

Cheyney University; she also holds a master's degree in psychology from Howard University where she also became a candidate for a Ph.D. in psychology. She earned a doctor of ministry degree from New York Theological Seminary. She holds two honorary degrees from Bethune-Cookman College and a doctor of humane letters from the National Theological Seminary and College. Upon completion of her studies, Dr. Bronson returned to Cheyney in 1967 where she taught for 17 years as an associate professor of psychology. Since retiring from that position to devote her full energies to her growing church, she continues to be a valued member of the Cheyney family.

Her many other appointments include: Dean of the Philadelphia Urban Education Institute, a subsidiary of the African American Interdenominational Ministries, Inc. (AAIM, Inc.) of Philadelphia in association with the major seminaries of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Member of the Board of One Church, One Child, Inc., of Pennsylvania, a statewide organization that encourages members of African-American Churches to adopt African-American children. She was a member of the Mayor of Philadelphia's Transition Team and currently serves on the board of the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation and the Executive Committee of the Association of Theological Schools.

Dr. Bronson's faith has led her to minister in prisons; serve as a block captain; work to rid the community of drugs and violence; feed the hungry; and keep her church doors open seven days a week. She is a tireless agent of change ideally qualified to lead the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity to new heights as it strives to "help the downtrodden" and those "pushed aside." In many ways, Dr. Bronson has been fulfilling this calling all her life. Early in the HIV/AIDS crisis, when some churches were turning away those afflicted with the disease, Dr. Bronson called on her fellow clergy members to accept those stricken by this terrible disease and to offer education and testing in their communities, a mission she plans on continuing in her new post.

Madam Speaker, I ask that this House acknowledge Bishop Dr. Audrey F. Bronson, as a testament to Marian Wright Edelman's observation that: "education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it." Bishop Bronson's life of preaching, learning and teaching has made her a pillar of strength, wisdom, and civic spirit. She has empowered countless African-American families to live fuller, more purposeful lives through their faith in God and one another. With her new responsibilities at the helm of one of the premier spiritual collectives in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, her ability to guide, counsel and inspire across an entire metropolitan region is very welcome news.

Particularly during these very difficult times, she is the perfect "watchman on the wall."

HONORING MARCELLA OBERTI

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Marcella Oberti upon

her 100th birthday. A celebration will be held for Mrs. Oberti on her birthday, December 6th.

Mrs. Marcella Oberti was born on December 6, 1909, in San Francisco, California. Her mother was a native San Franciscan and her father was an immigrant from Genoa, Italy. At the age of 5, Mrs. Oberti participated in the 1913 Pan-Pacific Exposition. As a young girl, she attended Montessori Grammar Schools in San Francisco. Upon graduating from high school, she attended the University of California, Berkley, where she majored in English Literature and Language. She graduated from UC Berkley in 1932 and began working for Bank of America in the legal division.

In 1938, Mrs. Oberti married Frank Oberti and they moved to Madera, California. It was a large transition for her; adjusting from a large city life to rural country life. She became active in the community, joining various clubs and organizations. Mr. Oberti and his brothers were busy developing the Oberti Olive Company, which became Madera's largest industry at that time. The small company grew to include 220 acres, processing over 120 tons of olives per day.

Mr. and Mrs. Oberti have two children: Carla and Philip. Mr. Oberti passed away in 1984. Mrs. Oberti leads a busy life visiting San Francisco, playing bridge with friends, spending time with her family, friends and cat. She spends much of her time with Carla and her husband, Bill, Philip and his wife, Klina, her five grandchildren and her six great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring Marcella Oberti upon her 100th birthday.

HONORING VIRGINIA S. BAUER

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Virginia S. Bauer of Red Bank, New Jersey. Ms. Bauer will be honored as a "Woman of Distinction" by the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore for her dedication and commitment to the families and victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Ms. Bauer, a widow of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, worked closely with congressional leaders and the White House to pass legislation for September 11 victims in 2002, and initiated efforts to enact federal tax relief for surviving family members. Currently, Ms. Bauer is assisting in the creation of a new development plan for the World Trade Center site in lower Manhattan. Ms. Bauer also serves as senior vice president of Covenant House and is a commissioner of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

The Girl Scouts is an organization dedicated to providing a nurturing environment for young girls to build character and skills for success in the future. It was founded by Juliette Gordon in 1912 in Savannah, Georgia, and has since grown by over three million members worldwide through its many regional chapters. The organization also honors women who represent diversity and leadership in their communities. The Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore will present Ms. Bauer with a "Woman of Distinction" award on April 13, 2010.

Madam Speaker, I sincerely hope my colleagues will join me in thanking Ms. Bauer for the work she does in supporting my constituency, as well as congratulate her upon receiving the "Woman of Distinction" award from the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CITY OF FAIRFAX, VA., FIRE CHIEF THOMAS W. OWENS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor City of Fairfax Fire Chief Thomas W. Owens and to recognize his decades of public service.

Chief Owens has had a long and distinguished career in public safety. His journey began in 1969 when, at the age of 16, he joined the Sterling, Va., Volunteer Fire Department. During his 21-year tenure with that organization, he served in all operational capacities and eventually rose to the rank of Chief of the department.

Shortly after he began volunteering with the Sterling Fire Department, Chief Owens began his career as a professional firefighter in 1972 as a Firefighter/Station Office with Prince William County, Va., Fire and Rescue. Between 1972 and 1990, Chief Owens' held a number of positions with several municipal fire departments in the National Capital Region, including those in Prince William, Washington, D.C., Loudoun County, and Fairfax County.

In 1990, Chief Owens stepped down from his duties with the Sterling Volunteer Fire Department. That same year, he became the first Director of Fire and Rescue for the Frederick County, Va., Fire and Rescue Department. In 1998 Chief Owens returned to Northern Virginia as Assistant Fire Chief of the City of Fairfax Fire Department, and, in 2003, he was appointed Chief.

This impressive history of regional service tells only a small part of the Chief Owens story and barely captures his many contributions to our community. Under his leadership, emergency preparedness and public and professional education were top priorities. Chief Owens established a formal Life Safety Education Program which emphasized fire safety education for our most vulnerable residents, children and seniors. In addition, he created a citizen-based Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) with grant funding. His dedication to the continued education of emergency responders helped lead to an expansion of the Public Safety Training Center, the strengthening of flammable liquids firefighting capabilities and the implementation of a swift water rescue program. Under the leadership of Chief Owens, the City established an Office of Emergency Management.

Chief Owens has had a permanent, indelible impact in another unique area. He led the efforts to strengthen and enhance the working relationship between the City of Fairfax Fire Department, the leaders of the Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. and the City of Fairfax Professional Firefighters and Paramedics Association which fostered mutual respect, support and cooperation and resulted in second-to-none service to the residents of the