

in a theater presentation. The Parent-Teacher Organization also holds an annual fundraising dinner with all proceeds going towards grants to supplement North Side teaching materials and special projects. Last year the school established the Deidre Hannafin Writing and Publishing Center as a tribute to Hannafin, a dedicated teacher who died of cancer at the young age of 32. At the Center, students work side by side with their parents and teachers to publish a newspaper, classroom writing projects, and this year, a literary magazine.

While stressing the value of traditional subjects, students are encouraged to look into their creative sides through art, music and nature programs. The Enriched Integrated Studies Program is one more way that North Side attempts to reach each child's strengths. Students attend enrichment activities once a week in order to bring the classroom to life. Class topics have included Ancient Egypt and Greece, while the entire school participated in activities such as Science Day.

Long Island students receive a better education thanks to the faculty and teachers of North Side Elementary School and I am proud to name them school of the month for April in the Fourth Congressional District of New York.

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE
MARTHA MANUEL CHACON

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 13, 2000

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I inform my colleagues of the passing of a great individual, a person who graced our world and the lives of so many people with love and compassion.

Martha Manuel Chacon, who passed away on March 28, 2000, was a beloved tribal elder of the San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians. She was totally dedicated to providing a better way of life for her tribal members as well as for future generations of Serranos and all Native Americans.

Mrs. Chacon's legacy will live on forever in the many lives she touched during her 89 years on this Earth. She demonstrated to all of us complete and total honesty and strength as well as leadership and courage.

Martha Manuel Chacon was and remains so much a tremendous person in our thoughts and in our memories. I appreciate so much and will long remember the many good and positive things she brought into the lives of so many people and to the lives of the people of the San Manuel Tribe.

I join with Martha's friends and family members in honoring such a truly remarkable and outstanding person, someone who gave so much to those she loved. Each of us is better and more fortunate for what she unselfishly gave to us and gave to our world, a world made so much brighter and gentler by her life and her presence.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all of those who loved Martha Manuel Chacon in extending our prayers, knowing that God's heaven will forever be blessed and graced by her presence.

TRIBAL MATRIARCH CHACON DIES AT 89

(By Joe Nelson)

SAN BERNARDINO—Martha Manuel Chacon was the backbone of the San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians—possessing honesty, strength, leadership, and courage. She was considered a true friend in every sense of the word, family members say.

After a lifetime of service to the San Manuel tribe, Chacon died Tuesday at St. Bernardino Medical Center in San Bernardino. She was 89.

Chacon was the granddaughter of Santos Manuel—for whom the tribe is named.

Manuel was responsible for saving the tribe during difficult transition times in 1866, when settling in one place was a challenge because American Indians routinely were forced to move from one location to another as land got swallowed up. It was Manuel who was key in settling the tribe near Highland, where it has remained to this day.

Chacon helped bring electricity to the reservation in the 1950s and running water to tribal homes in the 1960s. Her leadership helped the tribe improve its quality of life and plan its future, members said.

One thing family members said they will remember about Chacon was her strong connection to Serrano ancestry, culture and heritage.

Chacon's daughter, Pauline Murillo, 67, remembers the stories her mother told her when she was a child—part of the American Indian oral tradition.

Chacon often would converse with family members in the Cahuilla language.

"We shared the customs. She would call me or I would call her and we would speak Indian," Murillo said.

As a young adult, when jobs were scarce and she faced extreme poverty, Chacon commuted to Los Angeles and spent the work week there as a house cleaner to make ends meet. She would return to the reservation on the weekends to be with her family, Murillo said.

The time away never negatively impacted Chacon's relationship with her family, relatives said.

"She was a very strong person. She was like the backbone to our whole family," said granddaughter Audrey Martinez, who serves as the tribe's secretary-treasurer.

Chacon is survived by her husband, Raoul; children Pauline Murillo, Roy Chacon, Rowena "Rena" Ramos, Sandy Marquez, Raoul "Beanie" Chacon Jr., and Carla Rodriguez; 18 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren; and four great-great grandchildren.

A rosary will be recited at Chacon's home on the San Manuel Reservation at 7 p.m. Monday. The funeral will be at 10 a.m. Tuesday, also at Chacon's home.

Donations in Chacon's memory can be sent to: Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Foundation, 11234 Anderson Road, Room A607, Loma Linda 92354.

HONORING MR. PAUL JOHNSON OF SPRINGFIELD, TENNESSEE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 31ST ANNIVERSARY OF HIS HEROIC MISSION TO VIETNAM

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 13, 2000

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, today I honor Mr. Paul Johnson of Springfield, Tennessee,

on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of his heroic mission to Vietnam.

"Hero" is a term that I do not use lightly. However, "hero" is the most fitting word I could ever use to describe Paul Johnson and men like him, who risked their lives fighting for our country around the world.

As a career military man and Vietnam veteran, Paul Johnson has served our country well, retiring from the U.S. Army in 1985. However, until recently his story was largely unknown. Paul Johnson is not the kind of person who talks about his heroism. Perhaps that selflessness is what has made him a true hero.

Paul Johnson was only 29 years old when he arrived in Vietnam in the fall of 1968. He never dreamed that his year-long tour there would include an episode calling for him to risk his own life to save 90 U.S. Marines from a certain, fiery death. For such courage, Johnson was awarded the Soldier's Medal, one of the highest honors one can receive from the United States Army.

April 9, 1969, is a day that Sergeant Paul Johnson will never forget. That afternoon, after safely getting himself and others away from an explosives area, he was approached for assistance by a Marine Colonel who said that one hundred U.S. Marines were trapped inside a bunker beside an ammunition pad which had caught fire. The Marine Colonel could not order the Army soldier to assist, but stressed the need to rescue these men.

Johnson, knowing that the likelihood of surviving such a mission was very slim, made the decision to take his personnel carrier and go in anyway, risking his own life in the process. Although Johnson did not ask any of his men to go with him, his driver agreed to undertake the rescue mission with him. The two of them made four trips back and forth to the bunker that day through the smoke, heat, and flames, to rescue 90 men. According to his reports, each time they picked up a group of men, they greeted him with tears and shouts of joy. The day after the ordeal, Johnson drove past the location of the rescue and there was just a burned out hole where the bunker and ammunition dump had once been located. Paul believes that he made the miraculous rescue that day with the help of God.

The driver who assisted Paul in the rescue did not return from Vietnam. He was later killed in battle, with Johnson near his side. Johnson is appreciative of accolades he has received, but remains ever mindful of his friends and fellow soldiers who gave their lives in the conflict. Those are the individuals that Johnson believes should be honored and remembered. In fact, he flies an American flag in his yard in honor of those slain and as a symbol of the freedom he fought so hard to keep.

Paul Johnson was recently honored by the Tennessee State Legislature for his bravery and courage that April day and for his service to this nation. Currently, Paul is employed by the Robertson County Highway Department and is very actively involved in community and civic affairs.

May we not forget Paul Johnson and those like him, who have fought so bravely, and so selflessly to ensure our continuing freedom for this and future generations.