

time of 1 minute and 43.95 seconds. This record held and Derek won Olympic gold.

Derek's silver and gold medals surprised the world. At 5 feet 3½ inches, Derek is a small man in a tall man's sport. He is known by his Nordic competitors as "the little man with the big strokes."

Derek grew up on the West Side of San Bernardino with his brother and single father. He attended Roosevelt elementary and Eisenhower high school. He first learned to skate at the stardust roller rink in Highland where he became an avid inline skater.

As a Mexican-American youth growing up in southern California, Derek did not set foot on ice until he was 17 years old. Derek would be 26 years old before he would switch from inline skating to ice skating in 1996 in order to shoot for Olympic gold.

Derek's road to the Olympics has not been easy. He and his wife Tiffany have struggled to make ends meet raising a baby girl, Mia Elizabeth, while Derek trained for the Olympics. Unlike most skaters who train fulltime, Derek works part-time at a Home Depot to help support his family. Derek has doggedly pursued his dream against all odds.

When people said that he could not do it, he said that he could, and he did it. Derek proved that a determined kid from a working class family in Southern California could grow up to be a champion in a sport dominated by Northern Europeans.

We do not have many Winter Olympians in San Bernardino. The beauty of the Olympic games is the opportunity they allow all of us to experience the glory and triumph through our athletes. We feel a connection with them. As the first Mexican-American to ever appear in the winter games let alone win a medal, Derek expanded the dreams of millions of Hispanic boys and girls throughout the U.S. and the world. In a world that all too often tells our children, "no you can't," Derek Parra has shown them that "si se puede," yes, they can compete! Through faith, determination and hard work, Derek broke down barriers to become a beacon of hope to children everywhere. Derek is truly a role model for others to follow.

Derek Parra made history and opened the world of possibility of Hispanic Americans. Thank you Derek. San Bernardino is proud of you. Mexican Americans are proud of you. All Americans are proud of you. You are our hero. God Bless you.

TRIBUTE TO KANSAS CITIANS' RESPONSE TO OUR RECENT ICE STORM

**HON. DENNIS MOORE**

OF KANSAS

**HON. KAREN MCCARTHY**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 26, 2002*

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, Ms. MCCARTHY and I rise today to pay tribute to the thousands of Kansas City-area residents who over the past two weeks rose to the challenge posed by the worst ice storm to hit the Kansas City metropolitan area in decades.

The storm, which struck our area with unprecedented fury on January 29th and 30th,

cut electric power to over 450,000 area residents and caused more than \$50 million in damage in Missouri and approximately \$47 million plus damage in Kansas. Seven deaths were attributed to the storm.

As the Kansas City Star described it, the storm "blasted through [and] left most of the metropolitan area a dangerous tangle of downed trees, felled power lines and snarled traffic. . . . During an intense 12 hours, from 7 p.m. Wednesday to 7 a.m. Thursday, for example, Johnson County emergency dispatchers took 420 calls, mostly from people reporting tree limbs pulling down overhead lines. The Kansas City Fire Department dispatchers took 1,100 emergency calls in a 12-hour period; ordinarily they receive 1,400 in a month."

Mr. Speaker, our constituents dealt heroically with this unexpected calamity and we want to take special note of the outstanding contributions made by those whose job it was to respond to this crisis: police, firefighters, 911 operators, KCI airport employees, and members of the Missouri and Kansas National Guard, to note just some of them.

Medical teams dealt with cases of carbon monoxide poisoning, exposure, and injuries due to falling tree limbs and falls on ice. Homeless shelters opened their doors to neighbors left without heat and electricity and church groups, the Salvation Army, the Red Cross and municipal emergency services worked overtime and went the extra mile to help those in need during this time of crisis. Countless community volunteers including AmeriCorps, the Boy Scouts, and United Way gave their time to assist in the recovery process. Whether you were in Rosedale or Brookside, Independence or Overland Park, the "Kansas City Spirit" was prevalent with neighbors helping neighbors to cope with the devastation.

Most notably, hundreds of repair crews from area utilities—including Kansas City Power and Light, Missouri Public Service, the Kansas City, Kansas, Board of Public Utilities, Independence Power and Light, Westar Energy, and SBC—worked around the clock, along with 400 out-of-state repair crews and 350 out-of-state tree trimming crews, to replace lines, repair blown fuses and clear ice-laden trees that had cut off power lines and created fire and injury hazards. In fact, it is estimated that of the 450,000 trees that line Kansas City's streets, 10 percent of them will be gone when the cleanup is complete and over 10 percent of the city's privately owned trees also will have perished. To these utility workers, the people of the Kansas City area owe a special debt of gratitude.

We also applaud the leadership of our Governors Bill Graves of Kansas and Bob Holden of Missouri along with the countless local elected officials who worked in tandem with state and federal emergency management officials in compiling the damage assessments to that our Governors could request the Federal Emergency Disaster Declaration. The President and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) acted quickly to start the process of bringing federal relief to our community so that now the full recovery can occur.

Mr. Speaker, we have proven once again Kansas City truly is the heartland of America—when our friends and neighbors are in trouble, our community comes together to address the crisis and to get the necessary job

done—quickly, efficiently and effectively. We have never been prouder to represent the Kansas City metropolitan area.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. EUNICE MERRILL OF HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

**HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 26, 2002*

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor a very special lady in the 5th District of Alabama as she celebrates a remarkable anniversary.

Mrs. Eunice Merrill has been serving her home cooking to the people of north Alabama for fifty years. In January of 1952, a time when very few women in Alabama owned their own businesses, she opened "Eunice's Country Kitchen" in Huntsville, Alabama. Over the years, Eunice's Country Kitchen has become a local favorite.

People from all around don't just come to Eunice's for the food. "Aunt" Eunice, as her many patrons know her, is a local celebrity. She is never caught without a smile and shows kindness and warmth to every person who enters her restaurant.

Eunice Merrill shows that same love and affection to her community as well. She is an extremely active member of the Huntsville community, spending much of her time volunteering and raising money for the Arthritis Foundation.

Eunice's Country Kitchen is a place where politicians, business leaders, and other locals can gather to eat, drink coffee, and tell stories. Whether it's at the "Liar's Table" reserved for "Politishins and Fisherfolk" or refilling coffee cups throughout the restaurant, everyone feels right at home at Aunt Eunice's. For fifty years, people from all over the world have visited Eunice's Country Kitchen and have concluded that it truly is the finest place for country ham & biscuits.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely congratulate Aunt Eunice for fifty years of friendly service and great food. And I want to thank here for making me a part of her Alabama family.

DR. BOB ALBIN OF TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY RETIRES

**HON. LARRY COMBEST**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 26, 2002*

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call my colleagues' attention to the tireless dedication and tremendous effort of Dr. Bob Albin, the Associate Dean of Research for the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at Texas Tech University. For more than 40 years, Bob has shaped the minds of agriculture students, initiated cutting-edge research throughout the agricultural college, served as a committed faculty member and student advisor, and been a unswerving friend to all of agriculture. As he retires, Bob can look back on his time at Texas Tech with great pride on his many accomplishments.

As the Representative of Lubbock, TX and of Texas Tech University, I have personally