

who live there are privileged to enjoy. The occasion is his 78th birthday, but this tribute could be delivered any day. It is a testament to how universally known, loved and admired he is that you only have to say the word "Luther," and just about anyone will know you are referring to Luther Masingill, who has made Chattanooga's mornings brighter for 60 years.

He signed on as host of his near universally known morning show on WDEF Radio, then an AM only station, on December 31, 1940. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was President then, and we were on the eve of World War II. Luther has seen Chattanooga—and the world—change mightily during his years on the air. Eleven U.S. Presidents as well as numerous Tennessee governors and Chattanooga mayors have come and gone while Luther has held way on the air. Luther has stayed on, however; and the "secrets" of his success and value to the Chattanooga area have remained the same.

His radio show, now broadcast on WDEF AM and FM from 6–9 a.m. each weekday morning, does not focus on the controversies that tear us apart. By design, Luther devotes his show to the things that bring us together and make us human. Is your dog or cat missing? Would you like to buy or sell an animal? Is your civil club meeting or having a sale? His show is very much about neighbors helping neighbors and swapping information across the backyard fence, or at the grocery store, or after church. And his devoted listeners treat Luther as their friend and neighbor, which indeed he is.

Luther plays relaxing, traditional music in between announcements; and his warm, reassuring voice has made countless folks in Southeast Tennessee, North Georgia, North Alabama and Western North Carolina begin the day in a better spirit, no matter what the day may bring. He also does a spot on the noon news on Channel 12, WDEF television, and he's been with that station since it signed on in 1954.

Today, March 9, 2000, is your 78th birthday, Luther; and so we say a loud "Happy Birthday!" and thanks for all you have done to enrich our lives and communities. And here's wishing you many more years on the air!

**PROVIDE RELIEF TO AMERICAN
ENERGY CONSUMERS: SUSPEND
THE TARIFF ON NUCLEAR
STEAM GENERATORS**

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, in ongoing efforts to ensure safety and efficiency, nuclear power plants must periodically replace their steam generators. When a Florida manufacturing plant closes its doors following the delivery of two steam generators this year, there will no longer be any steam generator producers in the United States. Consequently, the 103 nuclear power facilities located in the United States will have no choice but to import replacement steam generators.

Under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule, steam generators imported for use in nuclear power plants are taxed at a duty rate of 5.2 percent (except those imported from Canada,

where a zero duty rate applies). Importing a single \$30 million steam generator results in a tariff of approximately \$1.56 million. Because nuclear plants generally replace two of these generators at a time, the cost of this hidden tax to consumers is considerable. Unless it is addressed, this duty will increase the cost of supplying electricity to Georgia's rate payers by \$2.7 million this year. Such unnecessary expenses are inevitably incorporated into the rate base.

According to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), at least a dozen nuclear power plants are planning to replace their steam generators over the next several years. Since there are no domestic manufacturers, there is no legitimate reason to continue imposing this duty. American consumers should not be required to bear this unnecessary cost.

Today, with the support and original co-sponsorships of colleagues from Tennessee, Arizona, Georgia, and Connecticut, I am introducing legislation that will suspend the duty on steam generators for nuclear facilities for five years, providing significant relief for energy consumers around the country. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this legislation.

HONORING NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER JIM GRAHAM

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of myself and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina to honor a great American and a true friend to farmers, North Carolina Agricultural Commissioner Jim Graham. When Jim announced that he would not be a candidate for re-election to the post he has held since 1964, citizens of the state could be pardoned if they looked to the heavens for a possible misalignment of the planets. After all, this individual has become a North Carolina icon, beloved by the farmers he promised "to take care of," and by individual citizens who appreciated his unfailing good humor and dedication. "I love my job," Jim Graham said at the end of every speech he gave. He meant it, and the people knew.

Still, North Carolinians will understand and approve of the Commissioner's decision. He is, after all, now 78 years of age; he has served well and long; and he deserves a respite from the day-to-day turmoil that is characteristic of any public office. His friends—and all of North Carolina is filled with Jim Graham's friends—wish for him peace and joy for the rest of his years.

But it will be difficult to conjure up his successor, and he will be missed. It is extremely doubtful that any campaign for Agricultural Commissioner will ever be as colorful as those run by Graham, who could bray like the donkey of the party he represented and was not above making promises that others would never have dared keep. Such as the one Graham made that he would kiss the north end of a mule who was headed south if a particular county would vote Democratic from the top of the ticket to the bottom. And it did, and he did, to the amusement of the whole state's media.

Graham came to the job as Commissioner of Agriculture like an eagle returning to its nest—without hesitation. Reared on a farm in Rowan County, he knows from whereof he speaks when he talks about the "sweat and blood" farmers must expend in order to make a living. From day one, his love for those who till the soil has been unquestioned.

The Commissioner was born on April 7, 1921 to a Rowan County couple, the late James T. and Laura Graham. He attended high school in Rowan County and is a graduate of his beloved North Carolina State University. Graham taught agriculture in Iredell County for three years, then because superintendent of Upper Mountain Research State in Laurel Springs before becoming manager of the Winston-Salem Fair for three years. After a one-year stint as secretary of the North Carolina Hereford Association, he became general manager of the State Farmers Market. Governor Terry Sanford, who never hesitated when the job came open upon the death of L.Y. Ballentine, appointed him Commissioner of Agriculture in 1964.

Commissioner Graham's tenure as Agricultural Commissioner coincided with North Carolina's transition from a largely rural agriculture state known chiefly for its tobacco to the growing Sun Belt technology giant it is becoming today. The Research Triangle was in its infancy when Graham took office. Today, it is the heartbeat of North Carolina, propelling the state into an Information Age where the assumed parameters change by the day.

Jim Graham prospered in that atmosphere, glorifying farmers wherever he went. He also began promoting new crops North Carolina farmers had not grown before. Within the department, he hired good people, insisted that they run an efficient agency, and he expanded the agency as the state grew. He organized state farmers markets in Asheville, Greensboro, Charlotte, Raleigh, and Lumberton, but he also promoted the use of microelectronics technology for the inspection of meat, poultry and seafood so consumers could be protected.

Graham was an early proponent of foreign trade, realizing that North Carolina farmers would be better off if they could sell their products to the rest of the world. Today, the state is one of the leaders in the export of agricultural products. The department ran a boll weevil eradication program that was so successful that cotton is once again a stable crop in the state. The department modernized its soil testing service and promoted it heavily, thereby increasing per acre production for all crops.

Commissioner Graham, ever the showman on behalf of agriculture, was in his element as he grew the North Carolina State Fair into an event that today attracts more than 6 million persons annually. The State Fair is now 10 days of the best that North Carolina farmers, dairymen, and craftsmen can produce, surrounded by enough entertainment to make the Fair an October delight for young and old. Presiding over it is always the "Sod Father" in his cowboy hat and boots, typically with a crowd following him around the fairgrounds.

As Commissioner, Graham has been honored with dozens of awards and distinguished service citations. Catawba College has awarded him the Honorary doctor of Humanitarian Service, and NC State named him the winner of its alumni Meritorious Service Award.