

IN MEMORY OF CATHY THOMAS

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 6, 2019

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to observe and mourn the passing of one of the pillars of civic life in the Northeastern Corner of the state of Connecticut, Cathy Thomas. Sadly, Cathy passed away on November 26, 2019 surrounded by family and friends at Day Kimball Hospital in Putnam, Connecticut.

Madam Speaker, Cathy served for 40 years as the Chair of the Thompson Democratic Town Committee—a record that I am confident will never be broken. In that role, Cathy supported hundreds and hundreds of candidates for town, state and federal office, generously volunteering her time to the nuts and bolts of campaigns—organizing conventions, lining up delegates, filing the critical paperwork to ensure ballot access and most of all, giving wise, common sense counsel to public officials about what the important issues were and how to talk about them, and address them. Forty years ago, Cathy was a pioneer political leader paving the way for women to occupy positions of power. Over time, the respect she garnered with her quiet, steely manner became an inspiration for other women to succeed in public office. It was truly fitting that she was awarded the 2019 Ella Grasso Women's Leadership Award this year. This is a special honor reserved to an elite group of Women in Connecticut named after the first woman in America to be elected the governor of a state in her own right. I personally experienced and benefitted from Cathy's dedicated work during all my campaigns for Congress. I will be forever grateful to her for her unstinting, unselfish help.

Her life was not solely defined by politics and government. Cathy grew up in Thompson and attended Annhurst College and Nichols College where she received her degree in accounting. She worked as an accountant for many years at Davis publications in Worcester, Massachusetts. She was close to her brother Paul LaRoche of North Grosvenordale and had many friends in town with whom she enjoyed going to concerts, the beach, and Kittery, Maine. She was also an avid New York Yankees fan, living in an area that leans in favor of the Red Sox. Nonetheless, she revelled in the rivalry.

Cathy's passing is a big loss for Northeastern Connecticut and was felt far and wide by all who knew her and will miss her. Madam Speaker, I ask the House to please join me in expressing our deepest condolences to her family and friends.

HONORING MR. FELIPE 'TRES' BARRERA

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 6, 2019

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Felipe 'Tres' Barrera, a member of the Washington Nationals 2019 World Series Champions and a Rio Grande Valley Native.

Tres Barrera is an incredibly talented professional baseball catcher for the Washington Nationals. He was born in Eagle Pass, Texas, and moved to the Rio Grande Valley when he was 10 years old. Tres played on the baseball team for Hidalgo High School his freshman year, winning the District 32–3A Most Valuable Player award, before transferring to Sharyland High School. At Sharyland High School, Tres played football and baseball, and quickly became a standout athlete and student. He was selected to two all-state teams, and won the 30–5A Most Valuable Player and the All-Valley Player of the Year as a senior. His batting average was an astonishing .452, hitting 22 home runs during his time at Sharyland High School.

Tres' incredible work ethic, determination, and sheer talent earned him a spot on the renowned baseball team for the University of Texas at Austin. As a freshman, Tres was the team's starting catcher, won the 2014 College Home Run Derby, and led Texas to the College World Series. His achievements continued on.

During his sophomore year, Tres was a vital part of the University of Texas' Big 12 championship team, while adding his name to the All-Big 12 second team. In his junior year campaign, Tres earned the 2016 Academic All-Big 12 baseball honors and was named an All-Big 12 honorable mention. He left Texas after his junior year to join the minor leagues, but only after walking away with 20 home runs and 106 runs batted in (RBIs) for the University of Texas at Austin.

Tres Barrera's hard work and dedication continued for the next three years as he played for a number of minor league teams before being called up to the Major League Baseball, MLB, on September 8, 2019, for the Washington Nationals. Being a member of the Nationals, Tres participated in one of the most unlikely runs in the history of professional baseball.

The Nationals' record through 50 games was a poor 19 wins and 31 losses before they won 74 of their next 122 games. This secured the Nationals a wild-card spot in the postseason. The Nationals continued their unlikely playoff run until the very end, where they beat the Houston Astros in seven games, winning the World Series on October 30, 2019. On that day, Tres earned himself the coveted World Series ring.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Tres Barrera worked tirelessly to prove that with determination, will power, and commitment, we can accomplish anything we set ourselves to do in life. Tres made history, gave young people across our country the hope to achieve anything they set their mind to and for that I stand here today to recognize him. He is a proud son of South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley, and we appreciate him for his work and dedication to the Washington Nationals.

TRIBUTE TO THE HEROIC ACTIONS OF FAIRPLAY, PARK COUNTY, COLORADO

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 6, 2019

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, each and every day, across America our fellow commu-

nity members find opportunities to be of service to one another. These small acts of heroism, pinnacles of our values and ideals as Americans, are far too frequently lost in the rapidity of our society.

I would like to take a moment to draw attention to one of those small acts of heroism in the town of Fairplay in Park County, Colorado.

In a small mountain town of just 762 people, nearly 750 people were stranded last Friday and Saturday after snow, wind, and low visibility made travel impossible. At the height of the post-Thanksgiving travel rush, with their town's limited shelter resources strained to breaking, the people of Fairplay jumped to action to ensure safety and comfort for all those who could not continue their travels. Hotel operators housed people in every space possible; churches opened their stores of food to ensure no one went hungry; neighbors went door-to-door to gather blankets and supplies; transportation authorities brought vehicles abandoned on the highways to the town and reconnected drivers to their cars. In the end, everyone remained safe and sheltered. This is the type of hospitality and generosity that makes Park County and Colorado such an incredible place.

This year I am grateful for citizens like these in Park County, and throughout our nation, who remind us during this holiday season of the essential goodness of people.

THANKING LC "BUCKSHOT" SMITH FOR HIS 56 YEARS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 6, 2019

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and extend my gratitude to Mr. LC "Buckshot" Smith of Camden, Arkansas.

Officer Smith has spent a lifetime in law enforcement. His career spans over five decades in the Fourth District of Arkansas. Having spent 46 of those years with the Ouachita County Sheriff's Department, he officially retired in September 2010. However, after only a few short months in retirement, he decided to return to the Camden Police Department. At the age of 90 years old, he is still serving the community after 56 years of service.

President George H.W. Bush said, "Public service is a noble calling." Officer Smith has answered this call to service everyday as a police officer, church deacon, and community member for decades. The Ouachita County and Camden communities can attest to the exemplary character and dedication to service found in Officer Smith.

I'm proud to know of the lifelong commitment to service men like Officer "Buckshot" Smith have. His life serves as a powerful reminder of what an impact a lifetime of service can have on our communities. I take this time to thank him for the decades he has given to the Fourth District of Arkansas and for the example he has provided for generations of Americans to come.