

sergeant upon enlisting, and sergeant major just a few days later. As part of the 4th Regiment United States Colored Infantry, he would see action in the Virginia and North Carolina campaigns in the 10th, 18th and 25th Army Corps, and would distinguish himself valorously at Chaffin's Farm, on the outskirts of Richmond, VA, on September 29, 1864.

At the age of 24, SGM Christian Fleetwood stood a mere 5 feet, 4.5 inches tall. Nonetheless, while marching on Confederate fortifications he witnessed Alfred B. Hilton, a fellow soldier, fall wounded while carrying the American flag and the Regimental Standard, which Hilton himself had retrieved from a wounded comrade. Rushing forward under withering fire, Fleetwood and another soldier named Charles Veale caught both banners before they brushed the ground. Now bearing the American flag, Fleetwood carried the attack forward, but retreated once it became clear that the unit did not have sufficient strength to penetrate the defenses. Returning through enemy fire to the reserve line, Fleetwood used his standard to rally a determined group of men and renewed the attack on the battlements.

In a fight where the 4th and 6th Regiments of U.S. Colored Troops sustained casualties reaching 50 percent, Fleetwood refused to give up. For these actions and their contribution to victory at Chaffin's Farm, Fleetwood, along with Veale and Hilton, were awarded the Medal of Honor. Fleetwood's official Medal of Honor citation reads simply: "Seized the colors, after 2 color bearers had been shot down, and bore them nobly through the fight." Every officer in Fleetwood's regiment, all white men, submitted a petition to the War Department to have him commissioned an officer, a sure sign of the respect felt by all who witnessed his gallantry.

The medal is now part of the collection of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, and appears in the exhibit entitled "The Price of Freedom." The medal's inclusion in the Smithsonian exhibit is also unique. Fleetwood's daughter Edith Fleetwood donated his medal to the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum in 1948. The Smithsonian accepted the medal, making Christian Fleetwood the first African-American veteran to be so honored.

The Civil War did not call an end to Christian Fleetwood's service, though he was discharged honorably on May 4, 1866. Fleetwood would go on to organize a battalion of the D.C. National Guardsmen, and, in the 1880s, formed Washington, DC's Colored High School Cadet Corps, which counted among its graduates Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., the Nation's first African-American general, and Wesley A. Brown, the first African-American graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy.

Christian Fleetwood embodied everything Americans revere. His actions in

the 4th Regiment from Baltimore, MD, earned him the military's highest honor. He was selfless, brave, a fierce fighter for the abolition of slavery, and chose to dedicate his free life to service of his country and his community.

TRIBUTE TO TAHIS CASTRO

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Tahis Castro, who is retiring after 17 years of serving Nevadans as an organizer for the Culinary Workers Union.

Tahis came to Reno from Costa Rica in 1987. In 1994, she cofounded and organized Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 86, which represented over 900 culinary workers throughout Reno. Since that time, she has helped negotiate improvements in health care benefits, wages, job security, and training for thousands of working families in Nevada.

Tahis has always been a dedicated and tireless promoter of justice, respect, and dignity for all workers. She has been instrumental in the growth of Local 86, which merged with Las Vegas' Culinary Workers Union Local 226 to represent a total of 60,000 workers in Nevada today. In addition, she has served on the executive board of the Nevada State AFL-CIO.

Tahis has also been influential in representing Nevadans in the political sphere. In 2008, she was chosen as one of the State's five delegates to the Electoral College, and she has been instrumental in promoting voter participation among Nevada's Latino citizens.

I am pleased to stand today to commend Tahis for all she has accomplished, and all she will continue to achieve. Along with the Culinary Workers Union, I congratulate Tahis for her concerted effort and her career of dedicated service.

REMEMBERING EARLE B. COMBS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the remarkable life and career of one of baseball's greatest legends, and a native of the Commonwealth, the late Mr. Earle B. Combs. Known far and wide to fans as the Kentucky Greyhound, the Silver Fox and the Kentucky Colonel, Earle was a prime example of a gentleman who knew the value of hard work and determination.

Earle began his journey to greatness as a child on his father's farm in Pebworth, Owsley County, KY, where he and his siblings would play pickup games with homemade baseballs constructed out of leather and rubber trimmings from old, worn-out shoes and tightly wound string, and bats made with tree limbs found around the yard. Each spring, when warmer weather came, the rolling hills of farmland and hollows provided Earle with the perfect setting to develop a love for America's pastime.

But, as he grew older, he decided his calling in life was to teach. In 1917,

Earle left his hometown of Pebworth to attend Eastern Kentucky State Normal School, now Eastern Kentucky University, and received his teaching certificate in 1919. To help pay for his education, Earle returned to eastern Kentucky to teach in one-room schools in Kentucky towns like Ida May and Levi. That was until destiny had other plans.

In 1918 after a faculty-student baseball game, Earle's abilities caught the eye of Dr. Charles Keith, an Eastern Kentucky State Normal School dean and former pro player, who recommended he try out for Eastern's team. After successfully landing a spot on the team, Earle's talent on the field started to gain him some much-deserved attention. In the summer of 1921, after his last season on Eastern's team, Earle played semiprofessional baseball in several Kentucky towns until he was offered a contract with the Louisville Colonels.

During his 2 years with the Colonels, Earle's miraculous talent earned him his career-long reputation as a line-drive hitter with reckless base-stealing ability. In 1924, this reputation traveled north all the way to New York, where the New York Yankees bought the young and talented Earle for \$50,000.

In the years that followed, Earle became a leadoff hitter for the famed Yankees "Murderers Row," a lineup of the late 1920s and early 1930s, and a member of the 1927 World Championship Yankees team where he played alongside other greats by the names of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. He was errorless in the 16 World Series games in which he played throughout his career, and ended with a career batting average of .325.

Earle retired in 1935 after sustaining a brutal outfield injury the year before, but remained a coach for the Yankees until 1944, during which he trained other baseball greats such as Joe DiMaggio. He was named to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY, in 1970.

Earle coached for several other teams before returning to Madison County where he served as a banking commissioner during Governor A.B. Chandler's second administration and on Eastern Kentucky University's board of regents for 19 years, serving as chairman for 2 of those years. Earle was a leader both on and off the diamond. He was known as a loving family man, a successful businessman, and above all, a true gentleman. He was a devoted father and grandfather and a loyal husband to his childhood sweetheart, the late Ruth Combs.

He valued hard-work and knew the importance of higher education. There is no question that Earle was someone who forever changed the game of baseball, who left an impression on those he taught, and who left a lasting legacy in both his community and throughout the Commonwealth.

The Booneville Sentinel recently published an article introducing a new