

of Republic of China's National Day, it is important to remember that Taiwan has a strong relationship with the United States and we hope that this relationship will continue to flourish in the years to come. Happy birthday Taiwan.

IN MEMORIAL OF THOMAS J.
LASSITER

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 5, 2000

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, today I celebrate the life and memory of Mr. Thomas J. Lassiter of Smithfield, NC. Mr. Lassiter was a talented and influential journalist, a respected community figure, and a dedicated family man. As a journalist and editor of the Smithfield herald, Mr. Lassiter was widely known for his bold and careful thought and for taking sometimes unpopular, yet morally correct positions on issues of the day. History has proven that Thomas Lassiter was truly a man before his time.

Thomas James Lassiter, Jr. was born on August 21, 1911, to Thomas and Rena Lassiter, and graduated from Duke University in 1932. After taking a year to play jazz trombone with the Jelly Leftwich orchestra, Mr. Lassiter returned to Smithfield to join his mother at the herald, where she was serving as editor. He remained at the paper for not quite half a century until his retirement in 1980. During the 1940's, 50's, and 60's. Lassiter gained fame for his strong editorials on racial justice and his opinions on local and international issues. He also served as president of the North Carolina Press Association in 1951-52, and in 1982 was elected to the North Carolina Journalism Hall of Fame. Mr. Lassiter also taught journalism at the University of North Carolina from 1948 to 1953.

By virtue of the words he wrote in the Smithfield herald, Mr. Lassiter was already a public figure, but he also was motivated to serve his community through action. Over the years, he served as chairman or president of the Smithfield Library Board of Trustees, the Smithfield Chamber of Commerce, the local chapter of the North Carolina Symphony Society, and the Smithfield Kiwanis Club. He was also a leader at Smithfield First Baptist Church, as superintendent of Sunday school and church history. Mr. Lassiter was also committed to his family. Together he and Elizabeth, his wife of 61 years, raised two children who gave him four grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, before I close I want to read a quote from one of Mr. Lassiter's editorials. I believe it summarizes the greatness and vision of his work and gives us an idea of the intellect Mr. Lassiter possessed. This excerpt taken from an article titled "A Regrettable Rift" was written after some African American citizens were denied the right to register to vote in the 1945 Smithfield primary election.

All the Negroes who presented themselves for registration—more than 75 of them—were turned down, while only two whites were denied the privilege of getting their names in the book.

Racial discrimination is on the way out in America and the sooner the people generally recognizing that fact the better it will be for

whites as well as Negroes. Racial discrimination is on the way out because it is fundamentally wrong. It is contrary to the very heart of the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is contrary to the highest concept of democracy. It is specially forbidden by the Constitution of the United States.

Negroes pay taxes; they are subject to the same laws that govern whites; they are drafted into the armed forces; they shed their blood on the battlefields alongside of white soldiers. If they are asked to spill their blood for democracy, can we honorably deny them the right to share in the democracy for which they fight?

How long will the Negroes refrain from militancy or belligerency in their struggle for basic rights? That depends upon how soon the majority race frees itself from deep-rooted prejudices and refrains from denying Negroes fundamental democratic privileges which are guaranteed them by the highest law in the land.

Twenty years before the Voting Rights Act, the extraordinary editorial was bold, visionary and courageous. Mr. Speaker, Thomas J. Lassiter left us a legacy of words and actions that inspire us to improve our society, serve our local community, and uphold the honor of our families. I am honored to share his story and celebrate his legacy with this House today.

IN MEMORY OF BETTY BANKS

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 5, 2000

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of a beloved citizen of the Fourth Congressional District and a dear friend, the later Betty Jean Henderson Banks of Ivanhoe, Texas, who passed away earlier this year. Betty was a wonderful woman whose kindness and dedication to her family, friends and community will be long remembered.

Born in Louisiana to the late Lafayette Victor Henderson and Ida Butler Starke Henderson, Betty married James Walter Banks in 1938 in Bonham, Texas. Throughout her years in Bonham, Betty raised a family and worked tirelessly on behalf of her community. Betty was known by many of her work at the Sam Rayburn Memorial Veterans Center in Bonham, where she worked in food service. She also was known throughout Bonham for her volunteer efforts on numerous causes, for making uniforms for the Missionettes (Girls Club) to helping find and fight for a liver transplant for a baby in need. Betty was an integral part of a women's prayer group that met monthly for a prayer breakfast at the First National Bank in Bonham, and she was a member of the First Pentecostal Church of God in Bonham.

In the local paper, this was written about Betty by Mrs. Paul Keahey: "Over the years she stood up for truth and honesty at all levels of society and government and what she believed to be right." These sentiments were echoed by her many friends and fellow citizens who knew her and loved her.

Betty is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, James V. "Butch" Banks and Carol of Baytown; two daughters and sons-in-law, Kathy and Mike Stockton of Ravenna and Becky and Victor Santiago of West Haven,

Conn.; and a brother, Robert H. Henderson of Colville, Wash.. She is also survived by seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her loving husband, James Walter Banks, who passed away in 1996; a granddaughter, Amanda Stockton; brother, L. Victor Henderson, and a sister, Yvonne Henderson.

Betty was an honest and loyal friend to many and a role model in her community. We will miss her—but her legacy will live on in the lives of all those whom she touched with her generosity and kindness. Mr. Speaker, as we adjourn today, may we do so in memory of this beloved citizen of Fannin County, Betty Banks.

DR. JAMES BILLINGTON, LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, HONORED FOR BICENTENNIAL AND LOCAL LEGACIES PROGRAM

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 5, 2000

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to Dr. James H. Billington, the Librarian of Congress, and to thank him for the fine job that he and the staff of the Library have done with the Local Legacies program, which has served as the focal point of this year's bicentennial celebration for the Library.

As the members may be aware, the Library of Congress, the nation's oldest federal cultural institution, was established by an act of Congress in 1800, when President John Adams signed a bill transferring the seat of government from Philadelphia to the new capital city of Washington. In addition to the Local Legacies program, which is the focus of my remarks today, the bicentennial of this great institution has been observed with ceremonies, exhibitions, the issuance of a commemorative stamp and coins, as well as the launch of a new, easy-to-use and entertaining Web site, americaslibrary.gov.

In light of Dr. Billington's accomplishments and the tremendous success of the Local Legacies project, I would like to point out his ties to the Keystone State and to Northeastern Pennsylvania in particular. He is a native of Pennsylvania and holds an honorary degree from the University of Scranton. He has made great stride toward his goal of making the Library truly the "people's library," and the Local Legacies project is an excellent example of this.

Last year, each Member of Congress was asked to submit audio, visual, or textual documentation for at least one significant cultural heritage that has been important to his or her district or state to serve as a record for future generations, who might otherwise have lost this important knowledge forever. This documentation is now permanently housed in the collections of the Library's American Folklife Center. In May, Members of Congress and Local Legacies project participants from across the country came together in the Great Hall of the Thomas Jefferson building to celebrate the completion of this magnificent collection of historical material.

I was pleased to register several important cornerstones of community life in my district for posterity as Local Legacies: the Hazleton