

## HONORING ROB HIAASEN OF THE CAPITAL GAZETTE

## HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an obituary of Rob Hiaasen, an editor of the Capital Gazette in Annapolis Maryland.

[From the Baltimore Sun]

CAPITAL GAZETTE VICTIM ROB HIAASEN REMEMBERED AS A WRITER WITH A DEFT AND GENTLE TOUCH

(By Jacques Kelly)

Rob Hiaasen, a feature writer and editor recalled for the deft and understanding touch he applied to his off-center stories, will be remembered Monday at a private memorial service. He was one of the five staff members killed Thursday at the Annapolis Capital Gazette.

The Timonium man was 59.

“Rob was a terrific reporter because he had an innate curiosity,” said the former Baltimore Sun columnist Kevin Cowherd, a close friend. “He was a master of asking questions of the people he wrote about. It was one of his strengths. He was also drawn to quirky characters. In all his writing he tried to bring out the humanity.”

Mr. Hiaasen was born in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., to Kermit Odel Hiaasen, an attorney, and Patricia Moran, a homemaker. He graduated from Plantation High School and earned a bachelor’s degree in communications at the University of Florida.

He initially worked as an AM radio reporter and landed a job in Raleigh, N.C. There he met a competitor, Maria Mills.

“It was a small town and small radio market and everybody knew each other,” she said. “We got married and moved around and landed in San Antonio.

“We both hated our jobs there.”

Mr. Hiaasen reconsidered his radio work and decided instead to pursue newspaper writing and reporting. He got a reporting job at an afternoon paper, the Petersburg, Va., Progress Index. But first, he had to pass the paper’s oral spelling test.

“He remembered to put the P in raspberry,” Maria Hiaasen said. “He was always a good speller.”

Within 18 months, he and his wife moved on to the Palm Beach Post. He worked in its downtown newsroom; she covered police in Palm Beach County.

Tom O’Hara, the retired managing editor of the Palm Beach Post, recognized the last name on Mr. Hiaasen’s job application. He knew Mr. Hiaasen’s brother, the novelist and longtime Miami Herald columnist Carl Hiaasen.

“Rob was just charming,” Mr. O’Hara said. “It was a like a no-brainer to hire him. He was a Florida boy and that was a great attraction to me.”

Mr. O’Hara assigned Mr. Hiaasen to cover county government, a beat overseen by a meticulous editor. Mr. Hiaasen often began his stories with colorful anecdotes, while his editor required numbers.

“For Rob, it was a baptism by fire,” Mr. O’Hara said. “His editor would lop off the first three paragraphs. It was clear Rob belonged in features.”

“He thrived there and was a delight. He was enthusiastic about his stories. Everybody loved him. I liked sitting by him and listening to his little asides.”

In 1991, Mr. Hiaasen wrote a feature about five people who contracted AIDS from a

Palm Beach dentist. “Dr. Acer’s Deadly Secret: How AIDS joined the lives of a dentist and his patients,” won a national journalism writing award, and Mr. Hiaasen was hired by The Baltimore Sun as a features writer.

Colleagues recalled his daily routine. He took long walks, and became enamored of Baltimore’s neighborhoods and their characters. He ambled through Bolton Hill, Mount Vernon and Fells Point in search of offbeat tales to tell.

Friends said Mr. Hiaasen steered clear of newsroom factions and social circles. One described him affectionately as “a tall, brooding Norwegian.”

“Only two words in that phrase are true,” Mr. Cowherd said. “Rob was never brooding. He needed to laugh the way he needed oxygen. He was the best colleague you could ever have. In a roomful of towering egos, he was the first guy to come up and say, ‘You did a great job.’”

Mr. Hiaasen wrote about Mel Sherr, a veteran of D-Day familiar to Baltimoreans as a strolling violin player.

“Mr. Sherr knows what your favorite song is,” Mr. Hiaasen wrote. “While he’s asking guests where they’re from, he’ll be guessing their age and era. He’ll then pluck a song from his play list and play. Guests nod their heads and smile. Some blush. They now remember what they had forgotten. . . . Mr. Sherr will not be stumped by requests.”

He also wrote about Kirk Bloodsworth, the ex-Marine and Eastern Shore waterman who was the first person to be sentenced to death and then exonerated by DNA evidence.

Mr. Hiaasen spent a year from 2003 to 2004 as a John Knight Fellow in Journalism at Stanford University. While there, he acted in a play and studied singing.

Mr. Hiaasen accepted a newsroom buyout offer in 2008 and left The Sun. By 2010 he joined the Annapolis Capital. He mentored reporters as an editor and wrote a Sunday column.

“He did an amazing pivot to become an editor,” Mr. Cowherd said. “He became everything you want of a good editor—gently pushing them to do their best work and to not accept mediocrity.”

He also taught a news writing class at the University of Maryland’s Philip Merrill College of Journalism.

And he kept telling his stories in his gentle tone.

“When there’s no hiding from news, it’s time for a haircut,” he advised in a column late last year. “Getting a haircut—once a horrific, spirit-crushing event during the teenage years—is a safe haven for the news beleaguered. There, in the wrapped confines of your barber’s or stylist’s chair, you can slink away to a news-free zone. There, on your temporary throne, you are clipped and pampered by intimate hands.” In addition to his wife of 33 years, an English teacher at Dulaney High School, he leaves a son, Ben Hiaasen, a Towson attorney; two daughters, Samantha Hiaasen, an assistant manager of the Pratt Street Barnes & Noble store in Baltimore, and Hannah Hiaasen, a craft associate at Apparatus in New York who lives in Brooklyn, NY; his brother, Carl, in Vero Beach, Fla.; two sisters, Judy Hiaasen of Plantation, Fla., and Barb Hiaasen of Davie, Fla.; and many nieces and nephews.

## HONORING ALYCE GRIFFIN CLARKE

## HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable

public servant from the Backwoods of Deoveleno (a few miles northeast of Belzoni), to the Mississippi State Capital—Alyce Griffin Clarke, 1st African American female elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives in 1985.

In the backwoods of Deoveleno, in the last house near the Yazoo River, a beautiful baby girl was born to the late Mr. Henry Griffin and Mrs. Fannie Alice Merriweather Griffin. They named this beautiful precious baby girl, Alyce Myrtle Griffin.

This young lady walked the dusty roads of Deoveleno to Deoveleno Elementary School, to Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, where she was baptized, to Mt. Arratt Methodist Church, and to the one store in the community. As a matter of fact, she walked everywhere she went. The family did not own a car as they were sharecroppers. She chopped and picked cotton as so many of us did. She still boasts about being able to pick 300 pounds before quitting time and teasing others still in the field.

As the years passed, Ms. Griffin graduated from McNair High School, Belzoni, Mississippi in 1957. She went on to graduate from Alcorn College and other universities. She later became Mrs. Alyce Griffin Clarke when she married the late Mr. L.W. Clarke. They became the proud parents of one son, Demarquis Clarke.

In 1985, Mrs. Alyce Griffin Clarke became the first African American female elected to the Mississippi Legislature.

Currently, Representative Alyce Griffin Clarke is still active in the same post where she first made history, and we are all very proud of her accomplishments.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Representative Alyce Griffin Clarke.

## SALUTING COLONEL DAVID R. GIBSON

## HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I proudly salute Colonel David R. Gibson as he retires after 33 years of honorable service. Throughout his extraordinary military career, COL Gibson embodied the duty, honor, and loyalty that makes the U.S. Army the world’s premier fighting force.

COL Gibson’s commitment to investing his gifts, talents, and abilities in service of his nation is a deeply held creed that speaks to the generosity and activism of a true and devoted patriot. Throughout his career, he earned numerous academic and military accolades that garnered the respect and admiration of his peers. His resume tells the story of a man unafraid to embrace the challenges that forge the leaders our nation needs.

Retirement is meant to be celebrated and enjoyed. It is not the end of a career, but the beginning of a new adventure. I thank Colonel David R. Gibson for his service and dedication to our great nation. I proudly join his family, friends, and colleagues in wishing him nothing but the best for his richly-deserved retirement.

## FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

SPEECH OF

## HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 25, 2019

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3351) making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes:

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I can tell my colleagues with great confidence that USDA's proposal to move the Economic Research Service (ERS) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) outside the National Capital Region is a bad idea.

We held a hearing on the issue last March, at which four former senior USDA officials with 70 years of combined experience at the two agencies, from both parties, expressed their deep opposition to this proposal.

Numerous stakeholders have expressed strong opposition, including the National Farmers Union, the Association of American Veterinary Colleges and nearly 1700 other organizations, university officials, and individuals from 47 states.

We have not received a single letter in support of this proposal.

USDA violated the Appropriations Committee's statutorily required 30-day waiting period for such proposals when it took action to implement the proposal six days after notifying the Committee.

It failed utterly to comply with the requirements of the conferees in the 2019 omnibus appropriations report to submit all cost benefits for the move and a detailed analysis of any research benefits of a relocation when it submitted the 2020 budget.

USDA has also refused numerous requests from Members of the House and Senate that it provide the original cost-benefit analysis developed before the proposal was announced.

It finally gave us a so-called "cost-benefit analysis" after the final site was selected.

But an independent analysis of this supposed analysis found that "USDA leadership failed to follow federal guidelines for the benefit cost analysis" and that "the move to Kansas City will cost taxpayers between \$83 and \$182 million dollars, rather than saving them \$300 million dollars."

Large numbers of ERS and NIFA employees have left as a result of this proposal.

I fear that ultimately, these agencies will become mere shadows of their former selves, with the loss of hundreds of years of expertise.

These agencies' mission is to achieve the best science through research that advances U.S. agriculture and our understanding of the agricultural economy.

I believe that the Department's proposal puts that mission at great risk.

I urge a yes vote on the Norton amendment.

## HONORING JOHN McNAMARA OF THE CAPITAL GAZETTE

## HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an obituary of John McNamara, a reporter for the Capital Gazette in Annapolis Maryland.

[From the Baltimore Sun]

JOHN McNAMARA, CAPITAL GAZETTE SPORTS REPORTER, RECALLED FOR HIS VAST KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE OF THE TERPS

(By Jacques Kelly)

John McNamara, an editor and sports reporter for The Capital Gazette who covered the University of Maryland Terrapins and was a high school basketball history specialist, died June 28 at the attack at the Annapolis newspaper's office.

The Silver Spring resident was 56.

"Basketball was a love of his and he had a great feel for the game," said former Maryland men's basketball coach Gary Williams. "He could have made a lot more money elsewhere, but he had the job he wanted and it was what he wanted to be. I gave him a lot of credit for that."

Born in Washington and raised in Bethesda, he was the son of Thomas McNamara Sr., a federal Department of Education financial analyst, and his wife, Elizabeth Lynch.

He was a 1979 graduate of St. John's College High School in Washington and obtained a journalism degree from the University of Maryland College Park, where he had reported sports for campus newspaper, The Diamondback.

"John was one of the most honest and fairest reporters I have ever met," said Johnny Holliday, sportscaster and longtime radio personality. "I enjoyed being around him.

"He was of the mindset that he was going to pick out the positive aspects of an individual player. He told me he understood the greatest thrill for a 9- or 10-year-old was seeing their name in print."

Mr. McNamara played softball and basketball informally in school and had delivered newspapers for the old Washington Evening Star. He retained childhood memories of watching the old Washington Senators play at RFK Stadium. He was also a Bullets basketball fan. While at Maryland, he covered high school sports for The Washington Post.

"He had two job offers right out of college," said his wife, Andrea Chamblee, whom he met while both were Maryland students. "One was for \$15,000 a year as an agate-type clerk doing box scores for USA Today. The other was writing sports for \$13,000 at the Hagerstown Herald-Mail. He took [the Herald-Mail] because it allowed him to do what he wanted to do—and in that first year [1983] he covered the Orioles, who were in the World Series.

"He felt he made the right choice. His first year out of the college and he was covering a World Series. He was exhilarated."

She said they married in 1985 because by then he was making \$15,000—they had agreed to delay their wedding until he had passed that financial milestone.

"He could talk sports to someone who knew plenty and he could talk to someone who knew almost nothing," his wife said. "And both parties would leave feeling they understood the game better."

"Coaches were always impressed by his insight and knowledge of the game, but John was a good enough storyteller that he could

give a casual fan great insight," said Doug Dull, a friend and colleague at the Hagerstown paper.

"He'd hang out at the local grocery store when the Street & Smith's college basketball yearbook came out and he would pull out a highlighter as if he were doing homework. He knew more about Pepperdine and Fresno State than anyone in Maryland."

In 1987 Mr. McNamara joined The Capital as a copy editor, then worked as sports editor for the old Prince George's Journal from 1989 to 1994. He then rejoined the Annapolis paper.

"John never changed," said David Elfin, a freelance journalist and friend who lives in Bethesda. "He always loved sports and he was very passionate about the University of Maryland. I can't tell you how many games he had covered at Maryland for all the papers where he'd worked."

He was particularly fond of the university's Cole Field House.

"No matter if I met him at a Nationals game or at the Capitals or Redskins, Maryland was his comfort level," Mr. Elfin said. "It was almost as if he were walking into Cheers."

In 2001 Mr. McNamara and Mr. Elfin wrote "Cole Classics: Maryland Basketball's Greatest Men and Moments."

Eric Prisbell, who previously covered college sports for The Washington Post and is now a Dallas sports freelance writer, said: "John's basketball knowledge was second to none. He had a sharp eye and everyone respected him."

"He was an old-school journalist. He valued the relationships he'd established with coaches. John could be very funny. With just a look he could make a whole table roar with laughter."

In 2014 his editors at The Capital Gazette changed his assignment and named him editor and reporter of the Bowie Blade-News and Crofton-West County Gazette.

"He took the job change as gracefully as any sportswriter can," said his wife.

He had been completing research and conducting interviews for a book on the history and roots of high school basketball in the District of Columbia and its suburbs. As part of the project he had visited former NBA and college players who grew up in the area.

A memorial service for Mr. McNamara will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Tuesday at the chapel at the University of Maryland, College Park.

In addition to his wife of 33 years, a Food and Drug Administration attorney, survivors include two brothers, Charles McNamara of Bethesda and Danny McNamara of Amsterdam, N.Y.; and three sisters, Jane McNamara of Mercer Island, Wash., Mary McNamara of Washington and Peggy Pyles of Bethesda.

## TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA D. EVANS

## HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to someone who has made a significant impact here in this proud institution for the past four decades. For the past twelve years, my office and I have been extremely fortunate to have Patricia "Tricia" Evans on our staff.

Tricia is from Westchester, New York, and to say she is a proud New Yorker is putting it mildly. She's also an Irish Catholic through and through—all the way down to being a devout meat and potatoes eater—except, of