

If you are lucky enough to know my Dad, you know there are not enough words to say about him.

Dad taught us, inspired us to be better people everyday. He passed many lessons and things on to us kids.

Education is important. Five Perry High School graduates . . . were lucky to walk across the stage as Dad said our name with pride and we gave him a hug, Dad's hugs will never be beaten . . . and then five college graduates that represented the state of Iowa. Two graduates from UNI, a Central College grad, a Luther College grad, and a University of Iowa grad. Four out of five of us now work in schools or for schools. The fifth child actually makes money.

As a teacher in his building and watching him handle students and accommodating as needed to see them succeed, it became clear to me the impact we teachers and adults can have on our students. Sometimes all a kiddo needs to find success is for someone to genuinely hear them, and see them, and prove to them that someone cares about them after their mistakes, after their bad choices, and to not leave them out to dry. Dad took no greater pride than seeing the kids he harped on and held up tough expectations for, walk across the stage with a diploma in hand. He also made sure that each student had their name pronounced correctly, spending months before graduation with flash cards pronouncing each name over and over so that every student and family got to hear their child's name or their name as they crossed the stage. If you know how diverse Perry is, you know how tough a test this can be.

Another thing Dad taught us was how to love. How to love each other, how to love our parents, how to love our spouses and significant others, how to love our kids and grandkids. And it comes down to one word, selflessly.

Dad loved my mom, Dad is in love with my mom, unconditional, no question, Dan & Elizabeth 4evr. His patience, his grace, his unwavering support for mom in good and bad times was so clear, I understand what it truly means and looks like to love another person, not just saying you love them but to live it and prove it every day. Not every kid is lucky enough to see this from their parents but we were.

Dad showed us that we are never too busy or too far away to care and support your parents. Dad has so much love and respect for his parents, he would drop anything to be there for them, however, whenever they needed. Give back to the people that give so much for you.

Us kids know now, especially looking back on our growing up years how much Dad loved us. Tough love when we needed, patience and understanding when we needed that. Expectations that he had, but expectations that he made sure we knew were important for us to have for ourselves.

It is the little things like calling me Clairey or sending me a random amount on Venmo saying "Gas" or "Lunch on me". I was so excited for my Dad to meet my girlfriend's three boys, knowing they would love him and he would love them as if they were my own. Going out of his way to make sure our boys felt welcome to the Marburger family. I really wish Dad had an opportunity to play catch with them, especially the youngest and his passion and love he is developing for football and being able to bond over that. The grandkids don't yet understand what they lost today, but there will forever be "grandpas babies", bear traps, gummy bears in the freezer, and plenty of naps in grandpas chair. All things we will carry on.

My Dad was an incredible man, educator, husband, Dad, grandpa. A person I aspire to be and hope to make proud every day.

He will be greatly missed.

I love you, Dad. You are the best, forever".

Principal Marburger showcased to America, to Iowa, to our own families what Perry Strong means.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF NORMAN RAYMOND SMITH

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor the life of Norman Raymond Smith, Executive Director of Harmony House Senior Center, the Tremé Community Education Program, an agency of the New Orleans Council on Aging. He was the son of the late Yvonne and Matthew Smith, Sr., born on November 17, 1944, in New Orleans, Louisiana, in the Historic Tremé Community, located in the district I represent. Mr. Smith passed away on Sunday, January 14, 2024.

Mr. Smith and his family, Roman Catholics, attended St. Peter Claver Catholic Church. The Mass was conducted in Latin which Smith could not understand, but he enjoyed the Gregorian chants and the singing of standard Black Catholic Church Hymns. He sometimes visited other churches with friends, which had very powerful Tremé voices accompanied by piano and sometimes guitar or drums. In his adult life, Norman joined Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Church, where he served as an Usher.

As a youth living in the Historic Tremé, he attended Joseph A. Craig Elementary School, graduated from Joseph S. Clark Senior High School, and received his associate degree in Mortuary Science from the Commonwealth College of Science in Houston, Texas, becoming a licensed Mortician.

As a child, some of the first stories Smith heard were of family members from generations past. He knew that his father had been in the military, along with his grandfather and great-grandfather. In fact, his mother's great-grandfather had served in the War of 1812, and her great-uncle had fought in the 9th Cavalry Heavy Artillery in the Civil War. Their stories fascinated Norman. Soon after finishing his training, he was drafted into the Army where he was to serve as a telephone technician, arriving in Vietnam and transferred to work as an identification specialist, and later he was tasked with preparing fallen heroes for return home to their families. After Smith returned from Vietnam, he worked as a funeral escort stationed at Oakland Army Base. His military service included serving as a United States Army Sergeant, Quarter Master Corporal, and was a Purple Heart Recipient, though never receiving his Medal of Honor. He was honorably discharged in 1969. He was also a member of the Veterans of Foreign War, following his service in the Vietnam War, a member of the American Legion Post 500, and the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 15.

He returned to New Orleans and began working at Charbonnet-Labat Funeral Home, also working at several other funeral homes in the city. His passion to see his community uplifted led to his ultimate involvement in community politics. His life as a community activist

started to take shape. He attended the inaugural class at the Institute of Politics at Loyola University. Norman also served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention, electing President Jimmy Carter. Norman was instrumental in helping to elect countless men and women to state, local, and national offices.

Education was always very important to Norman, so at the age of 50, he returned to Southern University at New Orleans and earned a Bachelor of Arts, BA in History. Norman worked as an Education Specialist at the State Department of Education under Superintendent Kelly Nix, serving Veterans across the State of Louisiana. His departure from the Department of Education led him to follow his dream of creating calendars like the one he read as a child at Joseph A. Craig School, Norman Rockwell. He began what would eventually add up to nine years of research on historical Black figures from Louisiana under the title "Etches of Ebony Louisiana", dedicating the rest of his life to researching and educating his community in the contributions of Black people born in Louisiana. In 1983 he published his first calendar.

An active resident of New Orleans until his passing, Norman was a renowned Culture Bearer, Tremé's Drummer, Photographer, member of Joseph S. Clark Alumni Association, Knights of Peter Claver Tommy Lafon Chapter 214, Loyola Institute of Politics, Amistad Research Center, Southern University New Orleans Alumni Association, Officer/Member, New Orleans Embalmers Association, Crescent City Funeral Directors and Morticians Association, Louisiana Funeral Directors and Morticians Association, Louisiana Black History Historian, Political Strategist and President of Tremé Improvement Political Society (T.I.P.S.), and past member of the Upper Pontalba Board of Directors. He was also the Author and Publisher of "Footprints of Black Louisiana".

Norman was the proud father of two sons, Corey Norman Smith (Heather) and Christopher Jude Smith, born from his marriage to Joyce Singleton Smith. He was the loving grandfather of Sterling and Sydnei Smith, and Taylor Hampton; great-grandfather of Ava Rose and Dallan Steen, Jr., his sister Emelda Petit. Norman is preceded in death by siblings Emma Smith Brown, Matthew Smith, Jr., Anthony Smith, Verdelle Smith Johnson, Isabelle Smith, and Paulette Smith Pate.

He was one of those children who knew what he wanted to do at a young age. He wanted to be a historian. Specifically, he wanted to record and preserve Black history. As early as the fifth grade, Smith had the idea to make calendars that would bring to life the stories of Black historical figures. His goal was to share the many contributions Black people had made to American society, especially some who might be lesser known. "The point was to do something positive," he explained. "So little Black kids like me could have something to look forward to. To look up to." He successfully fulfilled his dream.

His impact on Greater New Orleans, especially the Tremé Community will forever remain engraved in the lives he touched along the way. Rest well, my brother.

HONORING THE CITY OF SANTA ROSA'S MAUI RECOVERY SUPPORT TEAM

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a team of public servants from the City of Santa Rosa all of whom traveled to and continue to support local and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recovery efforts in Maui, Hawaii following the tragic wildfires of August 2023. The team includes Division Chief—Fire Marshall Paul Lowenthal, Deputy Director of Water and Sewer Operations Joe Schiavone, Chief Building Officer Jesse Oswald, Marin Water Communications and Public Affairs Officer Adriane Mertens and Programmer—Analyst Jake Bayless. I have named the team as a Public Safety Hero of the Year from Sonoma County in California's 4th District as a result of their extraordinary selflessness, dedication and service to others.

While people across our nation watched in horror as a wildfire engulfed Lahaina, many in our district found the sight sickeningly familiar. Just a few years prior in 2017, the Tubbs Fire swept through Santa Rosa destroying thousands of homes and taking twenty-two lives. Our community has hard-won wisdom when it comes to recovering from wildfire.

So, when FEMA Region IX Administrator Robert Fenton called Santa Rosa to ask for their expertise, these extraordinary public servants answered. Mr. Lowenthal, Mr. Schiavone, Mr. Oswald, Ms. Mertens, and Mr. Bayless landed in Maui on August 27, 2023. Over the coming months, the team provided extensive technical guidance in debris removal, information recovery, public communications, sewer service restoration, water service restoration and the development of

Maui's official recovery web portal: mauirecovers.org.

Mr. Lowenthal has been to Maui four times since the fire and continues to consult Maui County's Department of Water Supply, Department of Public Works, and numerous other agencies on recovery. Mr. Bayless helped convert key digital resources for survivors including our own community's sonomacountyrecovers.org. into the new mauirecovers.org. The website now serves as the official clearinghouse for Maui fire survivors seeking recovery information and services. Ms. Mertens provided over two months of public information support and provided technical guidance on the development of mauirecovers.org. Mr. Schiavone continues to work with Maui drinking and wastewater and was critical to the testing, flushing and restoration of water services. Mr. Oswald helped develop damage assessments and a rebuilding framework. He continues to consult Maui County Development Services Administration on recovery plan implementation and permitting process.

Mr. Speaker, we thank this team of exemplary civil servants for their persistence, service and commitment to our nation. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor them here today.

**RECOGNIZING CANTON MAYOR
THOMAS BERNABEI**

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2024

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to Thomas Bernabei on his service as the Mayor of Canton, and my sincere gratitude for all that he has done for the people of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, the "Birthplace of Champions." I have appreciated his partnership as

we worked together to expand opportunity and deliver results for our shared constituents.

Mr. Bernabei's drive to lead is commendable, and I have no doubt that he has bettered countless lives as a result of his steadfast service. Throughout his time in office, he proved to be a true public servant and leader. He leads by example through his perseverance, compassion, and dedication to his role in the community.

As Mr. Bernabei goes on to continue serving our community in new ways, I wish him all the best in his future endeavors. On behalf of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, I thank Mr. Bernabei for his commitment to the people of Canton and to Northeast Ohio.

**RECOGNIZING THE WHEAT RIDGE
THEATRE COMPANY**

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Wheat Ridge Theatre Company for receiving the Wheat Ridge Business Association's 2023 Cultural Commission Award.

The Cultural Commission Award recognizes a local business or organization that helps enrich art and culture in Wheat Ridge. Wheat Ridge Theatre Company strives to promote an artistic community where participants can express their diverse points of view through performative arts with the focus of promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion. Their hard work and dedication to the Wheat Ridge Community is tremendous.

Congratulations to the Wheat Ridge Theatre Company on the accomplishments that led to this prestigious award. We are grateful for their continued contribution to the Wheat Ridge community.