

HONORING THE LEGACY OF THE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND (SAC) ELITE GUARD

HON. DON BACON

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of the Strategic Air Command (SAC) Elite Guard, as they celebrate their reunion this August.

Founded in 1956 by the visionary General Curtis Lemay, the Guard wasn't simply a security unit, it was the cornerstone of safeguarding our nation's most critical assets. Following WWII, the security surrounding our strategic air assets were woefully inadequate. Because of this, Lemay sanctioned Detachment "A" of the 3902nd Air Police Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, which later became known as the SAC Elite Guard.

Having had the privilege of serving as a SAC intel briefer, I can attest to the elite men and women that served in the Guard. They were hand-picked, rigorously trained, and became guardians not just of installations and resources, but those who shielded our nuclear arsenal, and served as our planet's greatest deterrence.

The Guard's mission was threefold: securing SAC Headquarters, protecting the Commander and Vice Commander, and as SAC ambassadors at official dignitary functions representing SAC with honor. Serving during the Cold War had its many complications, and the weight of responsibility all service men and women carried was immense, yet the Guard never faltered. The Guard pushed themselves to the limit, both physically and mentally, and the weight of these responsibilities forged an unbreakable bond between them, because they knew even the smallest mistake could have devastating consequences.

In 2004 the SAC Elite Guard Association was formed by former SAC Elite Guardsmen Sgt Mike Paventi and Sgt Herbert "Bill" Marshall. The association's mission was to maintain a social connection to those men and women that served and protected SAC Headquarters. The Guard's reunion each year is a chance to honor the legacy they built together. A chance to remember all our fallen comrades, whose sacrifices will never be forgotten, and a chance to reconnect with the brothers and sisters in arms who shared the Guard's extraordinary experience.

CONGRATULATING CHIEF MATT SHEPPARD OF THE FOUNTAIN VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR HIS RETIREMENT AND YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. MICHELLE STEEL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mrs. STEEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish a heartfelt congratulations to Chief Matt Sheppard of the Fountain Valley Police Department.

I would like to personally thank him for a remarkable 24 year tenure marked by service, selflessness, and commitment. I applaud Chief

Sheppard and am grateful for his dedication to our community in Fountain Valley. In occupying nearly every role within the department—from police officer, senior officer, sergeant, detective, lieutenant, captain and police chief—his experience and understanding are unmatched and is a direct reflection of his commitment to safety, security, integrity, and perseverance.

I know the Sheppard family is incredibly proud. My hope and prayer for our generation and the next is that they believe in the American Dream. This is the greatest country in the world, and as a first-generation American, I know firsthand that with hard work, anything is possible no matter who you are or where you are from.

While Chief Sheppard's leadership within the department will be missed greatly, the legacy he is leaving behind will not be easily forgotten. I am confident that I am joined by countless others—family, friends, and community leaders—in expressing our gratitude for his leadership in making the City of Fountain Valley "A Nice Place to Live".

I thank Chief Sheppard. I wish him the greatest of success in his new chapter.

CELEBRATING THE RESTORATION OF THE LAKE HOPATCONG FOUNTAIN

HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. KEAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the successful reconstruction of the Lake Hopatcong Fountain. Covering 2,500 acres and stretching a total of nine miles, Lake Hopatcong State Park is frequented by all with a love for the natural beauty New Jersey has to offer. Whether visiting to enjoy the water, take in the scenery, or spend valuable time with family and friends, visitors are now greeted with a beacon of community, camaraderie, and friendship upon entering. First opened to the public on July 16, 1925, the fountain served as a popular cooling spot and photo opportunity for all visitors until its closure in the 1990s due to a clogging issue. For years, the fountain thousands of people once knew and loved stood dry. With the help of the Historic Preservation Fund of Morris County, its full restoration was completed, and honored with a plaque. Providing much needed aeration for the Musconetcong River, a beloved asset for New Jersey citizens and visitors, and a tribute to the rich history of New Jersey, I am proud to honor its restoration.

HONORING COL. SIDNEY MILES

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of Colonel Sidney "Sid" Miles. Sid was the Colonel and Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Safety.

Recognized for his commitment to public education and enforcement of the Georgia

safety belt use law, Mr. Miles was presented with a public service award from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in 1998.

Prior to his appointment at the Department of Public Safety, Mr. Miles spent several decades serving at the Georgia State Patrol. He retired from his career in law enforcement in 1999. Mr. Miles was a dedicated public servant to the state of Georgia and will be greatly missed by those he served with.

I send my deepest condolences to Sid's wife and two children. My thoughts and prayers are with all of his family and friends at this moment.

CONGRATULATING KEVIN LYONS

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the achievements of Kevin Lyons and his work with the Monroe County Agriculture Extension Agency for Natural Resources.

Kevin has been an advocate in the agricultural industry for the past thirty-seven years across the Commonwealth of Kentucky. He is with the Kentucky Farm Bureau and the Cattlemen's Association where he served on the state board of directors for both organizations.

Kevin has devoted his time to improving agricultural productivity in Monroe County and the surrounding areas. Kevin helps people in the area start their own farms when he served as Financial Services officer for Farm Credit Mid America.

I am proud to recognize Kevin and all that he has done for agriculture in the 1st Congressional District.

CELEBRATING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MR. ED DWIGHT

HON. SHARICE DAVIDS

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the accomplishments of Mr. Ed Dwight.

In 1961, Mr. Dwight was a U.S. Air Force pilot when President John F. Kennedy selected him as a candidate for NASA's early astronaut corps. In the face of great pressure and prejudice, Mr. Dwight became the first Black astronaut candidate and advanced to the second phase of the training course. Despite his stellar accomplishments, qualifications, and graduation in the top half of a test pilot school, Mr. Dwight was not selected to be a part of the final astronaut group.

But, on May 20, 2024, at 90 years old, Mr. Dwight finally achieved spaceflight.

This story is perhaps a perfect representation of Mr. Dwight's drive and tenacity. He was born and raised in racially segregated Kansas City, Kansas. Mr. Dwight was the first Black male to graduate from Bishop Ward High School in Kansas City, a feat that did not come without experiencing hate and injustice. He earned his Associate of Arts in engineering

from Kansas City Community College and graduated cum laude from Arizona State University with a Bachelor of Science in aeronautical engineering before serving as a captain in the Air Force.

Even in the wake of disappointment following his rejection from the final 1963 astronaut group, Mr. Dwight did not retreat. Instead, he worked for IBM, started a construction company, opened his own barbecue restaurant, and finally, as if none of this was enough, earned a Master of Fine Art in Sculpture from the University of Denver. He's since become a highly respected artist. His sculptures focus on Black history and include memorials and monuments across the country.

The Kansas state motto is "ad astra per aspera," which means "through hardships to the stars." Mr. Dwight embodies everything it means to persevere and, literally, reach for the stars. He is a true example of the American dream, and I'm honored to have such an extraordinary individual call Kansas City home.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, on July 24, 2024, I was unable to vote due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 393.

RECOGNIZING FREDDY HOWELL

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of Bryan County Fire Chief Freddy Howell. Mr. Howell has had a wonderful thirty-nine year career serving his community, and we are all better off for and will deeply miss his passionate service.

During his time of public service for Bryan County, Mr. Howell led his department in various cleanup efforts and oversaw the expansion of the fire department.

He led the cleanup for a tornado in North Bryan that damaged many parts of our community, and Mr. Howell secured several grants that grew his department's team from 36 to over 100 firefighters.

The fire department also acquired new equipment, ambulances, and tankers under Mr. Howell's leadership. With his passion for aiding others, Mr. Howell greatly enhanced Bryan County's emergency response capabilities.

Following his retirement from the Bryan County Fire Department, Mr. Howell plans to join the private sector as a customer relationship manager. I thank Mr. Howell for his impactful public service to Bryan County.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF PATRICIA JEAN HAYES POPE

HON. VINCE FONG

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Patricia Pope on her 100th birthday.

Mrs. Patricia Jean Hayes Pope has lived in the Central Valley her whole life, having lived in San Martin, Salinas, King City, and now Visalia. Mrs. Pope will reach an incredible 100 years of age this August, and is deserving of recognition for the incredible life she continues to live.

Born on August 4, 1924, to Katherine Hitchcock and Francis "Austin" Hayes in San Jose, California, she is the middle child of three, born between her oldest brother Jack and younger brother Danny. While attending King City High School, she played piano for the dance band, clarinet in the school's marching band, and was the editor of the school newspaper.

After high school, Mrs. Pope attended Hartnell Junior College, after which she began teaching 4th grade at King City Grammar School. At the city pool in 1945, she met Marion Pope, who was then serving in the U.S. Navy. The next year, they were married in Del Monte, California, a marriage which would last 65 years. They later moved to King City, California, where they had five children together—Susan, Linda, Dennis, Laurie, and Leslie. Throughout their lives, Mrs. Pope has been dedicated to her children and active in their activities. She served as den mother for Cub Scouts and troop leader for Girl Scouts, taught 4-H sewing, and was president of the Parent Teacher Association.

Mrs. Pope has been an active member of her community throughout her life. She worked as the bookkeeper for her husband's painting business and was a substitute teacher at the local elementary school. Mrs. Pope also dedicated more than 4,000 hours as a volunteer at the local hospital service league. Mrs. Pope and her husband were key participants in the establishment of the Mee Memorial Hospital Foundation. To honor their life of service to the community, they were named King City Citizens of the Year in 1997.

After her husband's passing in 2012, Mrs. Pope moved to Visalia to be closer to her family. She is the proud grandmother of 2 grandsons, 7 granddaughters, and 16 great-grandchildren. In addition to spending time with her family, she remains a thriving member of the Visalia community, enjoying playing piano concerts, painting, and spending time with friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Mrs. Patricia Pope on her 100th birthday.

IN MEMORY OF CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE

HON. CLAY HIGGINS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise to respect the passing of Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. She leaves behind a significant legacy, grounded in a lifetime of passionate, diligent public service.

I came to know Sheila during the eight years we served on the Homeland Security Committee together. Having worked alongside her and engaged in countless debates with the good Congresswoman from Texas, I can say with full certainty that she was one of the hardest working Members of Congress I have known. Sheila was always incredibly well prepared, and although we commonly disagreed on ideological matters, I greatly respected her conviction.

In one of her final statements, she said, "the road ahead will not be easy, but I stand in faith that God will strengthen me."

I will miss Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, and I extend my most sincere condolences to her family.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF CHARLES OLVERA LONA

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to announce the passing of Charles "Charlie" Olvera Lona on June 26, 2024. Charlie was a beacon of justice, advocacy, and hope in Kansas City's Westside community and beyond. I urge us all to celebrate and remember the life of this incredible activist, community leader, friend, brother, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Born in Kansas City on October 14, 1946, to Wesley H. and Luz O. Lona, Charlie became an active community member of Kansas City's Westside neighborhood—a historic Mexican-American community—at birth. A graduate of Westport High School and Metropolitan Community College, Charlie took over his family business and transformed it into a Westside, and Midwest, staple.

Through dedication, effort, and business acuity, Charlie transformed his father's automotive repair shop into one specializing in building custom lowriders. His business, Lona & Sons Hydraulics, brought this unique aspect of Chicano culture to Kansas City. As Charlie allowed lowrider culture to make its mark on Kansas City, his skill and work brought attention from all over the United States.

Charlie's contribution to Kansas City's Chicano community did not stop at his business. He spent his life uplifting and empowering the residents of the Westside through his relentless advocacy and commitment to being a voice for the unheard. Worried that his fellow residents were being excluded from city affairs and left with disproportionately low resources, Charlie became a proud supporter of the Chicano Movement in the 1960s. He courageously marched, organized, and protested for