

A TRIBUTE TO HELEN KLEBERG GROVES

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Helen Kleberg Groves, who will be honored on October 3, 2009 at the Autry National Center's Annual Gala, "Celebrate the Spirit: Women of the West." The Autry National Center's mission is to tell the stories of all the diverse peoples of the American West, and that is reflected in the themes of their Galas—this year's theme, 'Celebrate the Spirit: Women of the West' reflects the often neglected stories of Western women.

Helen Kleberg Groves is a true Texas cowgirl, a mother, a grandmother, an author, and a philanthropist with a heart as big as the King Ranch, her family home. Groves was born in San Antonio on October 10, 1927, the child of Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg. She was reared on the 825,000-acre ranch in South Texas, where she learned about ranching, line breeding, genetics, and working cattle from her father.

She attended Henrietta M. King High School in Kingsville; St. Mary's Hall in San Antonio; and Foxcroft School in Middleburg, Virginia. She also attended Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. In addition to raising five daughters and a son, Groves made time for civic work while spending a lifetime in ranching and livestock. For more than 30 years, from 1956 to 1988, she was on the board of directors of King Ranch Inc.

She is president of the Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation, established in 1950 by her parents. The foundation has funded countless projects in Texas and across the country, particularly in the areas of biomedical research, health services, higher education, and veterinary and wildlife projects.

Ms. Kleberg Groves has been called an ambassador to the equine industry for her support of equine research and contributions to the development of the American Quarter Horse.

Known as the "First Lady of Cutting," Groves has spent decades breeding, raising, and riding cutting horses. She began competing in cutting horse events in 1972 and took many championships until she retired from competition. She is a member of the National Cutting Horse Association Hall of Fame, National Cowgirl Hall of Fame, and the Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame.

Among her numerous honors is the Order of Australia from the Governor General of Australia. She was only the second American to receive this award. She is emeritus director of the U.S. Equestrian Team and a lifetime vice president of the Texas and Southwest Cattle Raisers Association.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me in paying tribute to Helen Kleberg Groves, an inspiring individual—and true Woman of the West.

IN TRIBUTE TO GRAHAM HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING COACH RON McCUNN

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I am honored today to commend to the House the life and career of my friend and former wrestling coach, Ron McCunn, who passed away last month at age 63.

Ron McCunn coached at Graham High School in St. Paris, Ohio, for 23 years. During his career, he led Graham's wrestlers to their first three state championships (1982, 1998, and 2001). His hard work, dedication, and discipline not only brought national recognition to the wrestling program, but also had a positive impact on the students, athletes, and families whose lives he touched.

In addition to his coaching duties, Coach McCunn taught chemistry and physics at Graham.

Madam Speaker, a ceremony was held at Graham High School on Saturday, September 12, marking Coach McCunn's years of service and devotion to his students. I was honored to join former teammates, students, and friends from throughout the region in celebrating his contributions and accomplishments. I offer my sincerest condolences to his wife, Dale; their son, Steve; Ron's mother, Peggy; and all of their family and friends.

CONGRATULATING SCOTTSDALE DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF JAMES FORD

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Scottsdale Deputy Fire Chief James Ford for his induction into the Arizona Fire Service Hall of Fame on September 10, 2009. Chief Ford will be recognized for his continued dedication and service to the community. The Arizona Fire Service Hall of Fame recognizes those who make constructive contributions to their community.

Throughout his career, Chief Ford has worked tirelessly to promote the safety and security of the Scottsdale community, and his efforts have saved countless lives. He has dedicated much of his career to ensuring the safety of every community member by pushing for the installation of residential and commercial sprinkler systems. His pioneering research and advocacy on behalf of mandatory sprinkler systems, which activate automatically during a fire emergency to preserve lives and property, has established Scottsdale as a national and international leader in fire safety.

I am proud to represent such a compassionate and hard working individual in my district. Not only have his efforts benefited the community, but he has inspired communities elsewhere to develop and implement mandatory sprinkler ordinances.

Therefore, I urge you Madam Speaker to join me in recognizing and congratulating James Ford on his recent induction and his lasting contributions to his profession and community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, on Monday, September 14, 2009, I missed three recorded votes on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 696, "yea" on rollcall 697, and "yea" on rollcall 698.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY AVIATION DIRECTOR WILLIAM DECOTA

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life—and mourn the passing—of Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) Aviation Director William DeCota.

Bill DeCota was appointed director of the world's largest aviation system in 1999. As Aviation Director for PANYNJ, he supervised the management of a diverse portfolio of airports, from international hubs like Laguardia and Kennedy to Teterboro, a general aviation reliever airport located in my congressional district in New Jersey. Before assuming the position of Aviation Director, Bill served PANYNJ as Deputy Director of Aviation, Assistant Director for Business and Properties, and Manager of Business and Financial Services for the Aviation Department.

In all aspects of discharging his responsibilities, Bill was superlative. He oversaw the largest airport improvement program in the history of the United States, and he brought his keen expertise of airport congestion to bear on one of the Nation's most crowded air corridors. During my time in Congress, I have fought to reduce airport overcrowding and aircraft noise pollution, as well as increase safety at Teterboro and all of our national airports. In that fight, Bill was an ally, partner, mentor, and friend. His institutional knowledge and acute understanding of the difficulties faced by people living near airports, as well as his consistent good humor and positive outlook, made him indispensable. He will be sorely missed.

In the wake of his untimely passing, Bill leaves a legacy of safer air travel and improved quality of life for airport neighbors. He gave back to the community as richly and generously in his personal life as he did in his career, serving—in addition to positions on a variety of aviation-related boards—as president of the Queens Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Madam Speaker, Bill DeCota was a public servant of the highest order; humble, capable and knowledgeable. I rise today to applaud his achievements, mourn his passing, and express my heartfelt condolences to his friends, family and coworkers. New Jersey, and the country, are poorer for having lost him.