

and will positively impact the lives of countless scholars for years to come.

CELEBRATING MARIACHI AZUL Y PLATA'S STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mariachi Azul Y Plata of the Ben Bolt Palito Blanco Independent School District for recently winning its second consecutive state mariachi championship in Class 2A.

Ben Bolt High School and the people of South Texas are proud of the musicians of Mariachi Azul Y Plata for their hard work and impressive talent. This accomplishment is a testament to the dedication of these young men and women. Through their state title, Ben Bolt has set the bar for generations of high school mariachi musicians to come.

The mariachi band is composed of 23 students, who jointly participated in auditions against other schools to attend the competition. Azul Y Plata excelled in their division and they continue to embrace the Mariachi culture and keep our Hispanic heritage alive.

Congratulations again to the Palito Blanco High School Mariachi band in Ben Bolt for their tremendous achievement.

HONORING CONNERSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL SPARTANS BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Connersville High School on its 2017 IHSAA Class 4A Sectional 9 championship in boys' basketball.

The Spartans faced off against the New Castle Trojans, with a standing room only crowd watching, at historic New Castle Fieldhouse, the world's largest high school gymnasium.

I am proud of these young men for not only their remarkable win, but also for the Hoosier sportsmanship that they displayed throughout this exciting season. I want to commend Coach Kerry Brown as well as all of the assistant coaches who led these young men to victory.

Congrats, Spartans.

TRIBUTE TO D.M. MILLER

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, one of the finest men I have ever known, Mr. D.M. Miller, was the subject of a lengthy article in the Knoxville News-Sentinel.

The article told of his 48 years in education in my hometown of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Mr. Miller touched thousands of lives in good and positive ways during his career as a teacher, coach, principal, administrator, and school board member.

This country is in a better place today because of the life and service of D.M. Miller.

I include in the RECORD, the story about Mr. Miller in the Knoxville News-Sentinel from March 2, 2017.

[From The Knoxville News-Sentinel, Mar. 2, 2017]

(By Rebecca D. Williams)

You might say D.M. Miller of Knoxville, 91, a longtime educator and coach, was in school most of his life.

"I remember seeing my first basketball game, at South Harriman School, where my aunt was playing. I was 6 or 7 years old," he said.

"I was born in Roane County on Oct. 22, 1925. My parents were Ben and Stella Schubert Miller. My dad had a fourth-grade education and my mom had a fifth," he said.

By the time he was 10, the family moved to Knoxville and lived in Lonsdale. "This was during the (Great) Depression, and everybody was poor. My dad was a machinist, a motor mechanic, an electrician and a carpenter. He was without work at times," Miller said.

When he was a student at Lonsdale Elementary School, Miller remembers the marching band from Rule High School going on "strike," and marching around Lonsdale, to protest the fact that Rule only had 10 grades. The kids wanted 12 grades so they wouldn't have to walk to Knox High School, Miller said.

Rule High School had 12 grades by the time Miller got there. He lettered in basketball, track and baseball, and was captain of the football team and vice president of his senior class in 1944. Shortly after graduation, Miller joined the U.S. Navy, during World War II.

"Everybody wanted to join up," he said. "My mom wouldn't let me drop out of high school to go in. I graduated from Rule High School on a Friday and went right in the Navy, a boatswain's mate."

Miller served on the U.S.S. Gosper, an amphibious invasion and casualty evacuation ship in the Pacific. The ship was part of the Okinawa invasion. "There were four of us boys from Rule High School over there, and two of them got killed at Okinawa. We thought we were going to invade Japan, but thank goodness (the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb) and the war ended," he said.

"Then, they sent us to Corregidor (Philippines), and we picked up 2,700 American, Canadian and British prisoners of war. None of them weighed a hundred pounds. They were skeletons," he remembered.

After the war, Miller returned to Tennessee and enrolled in Maryville College on the G.I. Bill, where he played football and majored in education. "All the veterans had come back from the war, and we had a pretty good ball club," he said. "I played on an undefeated team and in the Tangerine Bowl, a forerunner of the Citrus Bowl, in 1946."

As a senior, he met Viola "Vi" Marshall, at a dance. "I saw her dancing and cut in," he said. "We started going together and got married June 2, 1952."

In 1950, Miller was hired back at his alma mater, Rule High School, as an assistant coach of several sports and teacher of math, science and health. He eventually became the head football coach of the "Golden Bears."

When the drafting teacher died unexpectedly on a Friday, Miller was asked to take over his class. He had only had one class in drafting in high school. "I studied all weekend to get ready," he said. "I taught on Monday."

Miller went back to the University of Tennessee at night for a master's degree in administration and became assistant principal of Rule High School for four years, and then principal from 1965 through 1975. It was a time of racial integration of the schools.

"We had on one side of us Lonsdale Homes, and on the other side was College Homes. And in between there was Western Heights, the largest low-income housing project in the area. So we started integrating in 1970. I enrolled 1,625 kids in a school that would hold 1,000. Eight hundred were black. We had the Black Panthers on campus; we had to run them out. It was not easy. I broke up the first fight," he said.

Discipline back then involved a "long paddle," Miller said. "Our kids were used to it. Mamas would call me and say, 'Handle it.' You have to be fair and firm and consistent. There's no in-between," he said.

After being principal, Miller was asked to work in the Knoxville City Schools administration building as the administrative assistant to the superintendent. He also served on the control board of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association for nine years, during which time he helped TSSAA build an office in Hermitage, reclassify schools, and implement Title IX. He was inducted into its Hall of Fame as an administrator in 1994.

Miller retired after almost 35 years in the city school system, and was elected to the Knoxville City School Board in 1986. The city and county schools merged in 1987, and Miller was elected to the consolidated board for his second term. "I'm the only man to have served on both," he said.

The Millers had three children, a daughter in 1952, and two sons. Even though he was an educator, Miller's daughter could not go to public schools.

"Our daughter, Elizabeth, we call her Libby, was born handicapped. They told us we should put her in an institution. We just couldn't bear to let her go, so we raised her.

"The (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) hadn't come into effect yet. So she never had any education. We couldn't get her in a regular school. Her speech was a problem. We had her at every speech clinic, and we had her to doctor after doctor, but she never went to school," he said.

Libby Miller is 64 today. She lives with the Millers and attends the Sertoma Center each day for adults with intellectual disabilities.

In retirement, Miller has been very active in his church, New Hope Presbyterian. And Miller still keeps in touch with other students from Rule High School, which closed in 1991. In 2015, the Rule Alumni honored Miller with a "Greatest Among Us" Award.

"I counted it up one time, and I've been in education about 48 years," he said. "Given my mom and dad's education, it's a miracle."

HONORING 2016 "MR. AMIGO"
FERNANDO LANDEROS VERDUGO

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Charro Days Fiesta and commend the 2016 "Mr. Amigo," chosen by the Mr. Amigo Association of Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Tamaulipas, in Mexico.

Fernando Landeros Verdugo is a caring philanthropist and founder of the Fundación Teletón. His institution's efforts have united both Latin America and the U.S. over the last