

Worth Fire Department and on his Fort Worth friends was enormous. Chief Gaines undertook with vigor the task of implementing a 4-man company staffing plan for the Fort Worth Fire Department to ensure that citizens enjoyed the best fire protection possible, while also undertaking a review of the Fire Department to abolish inefficient practices.

Chief Gaines was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and graduated from Oklahoma City Northwest Classen High School before enlisting in the U.S. Air Force in 1975 where he entered the Air Force fire protection services as a crash rescue firefighter. He was stationed at various Air Force bases and rose to the rank of assistant fire chief when he was honorably discharged in 1980. Chief Gaines joined the Oklahoma City Fire Department and became a firefighter in 1981 where he continued as a frontline firefighter and supervisor until 1985 when he became a fire services instructor. Beginning in 1990, Chief Gaines served the Oklahoma City community in various capacities as deputy chief, including deputy chief for personnel, training and safety operations. When the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building occurred in 1995, Chief Gaines was one of the first rescuers to reach the scene and served as the operations safety officer during the first 36 hours after the bombing, providing critical leadership that ensured the safety of firefighters and others who had rushed to the rescue of the victims of the bombing.

Chief Gaines was named Fort Worth fire chief in 2002 in a nationwide search and had the distinction of being the city's first African American fire chief. His fellow firefighters say his analytical ability, dedication to safety and determination made him "a consummate professional." Nothing signifies his dedication and hard work more than his personal development efforts. While serving as a full time firefighter, Chief Gaines earned a Southern Nazarene University Bachelor of Science degree, an Oklahoma City University Masters of Business Administration degree and graduated from the National Fire Academy's Executive Officers Program.

At the same time, Chief Gaines was fiercely dedicated to his family and friends, always there with a bright smile and wit.

Chief Gaines' outstanding professional abilities have indeed made Fort Worth a better place in which to live and work. It is with humility that I honor Fort Worth Fire Chief Charles Gaines as a great American who used his skills and talents wisely. Chief Gaines will be missed but not forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO BYRON NELSON—
AMERICAN GOLFER

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, ask 100 people on the street who is the best golfer in history, I bet a majority of them would reply "Tiger Woods." Ask that same question to 100 professional golfers, and their answer would be "Byron Nelson."

Byron Nelson was born February 4, 1912 in Waxahachie, Texas. He did not grow up with

the ambition to ever be a professional golfer; he just enjoyed playing it in his spare time. The onslaught of the Great Depression, and his subsequent unemployment, led Nelson to professionally pursue golf in 1932.

Known to golfers as the game's "Ultimate Gentleman," Nelson impressed audiences and fellow players alike with his good nature, his graceful swing, and his ability to win. In 1937, Nelson won The Masters, his first major tournament win. He would go on to win four more major tournaments over the years: the 1939 U.S. Open, the 1940 and 1945 PGA Championship, and the 1942 Masters. The accomplishment that he is the most well known for, however, did not come until 1945—13 years after he turned professional.

As America was winning World War II, Byron Nelson was winning golf tournaments. In 1945, Nelson did the unimaginable, winning 11 consecutive golf tournaments. By the end of 1945, Nelson had won a record 18 total tournaments—a record that still remains intact today. The closest anyone has come to challenging Nelson's record was Tiger Woods, who impressively won 6 consecutive tournaments in 2001; however, failed to catch the record by five tournaments. His last professional tour ended in 1946, when at the age of 34, he decided to live the simple life of a rancher.

Although Nelson had retired, his love and dedication for the game continued. For years later, he was a frequent ceremonial starter at The Masters tournament. Nelson was also always amazed at how the game of golf was evolving, from the "rising new stars" to the change in club material to the amounts of money involved. In a 1997 interview, Nelson stated, "I did not even dream in my wildest imagination there would be as much money. . . . I only won \$182,000 in my whole life." Mr. Speaker, nowadays winning a professional tournament yields millions of dollars, so one can understand Nelson's amazement at the winnings now.

Byron Nelson was the recipient of the 1974 Bob Jones Award for distinguished sportsmanship in golf. It is considered the highest honor awarded by the U.S. Golf Association. He has also been inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame, and is the only professional golfer to have a stop on the PGA tour named after him—EDS Bryon Nelson Championship played in Dallas, Texas.

Golf was not the only passion in Nelson's life. He was also a devout Christian, who gave his time, energy, and money to Abilene Christian University (ACU)—my alma mater. Nelson had a long family history with ACU. In his family lineage were the fourth and seventh Presidents of the University. Nelson's brother is currently a professor at ACU and his sister is an alumna.

Nelson was a member of the University's Board of Trustees and National Development Council. In 1984 Nelson and his wife of 50 years, Louise, established the Byron and Louise Nelson Golf Endowment, to raise funds for ACU. A dinner was held in his honor and the results netted enough funding to permanently institute the men's golf program at ACU. Nelson also continued to lend not only his name, but his person, each year to ACU's Byron Nelson Golf Tournament. His dedication and devotion to ACU allowed the men's golf program

to flourish, winning eight Lone Star Conference golf championships and one NCAA Division II championships.

For 94 years, Bryon Nelson was a man among men, always a gentleman, always a leader, always a Christian. On Tuesday, September 26, this great man passed away at his home in Roanoke, Texas. Bryon Nelson is not only mourned throughout the professional golf community, but throughout Abilene Christian University, where he gave so much of himself and asked for nothing in return. So his life will be remembered by all, as a great person and a great golfer.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION OF
MR. C. LARRY RHODES TO OUR
TROOPS

HON. JOHN N. HOSTETTLER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Mr. HOSTETTLER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the personal dedication of one of my constituents from Southern Indiana, Mr. Larry Rhodes, to our troops in the field, and their families here at home. Mr. Rhodes, a Vietnam Veteran, recognized the need for his community to step in and volunteer their time, energy, and resources to the families of our troops preparing to deploy to Iraq. Rather than wait for an opportunity to do his part, Mr. Rhodes took the initiative and formed the support organization "Operation: Support on the Homefront."

In the Summer of 2005, Mr. Rhodes began holding events for families of soldiers in the National Guards 163rd Field Artillery unit, and the Army Reserves 406th Corps Support Battalion, both of which have units in my congressional district—the 8th District of Indiana.

Mr. Rhodes has organized numerous fund-raising events, including concerts, dinners, silent auctions, and of course a joyous Christmas party for the families, where a huge dinner was served and all of the children received donated gifts. In addition to his fund-raising efforts, Mr. Rhodes has worked with the business community in Evansville and surrounding communities to encourage them to provide discounted products and services to the families of the deployed soldiers.

This August, after months of negotiating with the U.S. government, Mr. Rhodes and his producer Steve Olglesby, were given permission to travel to Iraq to spend time with troops from the 163rd and 406th, conduct interviews, and film a short documentary of their experiences in Iraq. Underscoring the hazardous nature of this trip, the day Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Olglesby left Al Diwaniyah, the base where they were staying came under mortar attack. Luckily, no one was injured.

This dedication to our troops, commitment to our country, and selfless sacrifice deserves the praise and recognition of a grateful community and country. I commend Mr. Larry Rhodes for his personal service to his country and his ongoing efforts to support our men and women in uniform that proudly serve today.