

Orr Award for Most Productive Unit, and the Best Vehicle Operations Flight in the Pacific Air Forces Command among others.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and heartfelt gratitude that I salute Chief Celento for his service and dedication to our great nation.

RECOGNIZING THE DECATUR
TELEPHONE COMPANY

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, small and family businesses are the backbone of America's economy. Today I want to recognize one of these family institutions that serve a community in Newton County, Mississippi. In this day of international mergers and billion dollar telecommunication deals, it is wonderful to see a small and stable company continue to provide telephone service to customers after sixty years in the same family. If I may, let me quote from The Newton Record's November 23, 2005 issue and article titled "Decatur Telephone marks 60 years" by Kenneth Billings.

Few enterprises are fortunate enough to reach a milestone one local business will celebrate next month when its owners celebrate more than half a century of operating the business. On Dec. 5, Bill and Louise Bailey will mark their 60th year as owners of the Decatur Telephone Company and the continuation of a family legacy begun in 1945.

"In a way it seems like any other day," Louise Bailey said of the upcoming anniversary. "Sometimes I can't believe it has really been that long. The office has been a part of home so long it is sort of an extension of what we do everyday."

The Baileys purchased the company shortly after Bill returned home from the military and began seeking a vocation. They purchased the company and all 46 customers from Katie Perkins in 1945 and began what would grow into a family legacy.

Over the years they nurtured the business and in 1976 earned the distinction of becoming the first telephone company in the world to be completely digital. Today, Decatur Telephone boasts more than 2,500 customers in the central part of Newton County.

Bill, 84, and Louise, 83, still take an active part in the business, but in recent years have begun to cut back. No longer is all day spent at the helm of the business as they prepare to pass the reins to other family members to carry on the legacy of the business.

Although their son, Mark has gone on to a career in medicine after spending summers at the company as he grew up, their daughter and company Vice President Esther Smith is preparing to take control when time comes for her parents to fully retire. Smith said taking up the family business seemed the natural thing for her to do having spent most of her life inside the offices of the company.

"I have grown up here," she said. "I remember when I would walk 'home' this is where I came. While momma and daddy worked I went into the storeroom and played. I even one time tried to memorize the entire phone book because I thought that was what I had to do.

"Daddy was always so good to look into future. He was a real visionary business person. In the world, technology changes so fast and he was making advances for the company at a critical time. I just hope I can continue on the path daddy started."

The Bailey's said an all-day open house is set for Dec. 5 at the Decatur Telephone Company for customers and friends to join with them in celebrating their anniversary with finger foods and refreshments available.

Mr. Speaker, this month marks 60 years of Bailey Family telephone service to Decatur, Mississippi and hope they will continue for many more decades to come. They make it possible for my constituents to call here to Washington, DC and participate in the great American experiment, the democratic debate of our Congress. They are able to call around the world and down the street. It may be technology that makes it possible, but it could not be done without the hard work of folks like Bill and Louise Bailey and their family.

COMMENDATION FOR ROGER EASTON,
NATIONAL MEDAL OF
TECHNOLOGY RECIPIENT

HON. CHARLES F. BASS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate New Hampshire resident Roger Easton for receiving the National Medal of Technology, America's highest honor for technological achievement.

More importantly, I would like to commend Mr. Easton for four decades of distinguished service to the field of navigation technology and to our Nation. His numerous inventions, from the Minitrack satellite tracking system to the "Navigation System Using Satellites and Passive Ranging Techniques," provided the foundation for the development of the Global Positioning System (GPS) in widespread use today. This crucial technology initially advanced the capacity and effectiveness of U.S. satellites, in addition to providing a measure of increased security in the Cold War era by enabling our military to track unknown objects orbiting the Earth. Mr. Easton's ground-breaking inventions have subsequently inspired the use of GPS technology in the civilian sector, including the system's adaptation for usage in commercial airplanes and personal automobiles.

His contributions as a public servant are equally noteworthy, having served two terms as a colleague of mine in the New Hampshire State Legislature and three terms on the Board of the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative. The National Medal of Technology could not have been bestowed on a more deserving individual, and it is an honor to offer this outstanding contributor to America's economic, environmental, and social well-being my heartfelt congratulations.

STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF RESPONSE BY AMERICA'S SECOND HARVEST TO HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

was devastating. More than one thousand people died and thousands of Gulf Coast residents lost their homes in these storms. As we now know, the Federal Government's reaction and response was woefully inadequate. We've seen how FEMA was ill-equipped to handle the catastrophes caused by these massive storms. We know that the then-Administrator of FEMA, Michael Brown, was the wrong choice to head such an important agency and we know that the lives of these Gulf State residents will never be the same because, in part, of the botched Federal response.

The responses to these hurricanes weren't all bad. The residents of the gulf coast were fortunate that there are non-profit organizations that were able to step in and provide the basic services and care to the victims of these storms.

One such group, America's Second Harvest, was a beacon of hope during and after the storm, providing food and water to the victims. America's Second Harvest is the nation's largest hunger-relief charity, and their truckloads of food and water helped support food banks and food-rescue organization in the gulf coast and other impacted areas.

Yesterday, December 15th, America's Second Harvest released a report documenting the impact of emergency food distribution in the wake of these devastating storms. Specifically, this report details the depth and breadth of the impact of the Gulf region hurricane disasters on the charitable food distribution system and the clients it serves. This report shows that demand for emergency food assistance in the Gulf Coast tripled following Hurricane Katrina. Just as startling is the finding that the demand for emergency food assistance continues to be more than fifty percent higher than it was before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The study also confirms what we know—that low income families and African Americans were disproportionately impacted by the hurricane disasters.

I'm a co-chair of the House Hunger Caucus, a group I helped form to focus on and educate Members of Congress about the issue of hunger. Two days ago, the Caucus hosted a briefing on the food distribution response—Federal Government and private groups—to the hurricanes. What we learned is that we need to tighten up the system. We need to cut red tape so that food and water is on the ground, ready to go into impacted areas right away. We need to educate people in disaster-prone areas so they have adequate supplies of food, water and other necessities.

And we need to make sure that the Federal Government and private groups have clear lines of communication and that there are real plans in place so that the relief and recovery can begin immediately after a disaster. There will be disasters. According to experts, the Gulf Coast is only a mild tropical storm away from being devastated once again. We must take the lessons learned from Katrina and Rita, apply to them now, and get ready for the next natural disaster that will strike.

This report, and the expertise of America's Second Harvest, is a good first step and I'd like to commend Bob Forney and his staff at America's Second Harvest for their work on it and for their dedication to combating and ending hunger in America. As we look into the successes and failures in the days leading up to and the days, weeks and months following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, this report should