

HONORING HERITAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR BEING NAMED A NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Heritage Elementary School located in Colleyville, Texas for being named a 2006 No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon School. Only 26 public schools in Texas will receive this coveted award this year.

The No child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels. Schools must make adequate yearly progress in reading, language arts and mathematics.

Heritage Elementary is no exception as Principal Stacy Voigt, her staff, the students and their families have poured dedication and heart into creating a fertile learning environment in Colleyville. They have realized the immense potential of all those involved in making a school Blue Ribbon-worthy.

The No child Left Behind Act is the bipartisan landmark education reform law designed to change the culture of America's schools by closing the achievement gap offering more flexibility to States, giving parents more information and options and teaching students based on what works. Under the law's strong accountability provisions, States must describe how they will close the achievement gap and make sure all students, including those with disabilities, achieve academically.

I extend my sincere congratulations to Heritage Elementary School for receiving this award. This school's contribution and services should serve as inspiration to us all.

TRIBUTE TO DR. VICTOR RODRIGUEZ

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor Dr. Victor Rodriguez, a native of Edna, Texas in my congressional district. Dr. Rodriguez's achievements in, and dedication to, education are an inspiration to us all. As detailed in his autobiography, *The Bell Ringer*, Dr. Rodriguez developed endurance and perseverance at an early age when his third grade teacher assigned him the task of ringing the bell for the St. Agnes Catholic Church.

For nine years, Victor Rodriguez woke up at 4 a.m. and jogged two miles to the church to ring the bell before the 5 a.m. mass. While this was obviously a difficult responsibility for a child, Dr. Rodriguez later said that he "came to accept ringing that bell as an honor . . . whenever I was tired and didn't feel like getting out of bed, I remembered my mom's encouragement. She used to say that if you do something, do it to the very best of your ability."

The importance of hard work, endurance, and dedication that Victor Rodriguez learned

as a bell ringer stayed with him throughout his life. Dr. Rodriguez was a star athlete who set many records and won numerous trophies at Edna High School, Victoria College, and North Texas State University. After earning his Ph.D, Dr. Rodriguez began a successful career as a teacher and as a coach of several championship track teams. In his work as a teacher and coach, Dr. Rodriguez inspired his students to strive to achieve their goals and dreams.

During Dr. Rodriguez's 12 years as superintendent of the San Antonio School District, the dropout rate was reduced from 50 percent to less than 10 percent. Applying the lessons in perseverance he learned as a young bell ringer, then superintendent-elect Dr. Rodriguez promised San Antonio School District's kindergarten class that he would stay as superintendent as long as they were in school. Of course, Dr. Rodriguez kept that promise, not retiring until 1994 when the kindergartners of 1981 were seniors in high school.

During his tenure as superintendent, Dr. Rodriguez won numerous awards and honors, including an achiever award from the Alamo Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America, representative from Texas in the 1989 National Superintendent of the Year Award Program sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators and the Service-Master Company, induction into the National Hispanic Sports Hall of Fame; and honoree in Ford Motor Company's Hispanic Salute recognizing San Antonio Hispanics for outstanding contributions to education and literacy. Executive Educator magazine twice named Dr. Rodriguez one of the Hundred Top School Executives in the nation. Just last month, Dr. Rodriguez was honored by his alma mater by being named a 2006 inductee into the University of North Texas's Athletic Hall of Fame.

Dr. Rodriguez's application of the lessons he learned, as a young church bell ringer should serve an example to all of us. It is a pleasure to offer my congratulations and thanks to Dr. Victor Rodriguez for all of his efforts to help Texas schoolchildren.

HONORING JULIA PON ON THE OCCASION OF HER 80TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a woman who whose quiet contributions in her support for her family make her community of supporters proud.

A native Californian and the daughter of immigrants, Julia Pon grew up on the orange groves of San Juan Capistrano, and after graduation from San Francisco College for Women, came to Santa Clara Valley to join her husband, Joe, in working and caring for the orchards for which our valley was world famous. As a great tribute to her patience and understanding, Julia Pon raised 9 children with her husband.

As Julia celebrates her 80th birthday on December 10, 2006, we celebrate a strong and courageous woman who has raised family members who have become successful members of society and who has lived a demonstrable life.

RECOGNIZING BOB AND SHARON BLANCHARD OF DADE CITY, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a husband and wife from Dade City, Florida who were recently awarded the prestigious 1000 Friends of Florida Award. Bob and Sharon Blanchard are the owners of a two thousand plus acre working ranch in the heart of Pasco County. In addition to breeding horses and cattle and hosting an annual steeplechase event, the Blanchards have taken the extra step to provide environmentally sensitive stewardship of their ranch.

Little Everglades Ranch has been reforested and is a conservation easement, assuring it will be protected from development. The Blanchards have also taken leadership roles in the Coalition to Protect Our Water Resources.

During his acceptance of the award, Bob Blanchard said that after his retirement, he was wondering what to do with the rest of his life. He credits his wife for being the driving force behind their efforts to make waves for the good of the community.

1000 friends of Florida promotes healthy urban and natural places by wise management of growth and change. 1000 Friends of Florida helps citizens have the technical knowledge and access needed to ensure that public and private decisions lead to livable communities.

Mr. Speaker, environmentally engaged citizens like the Blanchards are to be commended for not only maintaining a working ranch in the midst of a growing suburban region of Florida, but for also doing so in a way that protects our fragile ecosystem. I applaud the Blanchards on earning the 1000 Friends of Florida award and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOHN HENRY PORTER, JR.

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a doctor and educator, who works every day to expand the chiropractic profession. Dr. John Henry Porter, Jr., is a highly-regarded chiropractor in my home State of South Carolina, and he is being recognized by his peers on November 18, 2006 as a trail-blazer.

John Porter is a native of Spartanburg, South Carolina, where today he has a successful practice and teaches aspiring chiropractic students at his alma mater, Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic. As an Associate Professor of Clinic Sciences, Dr. Porter teaches Toggle Recoil and Full Spine. He has been with the college since 1979, and enjoys helping students enter the exciting and rewarding career of Chiropractics.

While teaching students, Dr. Porter has also continued his education by taking courses in Chiropractic Radiographic Interpretation, Adjusting Methods, and Chiropractic Principals.