

recently, Mr. Martin “Bo” Byran Burke. A true gentleman, Bo represented thousands of clients, guiding them expertly through legal difficulty and, at times, crisis. The positive impact he made on countless individuals, families, and small businesses is incalculable. He also enthusiastically participated in politics and government out of both a sense of civic duty and his abiding devotion to our democracy and constitution.

Born in 1940 to Edmond and Francis Burke, Bo was a true son of New England. His passion for his community and region defined his life's choices. After graduating from Colgate University with a Bachelor's in English, Bo continued his studies as he pursued a Juris Doctor from Albany School of Law. Although Bo's first foray into law was in New York State, he soon returned to his home state, passing the Connecticut Bar Exam in 1968.

Bo's career as a lawyer was long, eventful, and widely respected. His work ethic was unparalleled, and he was modest about his accomplishments. His small-town practice in Vernon, Connecticut was always centered on representing people, not large institutional clients. Today that model might be viewed by some as out of date, but Bo knew that such representation is at the heart of the oath he took when he was admitted to the bar. Bo was also committed to improving the profession. Bo served on the Connecticut Judicial Review Council, the Connecticut Law Revision Commission, and the Committee on Government Administration and Policy and the Governor's Commission on Judicial Reform. He additionally wrote for numerous law journals, such as the Connecticut Law Journal and the Connecticut Bar Journal. Bo opened his own practice in Vernon where he had immeasurable success. He focused on law, Title XIX, special needs, trusts, veterans' benefits, probate, and real estate. He took upon immense responsibilities as he briefed and argued over 12 reported appellate cases. Bo was understood by those around him to be a wise and trustworthy lawyer due to his extensive experience and mastery of the law.

Bo applied his vast knowledge of law and government to an amazingly accomplished one term in the Connecticut General Assembly. In 1974 he ran and won the 56th Assembly seat, representing Vernon. In his single term, he took on the incredibly important and difficult task of writing our state's freedom of information act. Opening state and local government to the press and public was extremely challenging. Yet, because of his diligent, talented ability to shape the bill and win consensus, the measure passed and was signed into law by Governor Ella Grasso. That law has withstood the test of time and still provides sunlight on the processes of government which is essential to a healthy democracy. After his two years of representation for the constituents of district 56, he decided to redirect his focus from elective office back to his law practice and town government. He transitioned to positions within the towns of Vernon and Rockville. For many years, he served both as Town Attorney and Assistant Town Attorney of Vernon. Bo endlessly served his town and state and was a champion of protecting democracy.

As someone who understood the opportunities created from receiving advanced education, Bo took it upon himself to improve and advocate for education with his town. Of

course, a big reason for his interest was his long and beautiful marriage to his talented wife Ellen, who taught hundreds and hundreds of children in the Vernon Public Schools. He served as counsel on the Vernon Education Foundation to being a member and Chairman on the Board of Trustees at the Rockville Public Library. Between Bo and Ellen, Vernon's education standards remained high, which is part of the reason two schools received blue ribbon awards from the U.S. Department of Education, something which is a great source of pride in Vernon.

Bo's career was one element of his multifaceted and exciting life. Since the mid-60s, he had been a continuous vacationer in Maine. For much of this time, he owned a camp on Flying Pond in Vienna, Maine. The days spent in Maine were calm and relaxing and gave Bo breaks from his demanding career as a lawyer.

It has been a great honor to personally know Bo. I met him when I was a young lawyer in Vernon many years ago and had the benefit of practicing law in the same community for many years. His example of strong advocacy and common-sense willingness to find common ground to settle disputes still resonates with me to this day. In 1986, I ran for the same seat he held in the general assembly and with his help, I was fortunate enough to prevail. He was always willing to provide counsel and advice which I deeply appreciated. Twenty years later he supported my election to the U.S. Congress, which was so special and meaningful to me.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to immortalize him today. He has been a great inspiration not just for me, but for his family, community, and beyond. His loss is deeply felt by his family members, including his wife, Ellen Schopfer Burke; his sons, Matthew, Jonathan, Andrew, and Sullivan Burke, and their wives; his sister, Susan Evans Burke, and his cousin Mary Jane Dempsey. He will also be missed by the community at large, which has seen many improvements directly due to Bo's efforts and deep commitment to others. His deep and nuanced understanding of the law assisted many constituents in defending their rights as American citizens. I am grateful to know that Bo's legacy will carry on within and beyond my district, as others follow in his footsteps.

RECOGNIZING BELVIN D. WARE
AND MACEDONIA MISSIONARY
BAPTIST CHURCH IN MACON,
GEORGIA

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the appointment of a dedicated servant leader and a true visionary for the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church of Macon, Georgia, Minister Belvin D. Ware. Minister Ware was elected by the church to serve as Head Pastor in December of 2023, and he was officially installed at the church on February 18, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.

A native of Macon, Georgia, Belvin D. Ware was born to the union of Denise T. Jones and Lawrence F. Ware, Jr. both of Macon, Georgia. Minister Ware completed his childhood

education in Macon and is a graduate of Central High School's Class of 1996. He is currently in the process of completing a Bachelor of Science degree in Biblical Studies. Minister Ware is also a United States Marine, joining in 1998 and reaching the rank of Staff Sergeant (E6) where he served for over sixteen years before receiving an Honorable Discharge.

Minister Ware first accepted Christ at the young age of seven years old at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, and he accepted the call to ministry in December of 2012. He gave his initial sermon on September 29, 2013, at New Life Family Worship in Jacksonville, North Carolina where he also received his License of Ministry. In July of 2018, Minister Ware accepted a full-time position at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church as the Servant Leader of Children, Youth, and Young Adults. After one year of successfully mentoring the church's youth and bringing them closer to the Lord, Lead Pastor Eddie Smith ordained Mr. Ware as a Minister of Gospel in October 2019 and named him Assistant to the Pastor.

During his tenure as Servant Leader of Children, Youth, and Young Adults, Minister Ware was responsible for evaluating, planning, and implementing a thorough course of action for the youth to grow in their faith. He facilitated Bible Study and Youth Church, oversaw the baptisms of eight young people and grew youth membership at Macedonia through outreach at local colleges and universities. Furthermore, Minister Ware has been instrumental in local community outreach—most notably his ministry at Bruce Elementary School where he visited at least twice a month to mentor at risk youths and facilitate two coat drives in which Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church donated over 250 winter coats to underprivileged youth. Following his efforts at the school, the Bibb County Board of Education selected Minister Ware to be a sitting member on the board to hire Bruce Elementary's next principal. Additionally, as Assistant to the Pastor, Minister Ware began the process and coordinated training with Middle Georgia Food Bank to establish Macedonia as a local agency to establish a food bank on church grounds.

Minister Ware has been recognized numerous times for his professional achievements. He is a recipient of the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Certificate of Commendation, and Letter of Appreciation. He was recognized by the Middle-Georgia Black Pages as a Young Entrepreneur and Professional in 2019 and was also nominated for Leadership Macon in 2022, a year-long program that introduces a class of rising community leaders to the successes and challenges in Macon-Bibb County's public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm once said that “Service is the rent that we pay for the space that we occupy here on this earth.” Belvin Ware has paid his rent many times over and still continues to give a prodigious amount of love and service back to his community. He is currently the Executive Director for Heal the Hood Empowering Movement, a community initiative to cure violence and to bring economic power back to the Macon community through mentoring, job placement, and prison reform. He is also a Co-founder of the Concord Project which is a partnership between the local clergy and the Bibb County Sheriff's Office.

Minister Ware has accomplished many things in his life, but none of it would have been possible without the enduring love and support of his loving wife of over fifteen years, Aisha N. Ware, as well as his sons, Kingston Josiah and Kingsley Uriah.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with more than 765,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District, in recognizing and commending Minister Belvin D. Ware, on his continued service as the newly appointed Pastor of Macon, Georgia's Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

RECOGNIZING JOHN GRAHAM, JR.

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the late John Graham, Jr. as the committed family man he was and will continue to be in memory.

While at Poquoson High School, he won notable achievements such as: becoming Virginia's Boys State Representative, being elected President of his Senior class, and was a brilliant athlete. John was such a brilliant athlete he not only received the role of Captain his junior and senior years of high school, he also was recognized as "Little All American" during his football career in college. His drive to play and contribute to his teams got him inducted into the RMC Hall of Fame in 2015.

While working for NASA he was a fundamental contributor to groundbreaking missions. John was critical in developing and building the budding space program, even working alongside the original astronauts. He also held crucial roles in the development of the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo space programs.

Unfortunately, right before John was eligible to retire from NASA, he was confronted with a decision that would change his life forever. His father was fighting through a tough battle with pancreatic cancer and asked John to take over the family business in his stead.

Showing true sacrifice and dedication to his family, John decided to leave his career at NASA in order to preserve his family's seafood business: Graham & Rollins. Keeping the spirit of a true family business, John brought his children and wife Sandra Graham to work alongside him, further cementing how his family was always a top priority. As President of Graham & Rollins, John expanded the company threefold, leaving a family legacy to his children and grandchildren.

During his successful career within the family business, John also took the time to mentor his sons and grandsons in wrestling. Due to his mentorship, his sons were able to blossom in the sport and each hold notable records. With a renewed sense of love for the sport, John had a vision to expand the fan base of wrestling. That's why he helped create the Peninsula Wrestling Association as well as founding the Virginia Duals. He even went on to serve as the team leader for the Olympic wrestling team in 1988 and 1996. Due to his contributions to the sport, John was awarded the Order of Merit for the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and was inducted into both the Virginia Wrestling and Lower Peninsula Halls of Fame.

John will always be known for his devotion to his family, his love for sports, and his unwavering commitment to give back to his community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing John Graham, Jr. and to thank his wonderful family for giving me the pleasure of acknowledging him and recognizing the kindness he shared with the world around him.

CONGRATULATING ARTESIA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. TERESA LEGER FERNANDEZ

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Bulldogs Football Team from Artesia High School in New Mexico. In November 2023, the Bulldogs won their 32nd State Football Championship in Class 5A. That is unmatched by any other high school in the state of New Mexico. In fact, the Artesia Football Program has won more State Football Championships than any high school in the nation since 1950.

To win a state championship takes teamwork, persistence, and determination. It's a reflection of the commitment of the school leaders, coaches, parents, and everyone in the community. It's a reflection of the Bulldogs' players' ability to succeed in their future endeavors.

Let us enshrine the names of every member of the Artesia High School football team forever:

Matt Saiz, Grant Johnson, Porter Hardman, Gael Ruiz, Axel Hartley, Juan Diego Duran, Derrick Warren, Izac Cazares, Brody McDonald, Jaden Waldrup, Phillip Finley-Rascon, David Hammond, Josiah Rodriguez, Jaeden Hutson, Jesse Lerach, Diego Lopez, Frankie Galindo, Jarren Wadkins, Jesse Armendariz, Cael Houghtaling, Angelo Silvas, Andrew Rodriguez, Jaykob Ortega, Edel Villa, Jett Whitmire, Haden Harcrow, Joseph Martinez, Jeremiah Chavez, Miguel Soto, Nye Estrada, Kaden Zuniga, David Ybarra, Cody Johnson, Gabino Barrera, Jake Vandevender, Zach Wells, Hagan Crockett, Tootie McNeil, Xavvy Jagger, Ayden Huffman, Jesus Estrada, Omar Salais, Rafael Orozco, Steven Williams, Diego Wesson, Dylan Fisher, Ricardo Huerta, Saul Peralta, Francisco Caley, Kaden Grantham, Myka Aguirre, Juan Leon, Ivan Chacon, Adrian Ramirez, Edgar Canillo, Kellen Worley, Enrique Armendariz, Garret Fisher, Stephen Butts, Daeven Hutson, Manuel Calderon, Jackson Parker, Devyn Velasquez, Troy Tomsic, Carson Troost, Caleb Martin, Marco Soto, Daniel Aguilar, Joel Crosby, Caleb Murray, Crecencio Cuellar, Jonathan Gonzalez, Fernando Lira, Kaden Beauregard, Ethan Conn, Bryce Parra, Jacob Parrish, Jack Byars, Gavin Brown, Ulrich Medez, Santiago Esquibel, Jacob Calderon, Xavier Ramirez, Braylon Kinnibrough, Kaiden Fredrickson, Andres Estrada, Yeudiel Salamanca, and Ricky Maesta.

Let us also remember the incredible work of the managers Max Klingshirm, Ryan Hickey, Jesus Ruiz, Matt Gage, and Kaiden Fredrickson as well as the coaches Jeremy Maupin, Jourdan Rodriguez, Jackson Bickel, Tony Jaramillo, Max Rodriguez, Derek Mon-

toya, Andy Lopez, and Cory Saxon. You're all great examples of the persevering spirit of New Mexico.

Go Bulldogs.

CELEBRATING WHIO-TV'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 75th anniversary of WHIO-TV, a leader in local news in my hometown of Dayton, Ohio.

WHIO was the first television station to begin broadcasting in Dayton, and has remained a CBS affiliate since that first broadcast. For nearly their entire history, WHIO has aired on Channel 7 in the Miami Valley and residents have routinely tuned in to the 'coverage they can count on.'

For three quarters of a century, WHIO has provided their audience with vital weather updates, local and national news coverage, and in-depth reports from their investigative unit, the I-Team. Our community also relies on Channel 7 for their sports coverage, faithfully airing both Bengals and Browns CBS games on Sundays.

The WHIO news team plays a vital role in keeping the Miami Valley informed and up to date on affairs that affect our everyday life. The Storm Center 7 weather team prepares viewers for their day, but also provides lifesaving information when severe weather strikes. The news team holds business and government accountable to the citizens they serve, as well as informing viewers of local and national news stories.

Local journalism is a critical part of our community and is instrumental to our democratic experiment. WHIO embraces that responsibility and has established itself as a trusted news source for the Dayton area. I join the Miami Valley in saying thank you for a steadfast 75 years, looking forward to tuning in for many more.

RECOGNIZING MARK HAFNER

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Keller City Manager, Mark Hafner, who is retiring after more than four decades of public service. At just 18 years old, Mr. Hafner started his career as a police officer. In 2001, he moved his family to Texas to lead the Keller Police Department as the Chief of Police. Under his watch, Keller's first Crime Control and Prevention District sales tax was passed, allocating a portion of the tax dollars toward ensuring public safety. Keller Police Department also earned its state and national accreditations and forged cutting-edge partnerships in 911 dispatch, animal services, detention, municipal court services, and policing with the cities of Colleyville, Roanoke, Southlake, and Westlake. He also oversaw two major police station expansions and renovation projects.