

Again, the story of my own parents illustrates this point.

My parents moved to South Baltimore in 1945.

They knew that they had to leave South Carolina if their children were to have a better life.

Life in Baltimore was difficult for my family. During my earliest years in South Baltimore, all that they could afford for themselves and their seven children was a small, rented, three-room house.

Yet, it was there in South Baltimore that my life was changed.

It happened at a neighborhood swimming pool, which at that time was segregated.

We were just children looking for a way to escape the summer heat of South Baltimore's concrete and asphalt streets.

In those days, South Baltimore's white children swam and relaxed in the Olympic-sized Riverside Pool that the City maintained not far from where I lived.

Black children were barred from Riverside by the cruelty of segregation.

We were consigned by the color of our skin to an aging wading pool at Sharp and Hamburg Streets. That wading pool was so small that we had to take turns to be able to sit in the cool water.

Upset about our exclusion from our neighborhood's public pool, we complained.

To their everlasting credit, Captain Jim Smith, Juanita Jackson Mitchell, and the NAACP organized a march.

Other people soon joined in this struggle.

I would like to be able to tell you that the White families at Riverside accepted us graciously. Sadly, that is not what happened.

As we tried to gain entrance to the pool each day for over a week, we were spit upon, threatened and called everything but children of God.

I still carry a scar that I received from a bottle thrown at me during the march. We were afraid. And our parents became concerned for our safety.

Then, when all seemed lost, we saw Juanita Jackson Mitchell marching up the street toward our little group. With her were two reluctant, but grimly determined, policemen. They seemed more afraid of Ms. Mitchell's anger than of the jeering, hostile crowd.

Four decades later, the history books say that the Riverside pool was peaceably integrated. We know the truth.

My friends, the struggle to integrate that public swimming pool at Riverside may not have been a large thing in the eyes of the world.

It was not Little Rock—not Selma, Birmingham nor St. Augustine.

But Riverside has a LARGE meaning for me.

At Riverside, I learned that there are dividing lines in every human lifelines that separate hatred from love.

And I learned that we all will face a time when we must choose on which side of these lines we will take a stand.

That choice is the same no matter who is the victim of prejudice, exclusion and hatred.

We face that same choice today as we open up America to people from every continent, language, religion and race.

And how we handle this choice will determine the future of generations yet unborn.

Black History Month means so much to so many people and I want to thank Congress-

man Al Green for his leadership in introducing H. Res.198 to recognize this fact. I strongly urge all my colleagues to support it.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND  
WORK OF FATHER ROBERT AN-  
THONY MACK

**HON. BRIAN HIGGINS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2007*

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise to commend Father Robert Anthony Mack for his 50 years of service as an ordained priest, and his significant contributions to the western New York community and Catholic Church.

Father Mack will be honored in a special Mass at Saint Louis Parish on Sunday March, 25, and today I honor his accomplishments and devoted service to his parish and community.

A passionate and dedicated man, his contributions to Buffalo include service as chaplain of Nardin Academy, Catholic chaplain of the Buffalo Fire Department, chaplain at Buffalo Memorial Auditorium and War Memorial Stadium, and division chairman of the Public and Service Division of the Erie County United Way.

A native of Riverside, Father Mack's first pastorate began in 1973 at Saint Matthew's Parish in Buffalo where he served until 1978. Father Mack also served as pastor of St. Bridget's in Newfane, NY, as well as at Saint Francis Xavier Parish of Buffalo. During his time at Saint Francis Xavier, Father Mack served as regional coordinator for Region 1 parishes and was a member and secretary of the Black Rock Riverside Clergy Association. In August 1989, Father Mack was honored in front of 25,000 people as Irishman of the Year at a home game of the Buffalo Bisons by the United Irish American Society of Erie County.

Father Mack also served as the pastor of All Saints and served as an administrator of the Rosary Parish in Niagara Falls before being appointed pastor of St. Louis Parish where he retired from in 2002. Father Mack also chaired the Peace and Justice Committee of the Priests' Senate and was appointed to the Arbitration Section of the Diocesan Due Process Committee.

Madam Speaker, Father Mack's experience during his 50 years as an ordained priest is unrivaled in our community. He has been a leader and an inspiration to countless parishioners and to the community at large. Father Mack is one of Buffalo's most prolific men of faith and on this special occasion, I recognize his vast accomplishments and dedication to our community.

RECOGNIZING RETIRING SUISUN  
CITY POLICE CHIEF RON FOR-  
SYTHE

**HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2007*

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Suisun City Police Chief Ron Forsythe, who after nearly 30 years of service to

the community of Suisun City has retired from the Suisun City Police Department.

Chief Ron Forsythe has unselfishly served his community with great dedication and pride, and will leave the department with special recognition and with the highest commendation.

Chief Forsythe began his professional career in 1973, as a student aide in the Daily Republic newsroom, eventually being promoted to reporter and photographer.

His time spent in the newsroom piqued his interest in law enforcement. In 1977, he became a dispatcher and reserve police officer for the Suisun City Police Department. Working his way up the ranks, Chief Forsythe was promoted to chief of police in 1993.

During his career in Suisun City, Chief Forsythe was known for his innovative and forward thinking policies. He took leadership roles in introducing technology, such as automation and car-mounted computers to the department.

Chief Forsythe also instituted the first "citizen police academy" in the county and later introduced the first "teen academy" in the country. Moreover, Chief Forsythe's role in implementing community policing in Suisun City played a key role in turning around a city that was once considered the worst city in the bay area to live in.

Police Chief Ron Forsythe has served the citizens of Suisun City with great distinction, evidenced by policing policies that have served as nationwide models and the numerous State and national awards the department received.

As Chief Ron Forsythe retires from the Suisun City Police Department, I would like to thank him, and his partner, Matthew Forsythe, for his record of service and concern for the protection of life and property in the local community, and extend to him sincere best wishes for continued success in his future endeavors.

JUDGE ELISEO B. VEGA

**HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2007*

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, the nation—and South Texas—lost a valuable patriot today with the passing of longtime Port Isabel municipal judge and community leader Eliseo B. Vega. Known affectionately as "Cheo," Judge Vega died following a lengthy illness.

Judge Vega was an extraordinary caring and hardworking man. He was a familiar face in the Port Isabel area and was a political powerhouse. Despite his several setbacks due to illness, when most would think that he couldn't pull through, the man just kept going and wouldn't miss working. He was a man of great faith and loved life fully. He loved life so much he didn't want a sad funeral, so we will celebrate his life this week.

His life touched so many people. Judge Vega was best known for his role as judge in the municipal court system. His lengthy judicial career, beginning in 1971, spanned generations. He was what you wanted a judge to be: fair and even-handed. He understood people, he understood justice, and he stood at the intersection of both.

Prior to his legal and judicial career, the Judge was a banker and also served in a law