reverend Dr. Cecil L. Chip Murray; Kobe Bryant; and Shaquille O'Neil as she was an avid Laker fan. She attended a personal reception with the team along with her grandson, Demetrius Wilson.

She has been honored with a published song entitled "Mary," composed, scored and written by her grandson, Ende (Sky) Wilson; and she has been given a tribute by her grandson, Demetrius (Red) Wilson, via a personalized brick on the residential mall at Xavier University, his alma mater, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

One would often hear her quoting from an old spiritual, "needless pain we bear . . . all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer."

Just a little about a Queen, who never had to declare herself a queen . . . she just was.

CONGRATULATING PENNY BUSINGA

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Penny Businga of Gering, Nebraska, on her retirement this month and to honor her 29 years of dedicated service at Educational Service Unit #13 in Scottsbluff.

Before becoming a trailblazer for professional development, Ms. Businga taught in

western Nebraska public schools. She then decided to take her classroom expertise to the next level to assist other educators across the Nebraska Panhandle and beyond.

Ms. Businga devoted her career to ensuring Nebraska teachers have the innovative training and support they need to instill a love of learning in their students. When I worked for her, I personally witnessed Ms. Businga's hard work and dedication to ensuring educational opportunity for young people.

On behalf of the people of Nebraska's Third District, I thank Ms. Businga for her impact on Nebraska education and congratulate her on the start of this new chapter in her life.

RECOGNIZING THE DAMAGING IMPACT OF SHELBY COUNTY V. HOLDER

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the 2nd anniversary of the Shelby County v. Holder Supreme Court ruling. By declaring Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act unconstitutional, the Supreme Court dismantled a key provision to this pivotal voting rights protection. The importance of the Voting Rights Act to our American democracy cannot be overstated. This damaging precedent, set by the nation's highest Court has weakened a piece of legislation that was fundamental to the advancement of the American democracy.

On June 25, 2013, when the Supreme Court decided that states with a history of discrimination against minority voters no longer needed clearance from the federal government to set new voting restrictions, it established a pathway for modern day discriminatory practices. Under this ruling, states across the Deep South, where vestiges of discrimination are still present, were able to enact stricter voting requirements for the first time since 1965.

Many of these states, including my home state of Texas, are governed by Republican-led state legislatures that insist on the necessity of voter ID laws to protect the integrity of elections. However, Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that these laws, which disproportionately affect African-Americans, Hispanics and poor people, are a political ploy to suppress voter turnout. This runs counter to the Constitutional right to vote, which is the cornerstone of our democracy.

Recently, as a result of the Shelby County v. Holder ruling, Texas implemented restrictive voter ID laws that prohibit voting autonomy for many underserved minorities across the state. During the 2014 election, instead of being granted the opportunity to cast their vote of choice, many voters were turned away on the basis of technicalities.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot fathom how these actions would be permissible among any group of lawmakers. Today, I stand before you to call attention to this fact. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was implemented to ensure that all Americans have the ability to exercise their right to vote. This body should act in a bi-partisan fashion to ensure that this right is fully restored.