

HONORING ASTRONAUT WALTER MARTY SCHIRRA, AND EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON HIS PASSING

SPEECH OF  
**HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE**

OF TEXAS  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Wednesday, June 6, 2007*

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 446, to honor and recognize the life of astronaut Walter Marty Schirra, and to express condolences on his passing. Walter Marty Schirra passed away in La Jolla, CA, at the age of 84.

The American community is sad to have lost one of its original space trailblazer—a true pioneer in both innovation and discovery. In attempting to place men in space, Schirra was chosen to serve as one of the original Mercury 7 astronauts for Project Mercury. Serving as an astronaut and naval officer, Schirra became the first man to fly on all three of our Nation's space programs—Apollo 7, Gemini VI-A, and Mercury 8 (Sigma 7). Prior to his passing, "Astronaut Wally Schirra" logged a total of 4577 hours of flight time, with 295 of those being in space. Additionally, he performed 267 landings in an aircraft carrier.

His lifetime of achievement also included a decorated record of service in the United States Military. He flew 90 combat missions in F-84E jets, as well as downing at least one MIG fighter, while serving as an exchange pilot with the 154th Fighter Bomber Squadron during the Korean War. His courage and valor was eventually recognized with three distinguishing flying crosses, two air medals, two NASA Distinguished Services Medals, and induction into the National Aviation Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, Wally Schirra serves as a positive role model and an asset to the space community. Schirra was an accomplished astronaut whose personal and professional career was filled with positive milestones and accomplishments. Schirra always rejected mediocrity by rejecting to conform to commonplace expectations. Schirra pushed the limits of 2 discovery and was determined to work harder and go farther than anyone before him.

Despite his numerous accomplishments, which ranged from educational attainment, military awards, hall of fame inductions, activeness in diverse clubs and organizations, as well as experiences, his humility was one of his most endearing traits. Although he was a great asset to the space industry, he assumed a very modest character.

As one of the few and profound trailblazers ever known to the United States Naval Academy, NASA, and the space community, he has helped pave the way for much of our knowledge about the operations of the space system. As a Member who represents many NASA-employed constituents and as a strong supporter of the expansion of our space programs, I understand the important role that Schirra played in advancing our scientific explorations in space.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing the enormous contributions that late astronaut Walter Marty Schirra has made in the space industry and beyond, while also expressing condolences for his passing.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION OF JOHNNY W. WELTON

**HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER**

OF CALIFORNIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Monday, June 11, 2007*

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Johnny W. Welton, as he retires as the director of Contra Costa Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), after 40 years of serving students in special education.

Johnny W. Welton's career in special education encompasses 12 years as a classroom teacher, 3 years as a resource teacher, 8 years as a site and central office administrator and 16 years as the Director of the Contra Costa SELPA.

In his role as director of SELPA, Welton established a Resource Parent Program, initiated Facilitation Skills training for staff IEP teams, and introduced Solutions Panel mediation training. Throughout his career, Johnny W. Welton has worked for equity, quality, reforms, and results in special education and conflict resolution.

On many occasions during his illustrious career, Johnny W. Welton received national, State and local awards and recognition for his service to the children of Contra Costa County.

Among these are: the first "Peacemaker of the Year Award" from the California Department of Education; the "Outstanding Administrator of the Year Award" presented by the Association of California School Administrators; a certificate of Appreciation awarded by Contra Costa Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder; and the first Alternative Dispute Resolution grant from the California Department of Education in 1993, and in each year to follow.

Johnny W. Welton's outstanding service to special education and dispute resolution more than validates his awards. He assisted in the reorganization and establishment of the California Department of Education Procedural Safeguards Unit, Compliance Monitoring Unit; he built partnerships between Education and other local agencies serving children with special needs; and he chaired the state of California Alternative Dispute Resolution Steering Committee.

As Johnny W. Welton retires, I would like to thank him for his dedication to the quality of education of the children of Contra Costa County, and his leadership in the field of special education as an exceptional educator and SELPA Director. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MINQUAS FIRE COMPANY NO. 1 OF NEWPORT, DE

**HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE**

OF DELAWARE  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Monday, June 11, 2007*

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to commemorate an important anniversary of service to the Town of Newport and the entire State of Delaware.

On May 21, 1907, concerned citizens met in the historic town of Newport to discuss the for-

mation of a fire company. At the time, there had been numerous fires which destroyed properties before the already established fire companies in Wilmington, New Castle and Newark could arrive and fight the blazes. After much discussion and debate, Lt. Governor John M. Mendinhal suggested to the 68 founders that the company should be named the Minquas Fire Company No. 1 commemorating a tribe of Native American Indians who traded with early settlers along the Christiania River.

From its genesis, the Minquas Fire Company has taken great pride in providing volunteer fire rescue and emergency medical services to the citizens of greater Newport. They began by purchasing property in the unit block of North James Street. Several extensions and expansions have taken place over the years the most recent being the erection of an ultra modern facility in 2005.

Minquas' first President Howard P. Weldin and Chief Thomas Bullen oversaw the original building project and the construction of the first fire house. In 1908, a horse drawn chemical engine was purchased from Radnor Fire Company of Pennsylvania for \$1,000 and put in service at the brand new station.

Today President Curtis Clifton and Chief Michael Saggione command the Fire Company. Through their leadership, Minquas has continued to acquire the latest fire, rescue, ambulance apparatus and equipment to respond to the emergency service needs of their community. The Company's Motto "We go where duty calls" exemplifies the volunteer spirit of the men and women of the Minquas Fire Company No. 1.

I am proud of the contributions the volunteers of Minquas have made to Delaware over all these years and I congratulate them on this important milestone of 100 years of service.

IN TRIBUTE TO SAM CARMEN

**HON. GWEN MOORE**

OF WISCONSIN  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Monday, June 11, 2007*

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a leader and volunteer from the Fourth Congressional District, Sam Carmen. Mr. Carmen is a recognized leader at the national and local level for his work in the area of educational innovation and reform. Mr. Carmen is retiring from the Milwaukee Teacher's Education Association (MTEA) after 28 years of faithful service.

Sam Carmen graduated from Cornell University with a bachelor's degree in Industrial and Labor Relations. Following graduation, he worked for both public sector and private sector unions in various capacities.

Mr. Carmen joined the staff of MTEA in 1979. In 1986, he became MTEA's chief spokesperson in contract negotiations with the Milwaukee Public School (MPS) Board. While he was serving as chief negotiator, MTEA developed a portfolio of educational reforms that were incorporated into the collective bargaining agreement and became national models. For example, Mr. Carmen negotiated an interview process for filling teacher vacancies replacing the traditional seniority model. MPS utilizes this process to select teachers who best fit their needs with the input of teachers, administration, and parent representatives.