

HONORING LANA HUGHES AND JP PRITCHARD FOR 3 DECADES OF SERVICE TO SOUTHEAST TEXAS

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, August 1, 2011

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a pair of southeast Texans who have honored us every weekday morning for more than a quarter century. Up until July 1st of this year, part of starting your morning in the Houston area was tuning into News Radio 740 KTRH for the news from JP Pritchard and Lana Hughes.

Whether it was announcing breaking news from Texas, Washington, DC or across the globe, Houston's anchors—and Houston depended on them. Through devastating Hurricanes like Alicia, Rita and Ike and the most destructive Tropical Storm in U.S. history, Tropical Storm Allison, these dedicated anchors were the calming, assuring voices that kept Texans informed through good economic times and bad. Along the way, these Texas Radio Hall of Fame members became the most honored radio news team anyone can remember with dozens of national, state and local awards.

Native Texan Lana Hughes is a graduate of Conroe High School in the 8th Congressional District and Baylor University. She joined KTRH from the Conroe Courier and KIKR Radio. She is a walking encyclopedia of modern southeast Texas history, especially the accomplishments of the men and women of NASA. Many animals in Houston also have Auntie Lana thank for their loving homes.

A graduate of Drake University, JP Pritchard wasn't born in Texas, but he got there as fast as he could. He and his wife Esther, raised three sons in Texas and are now enjoying being grandparents. From reporter/anchor and news director of KULF Radio to KTRH, JP has a lot to be proud of including his award-winning documentary on the History of Houston.

I have had the pleasure of getting to know these consummate professionals and just how hard they worked to keep Houston informed every day. It is hard not to be in awe of all they accomplished while making it look so effortless. Synonymous with Houston for more than a quarter century, JP and Lana were inducted together into the Texas Radio Hall of Fame together. As they move on to new adventures, Houston owes them a debt of gratitude for being an amazing resource for so many for so long. I just wanted to say "Thank you" to Houston's anchors.

TRIBUTE TO U.S. FEDERAL DISTRICT JUDGE MATTHEW J. PERRY, JR.

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, August 1, 2011

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a legendary American who has passed from this life into immortality. The Honorable Matthew J. Perry, Jr. was one of our great legal minds and a stalwart of the Civil

Rights Movement. He was also my mentor and dear friend, and he leaves a void that cannot be filled.

On Friday, July 29, 2011, Judge Matthew Perry went to work as he did every weekday in the Columbia, South Carolina courthouse that bears his name. That evening he slipped quietly away at home, which was so in keeping with how he lived his life. August 3, 2011 would have been his 90th birthday.

Matthew Perry was the eldest child of Matthew and Jennie Lyles Perry, a tailor and seamstress in the segregated Waverly community of Columbia, South Carolina. Following his father's death when Matthew was just 12, he moved in with his grandfather, William Lyles, a brakeman on the Southern Railroad. Matthew was expected to contribute financially to the family, and he did odd jobs like painting, digging ditches and delivering newspapers to do his part. That led young Matthew to aspire to a better life.

He attended Booker T. Washington High School in Columbia and went on to South Carolina State College (now University) in Orangeburg from 1939 to 1941, until World War II broke out. Matthew was drafted and served as an Army Sergeant in an all-black Quartermaster Corps in England, France, Belgium and Germany.

When Matthew returned home on a furlough from the war, where he enjoyed more freedoms in Europe than he did in the Jim Crow South, he stopped to eat at a restaurant where he was forced to order through a window while he saw Italian prisoners of war eating inside with the white customers. This inequity stirred a passion in Matthew Perry that shaped his entire life.

He returned to South Carolina State College in 1946 and finished his degree in Business Administration, but he remained passionate about civil rights. He watched Thurgood Marshall argue a case in Columbia that led to the establishment of a law school at S.C. State to avoid the integration of the University of South Carolina's School of Law. That experience had a profound influence on Matthew's future. He determined he wanted to follow in the footsteps of future Supreme Court Justice Marshall and enrolled in the second class of S.C. State's law school in 1948. He was one of just five men to graduate in 1951.

Following graduation, Attorney Perry moved to Spartanburg, South Carolina where he was the only black lawyer. He made a name for himself representing the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), although he couldn't win a case. During that period, my mother took me—a teenager at the time—to see him represent the Sumter NAACP, so, in her words, I could see what I could be. He electrified everyone in the courtroom, and I was mesmerized.

A few years later, as fate would have it, I was arrested along with 387 other students in March 1960 during the first civil rights protest march and sit-in in Orangeburg. I was a student at South Carolina State College at the time. Attorney Perry chose me as his star witness because my parents, a minister and beautician, were immune from economic retribution from the white establishment since they didn't serve any white clients. That case launched what would be a lifelong friendship.

In 1961, Attorney Perry moved home to Columbia to join his childhood friend, Lincoln Jenkins, in opening a law firm. He was the at-

torney on three cases that have left a significant mark on South Carolina—the cases that resulted in the integration of Clemson University and the University of South Carolina and the 1972 lawsuit that created single-member districts for State House elections, which resulted in quadrupling the number of African Americans in the South Carolina Legislature.

Matthew Perry was a beloved figure and was even drafted in 1974 to run for Congress. However, the climate wasn't yet right for an African American to be elected from South Carolina.

In 1976, Senator Strom Thurmond nominated him to serve on the U.S. Military Court of Appeals. He was unanimously confirmed and became the second black to serve on that judicial panel. Just three years later, Senator Ernest Hollings tapped him as a U.S. District Judge for the state of South Carolina, which brought him back to Columbia. He was the first African American to serve in that capacity. He moved into senior status on the federal bench in 1995 and remained active until the end of his life.

In 2004, I had the honor of being with Judge Perry for the dedication of the Matthew J. Perry, Jr. Federal Courthouse in Columbia. I sponsored the legislation that named the building in his honor, and it was among my proudest moments in public life. It took ten years from the passage of the law until the edifice was complete, but it was well worth the wait, and I am so pleased that Judge Perry had the opportunity to work in the courthouse for a number of years. On a personal note, he swore in my daughter, Mignon Clyburn, as a member of the Federal Communications Commission in the Perry Courthouse, and it reminded me of when he presided over my ceremonial swearing-in when I became the first African American elected to Congress from South Carolina since the 19th century.

Because of his tremendous stature in the legal community, Judge Perry earned a number of honors and awards. Among them was South Carolina's highest civilian honor, the Order of the Palmetto, in 1986, and he was inducted into the South Carolina Hall of Fame in 2007. He earned the distinguished alumnus award from South Carolina State University in 1972 and 1980, and he was selected the South Carolinian of the Year in 1977. He received the William R. Ming Advocacy Award, which recognizes outstanding success as a lawyer representing causes important to the NAACP. He also held honorary doctorates from Princeton University, South Carolina State College, the University of South Carolina, Voorhees College, Francis Marion University and Lander College.

He was a lifelong member of Zion Baptist Church in Columbia and was married to the former Hallie Bacote of Timmonsville for 63 years. They had one son, Michael.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to rise today to honor the contributions of this national treasure. Matthew J. Perry, Jr. was a humble man who would never seek out recognition for his extraordinary contributions to civil rights and the legal profession; he just saw it as his life's work. He has left an indelible mark on this country, and his legacy lives on in so many, including myself, who have benefited from his passion and his persuasion. Judge Perry was a gentle giant, whose likes we will never see again.