

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 1999*

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, due to a medical evaluation last Friday July 16, 1999, I was not present for rollcall vote 307. If I had been present for this vote, I would have voted "no".

## A TRIBUTE TO NEIL ARMSTRONG

**HON. ROB PORTMAN**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 1999*

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise in tribute to my good friend, neighbor and constituent—Neil Armstrong.

Thirty years ago today, our nation, and the entire world, watched in awe as Neil Armstrong—a thirty-eight year-old Ohionan—became the first person to set foot on the moon. He forever etched the words, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," into our national consciousness. And, as so many authors, journalists and historians have noted, he put his name alongside Charles Lindbergh and the Wright Brothers as the great explorers of the 20th Century.

Neil Armstrong's many accomplishments are too lengthy to adequately list here. He flew 78 combat missions as a fighter pilot in Korea, and later went on to become a highly respected test pilot. In addition to his historic role as commander of Apollo 11 in 1969, he also commanded Gemini 8 in 1966—and later served as NASA's deputy associate administrator for aeronautics from 1970–71.

Over the years, Neil Armstrong has chosen to look beyond the temptation to exploit his accomplishments for personal gain. His disinterest in the limelight and in self-promotion hides a remarkable level of civic involvement. From 1971 to 1979, he served as a professor of aeronautical engineering at the University of Cincinnati—where he not only conducted research projects, but also got into the classroom and inspired hundreds of students during this tenure.

He also worked with another famous Cincinnati—Dr. Henry Heimlich—to develop a miniature "heart-lung" machine—a forerunner of a modern "Micro Trach" machine that is used to deliver oxygen to patients.

Neil is a strong believer in giving back to the community. Among the many group with which he has been involved, he served as a member of the board of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. He wasn't just an ordinary member—he served as board chairman—rolling up his sleeves and making many of the important decisions that have allowed that institution to experience a renaissance in its new home at Union Terminal. He has also served as a director of the Cinergy Corporation and Cincinnati Milacron, Inc.

Neil also owns a small farm in Warren County and has been an active and involved citizen of that area. From the time he first moved to the area, he took on the life of an unassuming local farmer and proud father—getting involved in auctions at the annual Warren County fair to support local 4-H programs;

participating in the local Boy Scout troops; and helping to coach the high school football team. And he has continued to give back to the Warren County community as well—for example, by working with other community leaders to build the countryside YMCA in Lebanon.

Neil Armstrong continues to handle his celebrity with his quiet, unassuming manner. Today, on the thirtieth anniversary of his historic accomplishment, he not only provides our nation with a hero for the ages, but a powerful model of humility and dignity.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICES OF  
FIRE CHIEF J.D. KNOX**HON. JOHN SHIMKUS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 1999*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize the unparalleled service of Springfield Fire Chief J.D. Knox. The Springfield Firefighter's Union this year nominated Knox, who won the state honor last month and is running for the National Veterans of Foreign Wars "Firefighter of the Year." When he responded to the nomination he said, "I was shocked. I thought it was a joke." Two years ago when Knox became chief he had big ideas. He was determined to do things that had never been done.

Knox is currently lobbying for Fire Department controlled ambulance service. Implementing such a program would save money and increase response time according to Knox. I would like to thank Knox for his dedication and open-mindedness that has made the Springfield Fire Department a world class organization.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 1999*

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 310, due to travel restrictions, I was unavoidably detained and unable to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMBERS OF  
THE ROSEWOOD (FLORIDA) SURVIVORS FAMILY**HON. CARRIE P. MEEK**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 1999*

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the proud heirs of the Rosewood (Florida) Survivors Family. On July 22 through July 29, 1999 the descendants will gather together for their first historic reunion in Miami-Dade County. I am extremely delighted that they are celebrating this historic occasion in our community. The John Wesley Bradley-Ruth Lee Davis Chapter of the Rosewood Survivors will host this gathering.

Some 76 years ago as the glow of a New Year ushered in 1923, the early mists of dawn

enveloped the town of Rosewood, promising a beautiful, cold morning over what was then a thriving Black community, just off Florida's West Coast. Little did those proud residents know when the serenity of their little town was soon transformed into a cataclysmic scene of terror perpetrated by hordes of angry vigilantes who literally torched every home, killing every Black resident in sight.

This killing rampage was perpetrated for seven harrowing days and reduced Rosewood into a smoldering pit of ashes—all because of the allegation that one married White woman, Fanny Taylor, sought to conceal her indiscretions by accusing a Black man of assaulting her. This happened at a time when the Jim Crow mentality possessed many of the men from the nearby Florida town of Sumner and its environs. Obsessed by an ambition of revenge and utmost brutality, the vigilantes transformed Rosewood into a virtual killing field. There were reports among survivors that a mass grave was hastily dug for the victims.

This episode was literally consigned to the dustbins of the past, and soon became Florida's dark and well-kept secret. In fact, Rosewood was virtually wiped off the map of Florida at the time. Many years would pass hence before the story of the Rosewood massacre was unfolded. It was not until 1992–1995 when the Florida Legislature, under the leadership of State Representatives Al Lawson and Miguel de Grandy, along with then-State Representative Kendrick Meek, resurrected the Rosewood massacre by recognizing this part of the state's ignominious past and thereby authorized its historical imprimatur. The testimony culled from the courage and resilience of two of the survivors provided the compelling evidence that would bring to light this particular shame in Florida's history.

Spurred by this legislative action, the Rosewood massacre was subsequently brought to our national consciousness through its airing on CBS' "60-Minutes." To add insult to this tragedy, however, those who unleashed the destruction of Rosewood and the murder of its Black residents were never charged. In 1993 the hearings on Rosewood concluded that the persons responsible for this tragedy were never apprehended. It lamely declared that the perpetrators were probably dead. Subsequently, the Florida Legislature approved a mere pittance to compensate the Rosewood survivors.

Mr. Speaker, I want you to know that the horrible feelings of disenfranchisement suffered by the survivors and their families throughout these 70-plus years continue to this very day to sear their memories. On the other hand, I am also cognizant of the depth of their genuine faith that gives them their renewed strength and hope.

I rest assured that this Rosewood Survivors Family Reunion will once again buttress the foundation upon which the members and their descendants will pass along and recount their collective experiences, following the spirit of that revered African Ashanti adage: " \* \* \* until the lions get their own historian, the story of the hunt will always glorify the hunter."

Despite overwhelming odds, they have truly dared to pull themselves up together again, much more determined to be stronger than ever before. They will remind themselves of their unique role in keeping alive the legacy of Florida's shameful past in hopes that, through their courage and vigilance, the specter of the Rosewood massacre will never happen again.