

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF
BEN JONES

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

Mr. HUIZENGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of Ben Jones, a beloved high school football coach at Cranbrook Kingswood High School, who recently passed away at the age of 30 in a traffic accident.

Ben went to Muskegon Catholic Central High School, where he played football, basketball, baseball and track. He led his football team to a state championship as a senior in 2008. While at Central Catholic, Ben found his favorite motto, "Get To." Every day, Ben would tell his teammates how they 'get to' play football today. Ben went on to play football at Hillsdale College. His teammates remember him as the hardest worker on the field, a great teammate and an even better friend.

Not surprisingly, Ben was also a great football coach. His players knew him as not only someone who understood the game, but someone who knew how to lead and loved his players. The players know that Coach Jones cared about their lives at home, how they were doing in school, and how they were developing as men.

"Get To" wasn't just a motto to Ben. It was how he lived his life. He attacked each day with enthusiasm, hope and excitement. The Muskegon Catholic Central, Hillsdale College, and Cranbrook communities have lost a dear friend and mentor. He will be greatly missed.

My Prayers go out to Ben's parents, Theresa and Bruce Jones, his sister Alissa, his brother Nate, his extended family, his friends, and the countless others who will mourn for him.

Madam Speaker, I join with those throughout Michigan in remembering the extraordinary life and legacy that Coach Jones has left behind.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH
BIRTHDAY OF MRS. BERNICE
TODD

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I rise today with profound joy, deep admiration, and endless blessings to recognize the 100th birthday of Mrs. Bernice Todd. One cannot tell the story of America without telling the story of Kansas City Jazz, and one cannot tell the story of Kansas City Jazz without telling the story of Bernice Todd.

Mrs. Bernice Todd was born September 8, 1920, and has made significant contributions to the Jazz music and culture of the 18th and Vine District of Kansas City. She performed with many of the big bands and Jazz greats of her day, both as a stellar singer and as a skilled dancer. However, Jazz was not only a career for Mrs. Todd. It was also a family affair. Her husband, Oliver Todd, was a trumpet player and bandleader who would go on to become a fixture of the burgeoning Jazz scene

in Kansas City, playing with everyone from Count Basie to Duke Ellington. And when a certain young virtuoso named Charlie Parker still carried his makeshift horn in a cloth sack, he would often come over to the Todds' home to eat lunch and play some music. Mrs. Todd was actually just one week younger than the Bird, and the three of them became close friends. Often, Parker would leave his horn in their living room and ask them to bring it to his performance the next night. Needless to say, the horn bought them free admission.

Mrs. Todd is a mother, a grandmother, and a friend to many. She has also been a loyal member of the St. James United Methodist Church, where I was a pastor for thirty-seven years. From personal experience, I can attest that Mrs. Todd keeps us all laughing. Mrs. Todd is also a caretaker of our Jazz history, as well as our Jazz musicians, through her involvement with the Coda Jazz Fund, which pays funeral and burial expenses for area Jazz musicians whose families cannot afford them. As I have said before, a gift is never truly received until you acknowledge the giver. Mrs. Todd has honored so many determined artists with that sacred acknowledgement as they enter the coda of their life. It is an honor to be able to acknowledge Mrs. Todd's legacy while her chorus is in full swing.

Since I began thinking about this momentous occasion, there's a song that's been stuck in my head. It is from an old compilation of Jazz standards released December of 1945, just a little over a year after I was born. The album sleeve must have weighed ten tons with heft of the names which graced it: Jay McShann, Nat "King" Cole, and of course, Oliver Todd. The song, by McShann, with Mrs. Todd's late husband on trumpet, is an instrumental version of an old standard. Nevertheless, I remember the lyrics well: "I used to walk in the shade," it went, "With those blues on parade / But I'm not afraid / This rover crossed over / If I never have a cent / I'd be rich as Rockefeller / Gold dust at my feet / On the sunny side of the street."

Now, as we stand not only at Mrs. Todd's centennial, but Charlie Parker's as well, I cannot help but reflect on our collective good fortune. We lost the Bird in '55, but God has generously allowed us a full century of Bernice. For that, I am immensely grateful. Madam Speaker, please join me, the world of Jazz, and everyone in Missouri's Fifth Congressional District in wishing Mrs. Bernice Todd a happy 100th birthday. Here's to many more years, Mrs. Todd, "on the sunny side of the street."

PEG FITZGERALD

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to provide my warmest congratulations and thanks to Peg Fitzgerald, a long-time resident and public servant in the State of Connecticut, who is retiring on October 1st after more than 42 years of service to our state. Like so many other citizens of our great state, I had the privilege to interact with Peg in government and had a front-row seat to watch her skillful use of shrewd intelligence, empathy and

humor to advance the public interest in whatever role she took on. I first met Peg when I was an intern at the State Capitol for then-State Representative Sam Gejdenson in 1978 when Peg first went to work at the State Budget Office under Governors Ella Grasso and William O'Neill. Despite being a young woman given the weighty task of securing legislative support for the Governor's budget, she did not back down and could go toe-to-toe with the crustiest older male legislators and yet still make them laugh at her sharp Irish wit. When she would walk into Sam's committee room, he would yell, "Hey Irish, what's going on?" and the two of them would start busting each other, leaving all of us in stitches. It was like watching a sitcom.

Seriously though, during her twelve years at the State Capitol, Peg worked with legislative leaders on both sides of the aisle, crafting compromises and ultimately promoting bills that would advance the health and welfare of citizens of the State of Connecticut. She provided training, guidance, and supervision to dozens of state agencies and their staff at the state Capitol in their own advocacy efforts for the Executive Branch.

In 1990, Peg joined the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, bringing with her outstanding expertise in the legislative process and a passion for affordable housing. In her thirty years at CHFA, Peg has continuously fought for the underserved, and taught dozens of employees what it means to be a true public servant.

For Peg, service to others never stopped at the office. When Peg wasn't at the Capitol, she often dedicated her time to organizing food drives or donations for local hunger relief organizations or finding homes for animals in need of adoption, including her own, many times over.

Peg Fitzgerald—through four decades—has been the embodiment of public service, showing a uncompromising commitment to the public good, a passion for the democratic process and a dogged determination to help those most in need.

I thank Peg for her service to the State of Connecticut and offer best wishes to her on her well-deserved retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF KAROLE
HONAS SERVICE TO IDAHO

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend Karole Honas on a well-earned retirement after an extraordinary broadcasting career.

Karole grew up in Gooding, Idaho and graduated from the University of Idaho with a degree in radio-TV, communications. Shortly after graduation she married her husband, Ken. They have been happily married for forty years.

Karole started her career at KPVI in Pocatello. After seven years, she left KPVI to raise her three sons. In 1990 Jay Hildebrandt called and asked her to fill in as an anchor for 6 weeks while another anchor was on maternity leave. Those 6 weeks turned into thirty years of co-anchoring with Jay Hildebrandt. Together