

A TRIBUTE TO BILL MILLS, THE
FATHER OF THE SANTA ANA
RIVER FLOOD CONTROL
PROJECT

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise today to commend Bill Mills who is retiring on April 1st after completing a successful term as the general manager of the Orange County Water District.

An innovative leader, for the past fourteen years Bill Mills has spearheaded both conservation and reclamation water projects to aid one of the largest counties in the nation. Recognizing the long-term need to reduce Orange County's dependence on imported supplies, Bill has been at the forefront to promote new technologies that would improve the quality of both surface and groundwater supplies. Under his leadership, the Orange County Water District has pioneered some of the most exciting changes in water management as well as maintaining one of the highest financial ratings for a water agency in the state of California.

What was once considered to be only practical in theory, the ability to purify wastewater for reuse, became a reality during Bill's tenure. An accomplished civil engineer, Bill advanced a project referred to as "Water Factory 21," a model water filtration system. This new technology has enabled Orange County residents and businesses alike to recycle a useless product into one of the most important resources needed to maintain irrigation needs during drought. And of course, today, this "new" technology is now the norm for many cities and counties throughout the nation and world. Because of Bill's leadership on this project, Orange County is now taking the next step to transfer this critical technology to help solidify other water needs.

Bill's keen ability to recognize early on the potential of new technologies such as Water Factory 21 have earned him praise and recognition from his colleagues throughout the world and numerous awards, including "Water Leader of the Year." The recognition of the Orange County Water District as a leading public agency is a tribute to his legacy. I know that many of my colleagues here in this House personally gained from Bill's expertise when he traveled several times to Washington, D.C. to testify on groundwater and water quality issues. Always thinking ahead, Bill developed a 20-year master plan to guide the County's future groundwater planning—including tackling a major flood control project for an area that was once considered the biggest flood threat west of the Mississippi. Due in large part to the expertise he shared with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Orange County is no longer designated as a flood threat area.

Today, I join my fellow California colleagues to thank Bill for all of his hard work and dedication. Orange County is a better place to live because of his foresight. In behalf of the United States Congress and all of the people of Orange County whom it is my privilege to represent, congratulations to Bill Mills, and best wishes for a well-deserved retirement.

SUPPORT OF NATIONAL SCHOOL
COUNSELING WEEK

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, the American School Counselor Association has declared the first full week of February as "National School Counseling Week." Congress recently recognized the importance of school counseling through the reauthorization and appropriation of the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Improvement Act of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

School counselors have long advocated that the American education system must leave no child behind. Even though students face myriad challenges every day, including peer pressure, depression, and school violence, school counselors help develop the total child by guiding their students toward academic, personal, social and career development.

In addition, school counselors are usually the only professionals in a school building trained in both education and mental health. For this reason, school counselors were instrumental in helping students, teachers and parents deal with the trauma of the aftermath of Sept. 11. Nevertheless, the role and responsibilities of school counselors are often misunderstood and as a result, under budgetary constraints, the school counselor position is often among the first to be eliminated.

The school counselor shortage is prevalent today, as evidenced by the fact that the current national average ratio of school counselors to students is 1 to 561. The American School Counselor Association, the American Counseling Association, the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association and other organizations recommend a ratio of 1 to 250.

I urge my colleagues to support National School Counseling Week during the first full week of February and I urge communities across the country to participate with appropriate ceremonies and activities. The American School Counselor Association recommends that parents and students should develop a collaborative relationship with their school counselors. School boards and administrators should continue to support students' academic, personal, social and career development through school counseling.

Mr. Speaker, our students' futures are important to us all and school counselors work every day to ensure that our students are well-rounded socially and academically. Let us take a moment to thank our school counselors for their ongoing work in our schools and communities during times of national crisis or students' personal crises by supporting National School Counseling Week.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL ROBERT L.
HOMER

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, Colonel Robert L. Homer retired on 26 September 2001 from his

position as the Logistics Group Commander for the 174th Fighter Wing, New York Air National Guard in Syracuse. He was appointed to this position on 2 Nov 95.

Col. Homer was born on 28 September 1945 in Ithaca, NY. He graduated from Skaneateles High School in 1963 and earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree from St. Lawrence University, NY in 1967. He went on to graduate from Syracuse University with a Masters in Business Administration Degree in 1971. His military education includes Squadron Officer School, Air Command & Staff College and Air War College.

Col. Homer enlisted in the NYANG in Aug 1968, was commissioned in March 1969 and graduated from Pilot Training in 1970 as Distinguished Graduate. He began working Full-Time at the 174th in 1975 as a Flight Instructor and held various positions within operations to include Ground Training Officer, Stan/Eval Officer, Scheduling Officer, Air Operations Officer and Deputy Commander for Operations. In 1991, when the 174th was activated during Operation Desert Storm, he was assigned as a Mission Director on the Joint Stars Aircraft. Following that, he went on to head the NYS Counter Drug Program for Headquarters, NYANG in Albany, NY. His last assignment prior to his current position was that of establishing the Minimum Essential Airfield (MEA), at Griffiss AFB in conjunction with the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 1995.

Col. Homer is a command pilot, having been combat qualified in the A-37, A-10 and F-16; with more than 4,000 flying hours.

His awards and decorations include The Bronze Star Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor Device and 4 devices, Combat Readiness Medal with 5 devices, National Defense Service Medal with 1 device, Southwest Asia Service Medal with 2 devices, Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with 5 devices, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with 1 device, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon with 1 device, Air Force Training Ribbon, and Kuwait Liberation Medal.

His military and civic affiliations include the National Guard Association of New York, Militia Association of New York, and the Air Force Association.

Col. Homer resides in Scott, NY with his wife, the former Lynn Bari.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DIANE
PORTER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Diane Porter and thank her for her extraordinary contributions to her community and to her state. As a resident of Pueblo, Colorado, Diane has dedicated herself to helping her community by selflessly giving her time and energy to a number of philanthropic endeavors. The remarkable work she has done with the people in her community is surpassed only by the level of integrity and honesty with which she has conducted herself each and every day. It is with a great deal of satisfaction and pride