

Singing River Health System is the largest COVID-19 provider on the Gulf Coast. It has cared for over 2,200 patients diagnosed with the virus. In response to the increased demand, it continues to make improvements to its critical care nursing units to meet the needs of the most ill patients, has established community-based clinical patient navigators to conduct local contact tracing, and supports patients recovering at home.

Mr. Bond credits the entire Singing River care and support services team for their efforts to deliver lifesaving care to those hit hardest by the virus and continue to be their greatest advocate. Despite all the long hours and very difficult days, he and the Singing River team have remained "Singing River Strong" and dedicated to their mission of improving health and saving lives.

### CONGRATULATING PATRICK ROMEO

#### HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 1, 2020*

Mr. RYAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Patrick Romeo, of Boardman, Ohio, on completing the Hoka Hey Motorcycle Challenge in Panama City, Florida, this August.

Being one of a hundred motorcyclists traveling 10,000 miles on a country-wide, 13-day journey, Patrick embarked on an excursion intended to raise awareness for veterans with traumatic brain injuries. This endurance challenge was aimed at testing the physical, mental, and emotional limits of all participants.

Mr. Romeo demonstrated extraordinary leadership along with outstanding integrity and values, qualities that empower and inspire individuals and families to overcome their physical, mental, or financial challenges.

Resurrecting Lives Foundation, an Ohio-based nonprofit founded by Youngstown native Dr. Chrisanne Gordon, was Patrick's designated charity. So far, Mr. Romeo has been able to help raise \$16,000 for the charity, which advocates for veterans with traumatic brain injuries.

The dedication and enthusiasm Patrick directed towards this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity has left a positive impact upon the community. Patrick, you are truly an inspiration to all of us who serve the public, and for that, I am forever grateful.

### HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF UGA MARINE EXTENSION AND GEORGIA SEA GRANT

#### HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 1, 2020*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the University of Georgia Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant for celebrating the 50th year since its founding.

In 1970, the University of Georgia initiated a marine extension service program with startup funds to assist the Cooperative Extension Service provided to agriculture. Edward Chin

led the original program, and also had responsibility for coordinating the university's marine programs on Sapelo Island and Skidaway Island.

Today, the UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant provides research, education, and training in science to assist Georgia in solving problems and recognizing opportunities for its coastal and marine environments.

Because of all the exceptional work they have done throughout the years, they have helped promote the economic, cultural, and environmental health of Georgia's coast. They have also aided in preparing Georgians to become good stewards of coastal ecosystems and watershed resources.

The Georgia Sea Grant College Program is part of a national network of 34 Sea Grant programs located in every coastal and Great Lakes state, Puerto Rico, Lake Champlain, and Guam. This program is among a network of over 300 institutions involving more than 3,000 scientists, engineers, educators, students, and outreach experts.

As the Representative for Georgia's coast, I can't thank them enough for the work they have done to help improve our environment to support Georgia's short- and long-term prosperity.

### REMEMBERING RONNIE KOLE

#### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 1, 2020*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I would like to take the time to remember Ronnie Kole for his contribution to the musical community and his charitable work. I include in the RECORD the following article "Ronnie Kole, renowned New Orleans pianist who performed for 6 presidents and a pope, dead at 89" by Dominic Massa on August 28th from the The New Orleans Advocate:

Ronnie Kole, the renowned New Orleans pianist who performed for six presidents, a pope and audiences around the world, died Thursday. He was 89.

Kole, a consummate entertainer known for his boundless energy, had been in declining health but stopped performing only recently, according to his son. Kole's wife of 36 years, Gardner, died this past January.

Kole's career spanned nearly 70 years and took him to Carnegie Hall, concert venues and music clubs across the United States, Europe and Asia. He recorded dozens of albums and was a frequent performer in New Orleans, where he settled in the 1960s before moving to Slidell some 30 years ago.

Kole—who was tall, lanky, goateed and always immaculately dressed—entertained six U.S. presidents during his career. In 1987, he performed "Amazing Grace" for Pope John Paul II during the Holy Father's visit to New Orleans. Kole performed at the outdoor Mass celebrated by the pope near the UNO Lakefront Arena. Accompanied by a symphony orchestra and a 350-voice choir, Kole called the performance "the way I've always envisioned doing 'Amazing Grace,'" mixing the hymn with bits of "Jesus Christ Superstar" and the "Hallelujah Chorus."

The song was a hallmark of most every Ronnie Kole concert. His set lists showcased a diverse range of musical genres from modern and traditional jazz to show tunes, clas-

sical music and everything in between. A typical show might feature "Rhapsody in Blue," "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," "What a Wonderful World," selections from Mozart or Beethoven, "Ave Maria" and a souped-up version of "When the Saints Go Marching In," just to name a few. In between songs at his concerts, he would frequently entertain his audience with jokes, anecdotes, self-deprecating asides and musical history lessons.

"My feeling is, anything your mind can think of, you can put down on a piano," he said in a 2004 Times-Picayune profile. "To me, a piano is an orchestra. It's a very imaginative instrument that you can do most anything on, which I try to do. I try not to have limitations. I have a lot of fun with it. I love to entertain."

According to Times-Picayune music writer Keith Spera, Kole was renowned for his showstopping, all-request Broadway medley, which concluded with him playing the main melodic theme with his left hand and a succession of requested melodies with his right—simultaneously.

Kole was a founder of French Quarter Festival, performing at the first event in 1984 and every festival since. He was scheduled to perform at this year's French Quarter Fest, as well as at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, both of which were canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic. Kole had performed at nearly every New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival since its inception in 1970 and played at the modern event's precursor, the 1968 New Orleans Jazz Festival.

Born Ronald Kuhn, Kole was a native of Chicago. He suffered from a heart condition as a child, which limited his outdoor activities. "When I was feeling good, I wanted to go outside and play ball, but when I was sick I was sometimes laid up for a month and a half, two months in bed," he said in a 2012 WWNO-FM interview. "My aunt played piano by ear and she had a big old upright piano. She showed me how to play 'Chopsticks' . . . and my mother and father said, 'Maybe we should get him a piano. That would keep him from wanting to go outside to play baseball.'"

Kole recalled first tickling the ivories around the age of 13 and considered himself largely self-taught. He went on the road in the Midwest to perform when he was just 16.

Kole first came to New Orleans in 1957 to audition as part of a jazz trio. He didn't get the job but he fell in love with the city.

While back in Chicago, he crossed paths with New Orleans music great Al Hirt. Although Kole had already toured the country and made somewhat of a name for himself as a young jazzman, he was uncertain of his career path. Hirt, a nationally known jazz trumpeter, encouraged Kole's career and gave it a major jump start by asking him to bring his ensemble to New Orleans in 1964 to serve as the house band for Hirt's Bourbon Street club.

"I guess I owe everything to Al for bringing me down," Kole said in 1987. "And also for kicking me in the fanny a year or so prior to that, when I had totally given up and decided to play solo in a restaurant piano bar thing."

Kole worked at Hirt's club for several years before opening his own club, Kole's Korner, where he performed for six years.

"Man, I'm treated like a hometown boy here," Kole said of the city in a 1967 Times-Picayune profile. "The people are wonderful—even the club operators on Bourbon Street—there's none of the cutthroat competition here that I've found elsewhere. To us, New Orleans is the ideal place."

Before coming to New Orleans, Kole, who performed solo but also with a trio or septet, frequently played Las Vegas and on national