

the Trace fell into disuse and was nearly lost to history. In 1934, Congress ordered a survey of the old wagon road, and, in 1937, provided initial funding for construction of what would eventually become the 444-mile-long Natchez Trace Parkway running through rural Mississippi, Alabama and Tennessee. Today, the Parkway is one of the most visited national parks and serves as a unique thoroughfare, allowing us to ride in comfort along an ancient trail through some of the most beautiful scenery in our country.

Tom has helped the Natchez Trace Parkway for decades, from the days of legendary Congressmen Jamie Whitten of Mississippi and Tom Bevill of Alabama. He worked hard to secure federal funding to complete and beautify the Parkway. Everyone associated with the Parkway knows that Tom is a great organizer, motivator, and promoter of the Trace. Just stop and eat a ham biscuit at the famous Loveless Café at the head of the Trace and you'll hear Tom's name mentioned frequently and with deep respect. Without Tom's efforts, the Natchez Trace Parkway would not be the link between the past and future of our region that it is today. Everyone in the Southeast United States is indebted to Tom for his vision. He helped save the Trace before it was too late.

His tireless work on the Natchez Trace Parkway is just one of his important contributions. Tom is a true servant of his community. Born to remarkable parents in Lewisburg, Tennessee, he served in WWII and came home to graduate from the University of Tennessee, manage the local co-op and open a small business. He was so popular he was elected Mayor of Lewisburg. Later moving to Nashville, he helped many Middle Tennessee businesses expand, thanks to his keen credit decisions while heading up industrial development projects for Third National Bank. Those years were the golden age of Third National under the leadership of the legendary Sam Fleming, but it was men like Tom Green that brought the loans to the bank. Money is a commodity; customer relationships are more precious than gold.

Tom went on to help all Nashvillians when he spent more than a decade as the associate general manager of the Nashville Electric Service, the local electric utility. Just one of the many people Tom helped was an African-American barber in a poor part of town. The barber would call Tom to tell him about an upstanding citizen who just couldn't pay their electric bill that month, but would pay when they found work. He asked Tom to keep their lights on and Tom did just that. As a former banker, Tom knew how to make character loans, whom to trust and whom not to. Despite being a monopoly, NES kept the goodwill of its hardworking customers and Tom made even more lifelong friends at a time when most white Nashvillians did not care much about goodwill in the black community. The barber is still in business in the same location and I have visited his barbershop with Tom. The barber's name is Vernon Winfrey, and he is the father of Oprah Winfrey. Tom bent over backwards to help him before he had any realistic hope of fame or fortune. That's the kind of guy Tom is.

Married for 53 years to Pat Green, the Greens are the parents of four outstanding grown men and grandparents of eleven children. Tom is an active member of the Nash-

ville Downtown Rotary Club and Christ the King Catholic Church and finds time to volunteer at the Nashville's "Room in the Inn" program for the homeless and at St. Thomas Hospital. Pat is a renowned local teacher who is directly descended from Abraham Lincoln's first-grade school teacher. Needless to say, the Green family is well educated.

Tom's generous spirit and joyful approach to life immediately come to mind when anyone thinks of him. No matter how busy his day may be, Tom always has a smile, an encouraging word and a couple of minutes just to talk . . . sometimes more than a couple of minutes. He'll pick up the conversation just where you left it . . . the day before, a week or a month ago. He always knows the news and has lots of tips about everyone's background, interconnections, and exactly how to approach everyone. His mind is better than a computer database. There's never been anyone like him.

Of course, I am the lucky one. Tom Green has been a key part of my office staff for the past several years. No one could ask for a more positive, uplifting presence in the office, or a better person to represent you out in the community. Not only does he know everyone, he also has great ideas. For example, last year Tom Green persuaded Vernon Winfrey to make available Oprah Winfrey Scholarships to Nashville Tech Community College. Now all future generations will benefit from an old interracial friendship, formed on the basis of taking a business risk to keep the lights on for decent, hardworking people who were temporarily down on their luck.

I am truly fortunate and want to take this moment to thank Tom for bringing his integrity, his energy and his ever-present sense of humor to my Congressional team. He can outwork a dozen people half his age. I want to take this moment to publicly offer my thanks, and the thanks of everyone in the 5th Congressional District of Tennessee, for Tom Green's extraordinary service to our community, our state and our country.

SUPPORTING REACH OUT AND READ PROGRAM

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the Reach Out and Read program. The Reach Out and Read Program is a program that promotes early literacy by making reading a standard part of pediatric primary care by encouraging doctors and nurses to advise parents about the importance of reading to children. Reach Out and Read programs are located in over 2,000 hospitals and health centers around the country. Annually, more than two million children participate in Reach Out and Read. My district is proud to have 14 Reach Out and Read programs that provide over 15,000 books to nearly 11,000 West Virginia children annually. I have participated three times in Reach Out and Read Programs in Kanawha and Roane Counties in my district.

By building on the unique relationship between parents and medical providers, Reach Out and Read helps families and communities

encourage early literacy skills so children enter school prepared for success in reading.

President Bush included Reach Out and Read in his fiscal year 2006 budget request, continuing a multi-year effort to support this vital reading program. Reach Out and Read has a strong track record of raising non-federal dollars and is capable of more than double the impact of its 2006 appropriation. In January Reach Out and Read undertook a major 2-year initiative to increase the number of children reached by 50 percent through mid-2007. This bold step will greatly increase the number of West Virginia children who grow up in a household where early reading is encouraged.

Reach Out and Read assists families and communities in encouraging early literacy skills so children enter school prepared for success in reading. The continued support of this program is critical to the success of the Reach Out and Read program.

TRIBUTE TO CHUCK AND SHELBY OBERSHAW

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to two outstanding leaders in my community who are to receive the Golden Baton Award from the San Bernardino Symphony Guild in recognition of their proactive role in fostering the culture of music in the Inland Empire. Today, I join family and friends in honoring Chuck and Shelby Obershaw for their remarkable achievements and express enormous pride in this recognition that has been afforded to them.

Chuck Obershaw was raised in the Inland Empire where he devoted himself to his family, friends and community. He selflessly served as a para-glider trooper in the 187th regiment of the 11th Airborne Division before returning to San Bernardino in the 1940s.

Chuck's accomplishments are as remarkable as they are diverse. He has served as President of the San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce, the San Bernardino Motor Car Dealers, the Air Force Association, and the Norton Air Force Base Chapter. In these capacities, he has been an integral contributor to the management and administration of community affairs and worked tirelessly for a better way of life for all of San Bernardino's residents.

Shelby Obershaw also proved the importance of serving your community. After moving to San Bernardino in 1959, she dedicated all her energy to shaping the minds of the future leaders of tomorrow as a dedicated teacher in various area high schools.

Her list of accolades is no less illustrious. They include election to the San Bernardino City Unified School District Board of Education, serving as President for 2 years, Director of the San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce, and member of the San Bernardino Chapter of the National Assistance League. She has also received the California PTA Honorary Service Award and the Citizen Achievement Award from the League of Women Voters.