

Development Program [RC&D] whose efforts have improved the economy, the environment, and the living standards of this Nation. I would like to designate September 15, 1996, as a day of recognition for the Resource Conservation and Development Program. The RC&D, initiated in 1962, serves 2,016 counties in more than half of the United States, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Basin. The 20,000 volunteers involved in the organization's projects contribute their time and resources to revitalize and sustain their communities.

The comprehensive efforts of the RC&D have focused on protecting the environment and fortifying the economy of this Nation. The program's resource protection initiative has improved 40,264 acres of wildlife habitat, and has increased the quality of water in 56,052 acres of lakes and 2,523 miles of streams. Furthermore, RC&D council and partners have added to the economy by creating 164 new businesses, resulting in 3,209 jobs. Their educational projects have helped 82,878 people develop new skills in areas of development, entrepreneurial training, and resource assessment. From saving the environment to creating jobs, the RC&D has touched the lives of all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, we all owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the RC&D for their dedication and service to this country. Their accomplishments illustrate the power and strength of volunteer organizations in this Nation. I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring the Resource Conservation and Development Program on this day.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. FRANK RIGGS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 12, 1996*

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No.'s 407, 408, 409, 410, and 411 I would have voted "yes," and on rollcall No. 412 I would have voted "no." Unfortunately, I was not present due to a physical ailment and subsequently requested an official leave of absence for the day which was granted.

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HAPPY 50TH VFW POST 8275

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 12, 1996*

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, September 15, 1946, a group of young men gathered in a community hall in Au Gres, MI. They had a common bond, all having served our country in the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marines. To preserve the pride in and service to their country, they formed VFW Post 8275.

Fifty years later the illustrious post, under the capable leadership of Commander James A. Armour, boasts 209 members and the Women's Auxiliary, under the leadership of Marion Maytas boasts 60 members. I congratulate VFW Post 8275 on its 50th anniversary and commend their dedication to their country, community, and family.

In 1946, department commander Arthur Greig installed 21 officers and members. They

named VFW 8275 Post in honor of three young heroes who paid the supreme sacrifice: John Rudolph, age 32, Leonard George Frank, age 23, and Harry Leroy Beach, age 19.

Because they did not have a post headquarters, they held meetings in various places including a school basement, a fire hall, and a council hall. The deficiency of a permanent base did not discourage or diminish the strength and tenacity of its members. By January 1948, under the leadership of Wilbur Lake, the Post purchased a building on South Mackinaw—near where the present Au Gres Fire Department building is today—for \$300.

Proving the strength and dedication of its families, the Women's Auxiliary to 8275 was founded and installed on February 12, 1950.

Over the next 12 years, the post thrived and grew under the leadership of many capable leaders including, Commander Hubert Dewald. However, the years took its toll on the post home. Under the leadership of Commander Joseph Czapski the members considered moving to larger facilities to accommodate their growing membership. In January 1963, the city of Au Gres offered the VFW Post 8275 a 50 foot lot on Main Street with a 100-year lease. Robert Conell and Daisy Gess offered free property, which consisted of approximately 8 acres, 2 miles north of Au Gres on U.S. Highway 23. A deed to the property was presented and accepted at the March 8, 1963 meeting.

With Archie McCready in command, \$812.50 in the bank, another \$800 from the sale of the old building and \$1,575 raised by post member Calvin Ennes, they had a small amount to begin construction and care for the property in April 1963. The post appointed Clem "Whitey" Bensen as building chairman and appointed Lincoln Emes as financial chairman. Donations of money, material, and labor began pouring in to support the post. The final meeting in the old post home was on May 5, 1963.

The first meeting in the new post home took place on September 13, 1963. Since the building was yet a long way from completion, members were content to have planks for seats and sand for the floor. They decided to borrow \$10,000 to complete the building and by May 30, 1964 they held a dedication and ground breaking. They held a 3-day "Burning the Mortgage" celebration in April 1971 and an addition was added in September 1973.

Today the post continues its community involvement including hosting bingo tournaments, dinners, and teenage parties. The members of our VFW post prove that the strength of our country depends, thrives, and grows because of the individuals who served our country and continue to serve long after formal commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I commend these dedicated individuals. I urge you and all of our colleagues to join me in wishing the members of VFW Post 8275 a most memorable 50th anniversary, with our thanks for all that they have done.

THANK YOU, HARRY F. BURROUGHS III, FOR YOUR LOYAL SERVICE

HON. JACK FIELDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 12, 1996*

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, it was with mixed emotions that I announced last December 11, my decision to retire from the House at the conclusion of my current term. As I explained at the time, the decision to retire was made more difficult because of the loyalty and dedication of my staff, both past and present, and because of the genuine friendship I feel for them. Each one of them has served the men and women of Texas' Eighth Congressional District in an extraordinary way.

Today, I want to thank a former member of my staff—Harry F. Burroughs III, who worked for me in a variety of capacities for 14 years—for all he's done for me and my constituents over the years.

Harry served as my legislative director from 1981 to 1985—the same position he held for our former colleague, Richard Schulze of Pennsylvania from 1977 to 1980. During my critical first two terms in the House, I relied on Harry's experience, advice, and expertise on a host of issues and legislative business.

Beginning in 1985, Harry served as my Counsel on the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee—a committee critical to the economic well-being of my district. When local residents asked me to work with the Army Corps of Engineers to devise a flood control plan for the Upper White Oak Bayou and Buffalo Bayou; when funds were needed to widen and deepen the Houston Ship Channel; and when Federal assistance was needed to solve a serious water pollution problem in Lake Houston, I turned to Harry to make sure that these urgent proposals moved forward.

With the start of the 103rd Congress, I was privileged to serve as the ranking minority member of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee—and, naturally, I asked Harry to serve as the committee's minority staff director.

As my right arm on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Harry played a crucial role in enacting into law the African Elephant conservation Act of 1988; the Oil Pollution Act of 1990; the Abandoned Barge Act of 1992; the Rhino and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994; and other legislation designed to protect our Nation's marine environment, strengthen our Nation's merchant fleet, and maintain our country's vital commercial waterways.

With the unfortunate abolition of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee in the current 104th Congress, our colleague, DON YOUNG of Alaska, chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, asked Harry to serve as the staff director of the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans.

When he is not working, Harry enjoys spending time with his lovely wife, Gayle, and their two sons, Rick and Chris. A resident of Warrenton, VA, Harry serves as a committee chairman of Boy Scout troop 175, in which his sons are members. For the past 7 years, Harry has volunteered as a Babe Ruth baseball coach, and he is a former member of the Fauquier County Youth Baseball Commission.

Harry Burroughs is one of those hard-working men and women who make all of us