

"I would like to start by stating that this award is not given out each year. Only when a citizen exemplifies the highest degree of devotion to the well being of our community, do we bring out this award. However, this year it is certainly necessary to acknowledge the devotion of Bill Eckman, the mayor of La Plata, with this award.

Bill Eckman first came to Maryland when AT&T transferred him here from Pennsylvania. He had been the Fire Chief in his Pennsylvania town. He joined the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department, where he served for 12 years. He has been a consistent and steady supporter, participant, teacher, writer and speaker for fire and rescue issues. He has traveled to many cities addressing fire and rescue infrastructure. He has started 9 specialized fire fighting training programs. After he retired from AT&T, he wrote a book about fire protection and water supply.

Bill and his wife Delores lead a bible study program focused on community. The program teaches others to build relationships and care for one another. Bill practices this philosophy in his activities with the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home where he regularly brings services and music with other lay preachers to the residents. This also gives him the opportunity to display another talent. Bill plays his trumpet with an informal group at the Veterans home.

Bill has been married for 52 years, has three children and three grandchildren.

Bill Eckman was a La Plata Town councilman for at least 10 years and has been mayor for 20 years.

In that time, La Plata has changed. The population has grown from under 2,000 to nearly 8,000. The Town Hall has had 4 homes and is getting ready to find a new location. The town staff has grown from 15 to 50.

He has devoted much of his adult life to municipal government. He has been the president of the Maryland Municipal League and is presently a well-respected member of the League's Legislative Committee. Often, he is asked to speak before the State Legislature.

It is safe to say that during this time Bill has made friends and earned the respect of elected officials on both sides of the aisle.

Bill has always wanted La Plata to be a happy place to live; a town that enjoys the fruits of good growth without losing the benefits of a small town. He has always wanted to plan, and whenever possible, to stay ahead of infrastructure needs. He has been known to get excited about the very unsexy jobs that come with being mayor—like putting in a new 15-inch sewer pipe.

Doug Miller, La Plata town manager, remembers when Bill first had the summer long concert ideas. Doug thought there might be a citizen turnout for 3-4 concerts, but thought Bill's vision was a bit ambitious. Well, for over 10 years, the La Plata Town Hall has hosted Friday night summer concerts to a packed lawn of families.

However, all the smart growth initiatives, concert series and sewer pipes were just sand in the bucket compared to the leadership Bill would exhibit after April 28, 2002. Every Mayor and Town Manager sweats weather conditions that have the potential of causing harm to their town and heaves a sigh of relief when storms pass on by, but this time they were not so fortunate. This time Bill had to go into high gear and get the job done. He had to stand strong for residents and businesses

that faced ruin, despair and fear. He was dealing with a complete lack of services, the water tower was down, electricity was gone, telephone communication was hampered, helicopters were med-evac-ing the injured, and the press was descending. He will tell you that there were many people who made the miraculous recovery possible, but there always has to be a leader that makes everything seem possible.

Here is a quote from the newspaper. "Every morning since the tornado hit early one Sunday evening, La Plata Mayor Bill Eckman has taken a walk around town to talk with demolition crews and neighbors."

Regardless of how many people contributed there is a very interesting reason why recovery did not have to start from square one. Bill had already realized that La Plata was in transition and had previously put together a new town visioning process many months before the tornado.

The blue print for recovery was there because Bill is an optimist, a visionary and a leader.

It is for those qualities that we honor Bill Eckman as the 2003 Citizen of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, please join with me and the Charles County community in recognizing the numerous contributions Mayor Eckman has made to our County, our State and our Nation.

INTRODUCTION OF FEDERAL DETENTION CENTER LEGISLATION

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I have introduced this legislation today to stop the Federal Detention facility from being built in Dundalk, Maryland.

This past month the Office of Federal Detention Trustees (OFDT) in the Department of Justice solicited proposals for a new detention facility for the Baltimore-Washington region. One of the proposed sites was in Dundalk, Maryland. I was concerned that this office took action without consulting the community. OFDT solicited proposals without bringing the communities into the process. OFDT took action without the input of Federal, State, and local officials. This is wrong.

The Dundalk community is undergoing revitalization efforts, and even proposing such a facility might have cooled businesses and new residential interest in this community. As the former Baltimore County Executive, my administration spent over \$130 million to revitalize the area. It is very important to me that we help our older communities. It is important that we allow these communities that have generations of families living there to revitalize and attract new jobs and new businesses.

Also, the eastern part of Baltimore County was hit hard by Hurricane Isabel. It has caused extensive damage and many of the residents and businesses are still struggling to get on their feet. Hurricane Isabel damage estimates for Maryland alone are valued at six million dollars. We must continue to work to help this area.

The Maryland Congressional delegation has worked tirelessly to stop the detention center, and I remain committed to its defeat. We

worked together to insert language into the FY' 04 Omnibus appropriations to stop this facility. I want to thank Senator MIKULSKI and Democratic Whip STENY HOYER for all their efforts. We knew the actions of OFDT would do more harm to our community and we fought to stop it.

This legislation takes an additional strengthening step to ensure that this facility and no new detention center or prison is built in my district. This legislation prohibits the OFDT from building or proposing any sites and it prohibits the Attorney General from building a detention center or prison in Dundalk.

In the past few months this area has experienced major problems. They saw thousands of Marylanders lose their jobs with the restructuring at ISG. They saw severe damage from Hurricane Isabel. This prison would be one more concern for the community. It is important to allow this area to revitalize and to grow. I remain committed to fighting for Dundalk and for my fellow Marylanders.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR TAUER AND THE RETIRING AURORA CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

HON. BOB BEAUPREZ

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, the political landscape of Colorado's third largest city changed considerably after the City of Aurora's November 4 municipal elections. Due largely to term limits, the largest turnover of elected officials in city history has occurred. The people who left public service were committed public servants who have left indelible marks on Aurora and positioned the City and its citizens for great success and achievement in the 21st century.

Collectively, Mayor Paul Tauer and Council members Barbara Cleland, Bob LeGare, Edna Mosley, John Paroske and Dave Williams provided their constituents with 85 years of service as elected officials at the City. They have provided visionary leadership and both their knowledge of and commitment to issues of importance to the people of Aurora will be hard to replace.

Paul Tauer was the Mayor of Aurora from 1987 until 2003. He was a City Councilman for eight years before that. He has been a visionary leader whose legacy will be felt for decades to come. He has been at the forefront of development in the City, including Original and Southeast Aurora, Buckley Air Force Base, Gateway, E-470 corridor, City Center, Aurora Municipal Center and the redevelopment of Fitzsimons. He was instrumental in establishing a growth management plan that sets goals for quality and smart growth and has been a leader in water issues including drought management, the enhancement of Aurora's water supply including acquisition of new water resources, treatment and use of recycled water and more than doubling storage and distribution systems. He has also overseen the enhancement of the City's transportation systems. He has been Aurora's greatest cheerleader and defender and under his leadership, Aurora has grown from a sleepy suburb to a vibrant city.

Barb Cleland served as an Aurora City Councilwoman for 20 years. She distinguished