

brought to the town's attention the need for local fire protection, and on April 25, 1907, in the meeting hall of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics on Franklin Place, the Morris Plains Fire Association was incorporated.

The Fire Department's first purchase was an American LaFrance horse drawn hook and ladder that was financed from donations from the local citizens. Another citizen pitched in by donating his own horse and wagon to be converted by the firemen for use as a hose and wagon.

As the community grew, in 1926, it was decided that Morris Plains would break away from Hanover Township to become what is known today as the Borough of Morris Plains, also known as the "community of caring." In addition, the new Borough government assumed the position of maintaining and replacing fire apparatus. The Morris Plains Fire Association became the Morris Plains Fire Department.

In August of 1940, a fire in the roof of the firehouse damaged the building beyond repair. The Borough Council had been conducting their business in the firehouse meeting room. The Fire Department and Council built a shared facility that today encompasses quarters for the Fire Department, Police and Borough offices.

Today, the Morris Plains Fire Department is led by Chief Michael Geary who successfully commands an all volunteer fire department of about 80 members serving close to 5,250 residents in about a two and a half square mile area.

Madam Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Morris Plains Fire Department and all their firefighters, past and present, on celebrating 100 years of protecting one of New Jersey's finest municipalities!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, on Monday June 18, 2007, I was tending to some family matters and thus missed rollcall votes 499, 500, 501. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all votes.

COMMEMORATING THE RETIREMENT OF RUTH ONITA SPAKE

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable person, Ruth Onita Spake, who has dedicated her career and life to public service as Chief Financial Officer for the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency. She is retiring from the County of Santa Clara on July 20, 2007 after thirty-seven years of exemplary work.

Ruth Onita Spake was born on April 3, 1945 in Tallahassee, Florida. Academic excellence was a priority for her; she received an Associ-

ates Degree from Napa Junior College and obtained her Bachelors Degree and a Standardized Secondary Teachers Credential from the University of California, Davis. Before joining the Social Services Agency, she worked as a substitute teacher and as a cost account clerk for an international newspaper.

Ruth's career with Santa Clara County began in 1970 as a Food Stamp Eligibility Worker, where she interviewed applicants on an individual basis to help determine their eligibility to receive county resources. She quickly rose through the ranks and became a Supervisor in just four years. Soon after that, she was appointed as the Program Coordinator, responsible for organizing and directing the entire food stamp program.

After receiving a Masters Degree in Public Administration from the University of California, Riverside, Ruth continued to contribute to Santa Clara County. In 1980, she joined the County Executive's Office of Management and Budget where she stayed for five years. However, she could not resist the call to work towards improving the welfare of Santa Clara residents. By 1985, she had returned to the Social Services Agency to manage the agency's budget.

Ruth progressed quickly through the agency, and her efforts were admired by all those who had the pleasure of working with her. By the early 1990's, Ruth was managing the \$500 million dollar budget of Social Services in conjunction with Central Services and Information Systems. Her role as the Chief Financial Officer afforded her the opportunity to initiate modernization for the agency. She planned and implemented a multi-building renovation project for the agency, revamping the physical infrastructure to supply superior services for the residents.

In addition, Ruth co-chaired the California Welfare Directors and California Department of Social Services Task Force, an association that significantly refurbished the statewide county reimbursement process. This development benefited not only the inhabitants of Santa Clara County but also positively affected those of all fifty-eight counties in California.

Ruth's main interest is her desire to travel. Being of French descent, she is strongly attracted to the French culture and can be classified as a true Francophile. After her retirement, she will undoubtedly dedicate her time to exploring foreign countries and expressing her love for anything French.

Ruth's outstanding achievements at the Social Services Agency were numerous, and their impact on Santa Clara County is immeasurable. Her ability to understand and employ the funding behind the provisions of public social services is astonishing. Where others might have merely done what was required of them, Ruth has gone above and beyond what her job description entailed to provide the Social Services Agency with more efficient methods of serving the residents of Santa Clara County.

I offer my congratulations to Ruth Onita Spake on her thirty-seven distinguished years of exceptional service to the Santa Clara community. Her dedication and sacrifice is the very definition of public service, and her tireless efforts to build and sustain the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency will forever be appreciated and remembered by all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, on Monday, June 18, 2007, I was not present for votes due to mechanical problems on my flight to Washington, DC caused by Northwest Airlines.

Had I been present for rollcall 499, H.R. 2563—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 309 East Linn Street in Marshalltown, Iowa, as the "Major Scott Nisely Post Office", I would have voted "yes."

JUNETEENTH DAY— ACKNOWLEDGMENT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the historical importance of June 19. This is the day that signifies the initial abolishment of slavery in the United States.

As you are aware, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862 to declare freedom of all slaves in the territories of the Confederate States of America by January 1, 1863. Despite the proclamation being issued in September of 1862, most people did not know about it because the infrastructure of communication at that time was no where near as sophisticated as it is today and slave owners undoubtedly did not want their slaves to know about their freedom. On June 19, 1865, troops descended on Galveston Island in Texas to impose the proclamation. Since then, June 19th has been celebrated and recognized as the day slaves were freed. The name Juneteenth is a compilation of portions of the word June and the 19th day of the month. June 19th is an official holiday in Texas and is recognized in some States including New York as an official holiday.

It is extremely important that we not forget the institution of slavery. It represents a very dark part of our history in the United States. The cost and sacrifices of people who were enslaved are immeasurable. For those who lived long enough to be set free, their strength is awesomely inspiring to me and nothing short of a miracle. When I reflect on slavery and the suffering endured, I am humbled and feel grateful for the steadfastness, courage, and faith of my ancestors. I would not be where I am today, if it were not for them.

On this day, I urge my colleagues and all Americans to remember the injustice of slavery and celebrate the abolishment of it. So much progress has been made in our great country towards the rights the forefathers and other great leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. envisioned for all Americans. We shall continue to advance civil and human rights, embrace diversity, and treat each other with dignity and respect.