

HONORING ALVIN CREECH

HON. TIM MAHONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, tonight, I rise to honor Alvin Creech for his valiant service in the Korean War. On Sunday, I will have the distinct honor of presenting Mr. Creech with his Purple Heart award for his brave and selfless service in the Chosin Reservoir Campaign during the first winter of the Korean War.

This Tuesday will mark the 225th Anniversary of when General George Washington established the Purple Heart. The award is one of the highest honors, as it recognizes those who have given personal sacrifice in the name of our great Nation.

Private Creech is a true American hero who has waited over 56 years to receive this honor. He was only 19 when he joined the U.S. Army, continuing his family's proud history of defending America in her time of need.

For about a year, Private Creech fought in Korea. Mr. Creech served in the Third Infantry, helping to hold the defensive perimeter to help ensure that the Americans could make it to the coast. During his time in the Third Infantry, Mr. Creech spent almost a year living in fox-holes and hunkering down under mortar attacks and enemy sweeps. He became a weapons squad leader, leading patrols to the frontline. Despite being wounded in 1951, he served a full tour of duty and returned home to receive a Bronze Star for valor.

Private Creech's service to our community did not end in Korea. He is the proud husband and father of four, and, after working and providing for his family, he retired but then decided to drive a school bus for children.

I am proud that Mr. Creech and his wife Joyce decided to move to Avon Park to enjoy a full retirement. On behalf of Highlands County, I want to express the community's thanks and gratitude to Mr. Creech for his service to our country.

A TRIBUTE TO RUBY DEE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ruby Dee, an American actress, poet, playwright, and civil rights activist. Her career in acting has crossed all major forms of media over a span of eight decades. Ms. Dee has been active in civil rights causes and is a living legend whose grace and life has inspired many.

Born Ruby Ann Wallace on October 27, 1924, in Cleveland, Ohio, she grew up in Harlem, New York. Ms. Dee is a graduate of the famed American Negro Theatre in Harlem where she studied with Sidney Poitier and Harry Belafonte, often working along their side in movies. Her acting career began during a time when Blacks were fighting for civil rights. She earned national acclaim for her performance in the 1950 film, *The Jackie Robinson Story*. Her film credits include *A Raisin In The Sun*, *Roots*, and *Do The Right Thing*.

She was the first African American woman to secure major roles at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Connecticut, serving as a trailblazer for Blacks in American theater. Ms. Dee and her beloved husband, the late Ossie Davis, were honored in 1995 by President Clinton with the Presidential Medal for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts and in 2004 by the Kennedy Center for their contributions to the performing arts in America. In 2007, their album titled, "With Ossie And Ruby: In This Life Together" won a Grammy Award for Best Spoken Word Album.

In the fight for racial equality, she was a member of several civil rights organizations. She and her husband served as masters of ceremonies for the historic 1963 March on Washington. Along with W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Malcolm X, and other leaders of the civil rights movement, she has been an advocate and activist of equal rights for all Americans.

Ms. Dee is a courageous woman who was far ahead of her time. She and her husband raised three children: Guy Davis, Nora Day and Hasna Muhammad. I'm grateful for her friendship, talent, and commitment to uplift and inspire African American people. Ms. Dee has touched the lives of all Americans, not to mention New Yorkers. The village of Harlem is proud to claim her as its own and America is a better place because of her life and immeasurable contributions.

CONGRATULATING KACIE RADER
ON WINNING SOAP BOX DERBY
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Kacie Rader, a neighbor of mine in Mechanicsville, Maryland, a constituent from the Fifth District, and a World-Champion Soap Box Racer.

This is the second time I have come to the Floor this year to sing Kacie's praises. On the first occasion, I commended her win in the National Championship. And today, I rise to celebrate her win in the National Derby Rally Championships—held in the great State of Indiana on Friday July 27—where she won her world title.

Earning the title "world champion" is no small feat. It takes hard work, determination, intelligence and athletic ability—all of which were on display when Kacie achieved her ultimate goal and became the best in the world at her chosen pursuit.

Madam Speaker, I had the pleasure of meeting Kacie this morning, and I can tell you that she is an incredibly well-rounded young woman from whom we expect even greater things in the future.

Today, I want Kacie and her family to know that her district, State and Nation are proud of her accomplishment and wish her nothing but the best in whatever the future may hold.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE JOEL
BLOOM**HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Joel Bloom, a beloved community leader, activist and business owner in my district, who passed away recently after a long battle with cancer.

At a memorial service last month held in front of Joel's business, Bloom's General Store in the Arts District, more than 200 admirers, family members and friends gathered to celebrate his remarkable life. It was a happy occasion, just as Joel would have wanted.

On a personal level, I am extremely grateful to Joel for his unwavering advocacy on behalf of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) Edward R. Roybal Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension. Joel knew that the Gold Line light-rail extension linking Union Station to destinations that included the Arts District and East Los Angeles would play a critical role in the economic development of much-neglected communities. At many MTA meetings when the extension was discussed, I could always count on Joel to represent the transportation needs of Arts District residents with passion and zeal. It saddens me that Joel will not be with us to ride the trains when rail service begins in late 2009 that he fervently believed would spur economic development similar to what occurred in his Chicago birthplace.

Madam Speaker, in honor of Joel's life and many accomplishments, I would like to submit for the record his obituary that appeared in the Los Angeles Times on July 14. It captures the many facets of a man who will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

[From the Los Angeles Times, July 14, 2007]
JOEL BLOOM, 59; L.A. ARTS DISTRICT ACTIVIST
(By Valerie J. Nelson)

Joel Bloom, a pioneering community activist who helped shape the downtown Los Angeles arts district and was its unofficial mayor, with his shoebox-sized general store serving as the area's town hall, has died. He was 59.

Bloom, who also was a playwright and actor, died of soft-tissue sarcoma Friday at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, said his son, Randy. Bloom had fought cancer since 2000.

"He gave the arts district its personality, and he was unabashed in his great love for it," said Councilwoman Jan Perry, who represents the area sandwiched between Little Tokyo and the banks of the Los Angeles River. "Joel was charismatic and ruled the roost over there for many, many years."

In late June, the city gave him an honor rarely accorded a living Angeleno—a sign was posted at East Third Street and Traction Avenue that declared the area "Joel Bloom Square."

The humble Bloom's General Store, founded in 1994 to give the growing community a place to pick up toothpaste or rent a video, stands nearby.

"There's a spark here—hopefully we can light it," Bloom told The Times in 1994 before opening the store in the industrial corridor.

The downtown arts district began in the late 1970s as a haven for artists who worked in the lofts and often illegally lived in them.