

IN HONOR OF MR. TONY
PETKOVSEK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH
OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, August 5, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Tony Petkovsek on the 50th anniversary of his Polka music radio show. Deemed "Cleveland's Polka Ambassador," he has worked tirelessly to advance Slovenian culture and Polka music both in Cleveland and around the world.

Starting in August of 1961, Tony began broadcasting a polka music radio show fused with interviews and discussions on the Cleveland community. Tony was also instrumental in establishing the United Slovenian Society and Greater Cleveland and the USS Concert.

In addition to his career, Tony uses polka as a vehicle to perform invaluable community service. Through his Cleveland Slovenian Radio Club's "Radiothons," Tony has helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Slovene Home for the Aged which helps elderly members of Cleveland's Slovenian-American community receive various therapies as well as recreation activities and entertainment. He has also helped form many cultural organizations in Cleveland such as the United Slovenian Society of Greater Cleveland and the Cleveland-Slovenian Radio Club.

Tony has received countless accolades and awards throughout his long and selfless career. He has served on the Ohio Arts Council and in 1991 was inducted into the Broadcasters Hall of Fame in Akron. He has received the Slovenian Man of the Year Award from the Federation of Slovenian homes. This year he is being inducted into the Cleveland International Hall of Fame, Class of 2011.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please rise to honor Mr. Tony Petkovsek on the 50th anniversary of his radio show and his recent induction into the Cleveland International Hall of Fame. He is a staple of Polka culture and is a vital member of the Slovenian-American community.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE GEORGE
RAMOS

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, August 5, 2011

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late George Ramos, a longtime Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist in Los Angeles, a Cal Poly professor, and a decorated Vietnam War veteran who devoted much of his life to honoring the Latino community that he knew so well and loved.

Mr. Ramos grew up in the area of East Los Angeles known as Belvedere Garden. As we learned through his own writings, Mr. Ramos escaped the trappings of poverty, drugs and gang life that plagued the area to attend college and embark on a distinguished career in journalism.

Among his many professional highlights, Mr. Ramos is heralded for his contributions to a Los Angeles Times groundbreaking series on Latinos in Southern California that earned the newspaper a 1984 Pulitzer Prize.

As part of this series, Mr. Ramos authored a July 27, 1983 article entitled "Going Home: American Dream Lives in the Barrio," in which Mr. Ramos shares with readers the story of his boyhood life growing up in the "hillside barrio." I would like to honor his memory today by submitting the full text of this article into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

On a more personal note, I was also deeply impressed by another thorough, fact-filled, and beautifully written article about Los Angeles' Latino community that Mr. Ramos authored—my father's October 25, 2005 obituary. In the first sentence, he described my father, the late Congressman Edward Roybal, as a "pioneer in Latino politics in Los Angeles and a godfather and mentor to scores of lawmakers." I find it truly fitting that many of the same words are being used over and over to describe his own life's contributions to journalism.

In addition to his reporting, I have also had the privilege, year after year, of joining Mr. Ramos and other Latino veterans on Memorial Day at Cinco Puntos in Boyle Heights near the Mexican-American All Wars Memorial. A Purple Heart recipient and proud Latino veteran, Mr. Ramos made it a priority to honor our fallen men and women in uniform and often served as the event's Master of Ceremony.

To more fully capture Mr. Ramos' life and accomplishments, I would also like to submit into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the following article that appeared in the online publication, CalCoastNews, where Mr. Ramos most recently volunteered as an editor. In the July 26 article, Los Angeles elected officials are quoted universally praising Mr. Ramos' talent for storytelling and his devotion to Los Angeles' Latino community.

Mr. Speaker, as his family, colleagues, fellow veterans, students and many friends prepare to gather for his memorial service August 6 at the Veterans' Memorial Building in Morro Bay, I ask my colleagues to please join me and the entire Los Angeles community in extending our heartfelt condolences to Mr. Ramos' loved ones and all of those whose lives he touched. By all accounts, this self-described "kid from East L.A." served Los Angeles well and will be greatly missed.

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL ADJOURNS IN
MEMORY OF GEORGE RAMOS

(July 26, 2011) CALCOASTNEWS—The Los Angeles City Council adjourned today's meeting in memory of George Ramos, a three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter, columnist and editor for the Los Angeles Times, Cal Poly professor, and CalCoastNews editor who was more comfortable referring to himself as "the kid from East L.A."

Ramos, who suffered from increased complications from diabetes, was found dead at his home in Morro Bay Saturday. He was 63.

"George was a tenacious reporter and a brilliant story teller who always wrote from the heart," said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. "A proud son of the Eastside, he intimately captured the Latino experience in Los Angeles and never lost sight of the human dimension in journalism. He will be greatly missed but his legacy and enduring love for our City will live on through the many young journalists he mentored throughout the years."

Ramos was born in Los Angeles on Oct. 1, 1947. He grew up in Belvedere Garden, a neighborhood he described in a 1984 Pulitzer Prize series story as an East L.A. hillside barrio inhabited by "poor but proud people" with "hopes as resilient as tall wheat in a summer breeze." Ramos graduated from Garfield High School and attended Cal Poly San

Luis Obispo where he earned a bachelor's degree in journalism in 1969. He joined the Vietnam War effort, serving in the U.S. Army from March 1970 to September 1971 in West Germany and South Vietnam. He was awarded the Purple Heart after suffering a leg wound.

"I first met George over the phone when I was studying in Oxford more than 15 years ago and recently saw him on Memorial Day at Cinco Puntos. In the intervening years, I came to appreciate his unique perspective on issues facing our great city. His death is a loss for us all," said Council President Eric Garcetti.

First District Councilmember Ed P. Reyes said: "George Ramos was a street reporter, passionate and fiery, who constantly searched for the human side of the news. We will miss his ability to seek truth. It's a perspective that's needed now more than ever and we will miss him."

Ramos joined the L.A. Times in 1978 after working for Copley News Service and the San Diego Union. During his career at the Times, he went on to win three Pulitzer Prizes, an honor only a handful of Latino reporters has accomplished in journalism history.

"As a teacher, journalist and veteran, George Ramos was a friend and mentor to many," said Fourteenth District Councilmember José Huizar. "His influence crossed generations. His keen intellect, sharp sense of humor and deep sense of humanity will be dearly missed. I'm fortunate to have had the opportunity to see all his gifts displayed at our annual Veterans' Memorial commemoration at Cinco Puntos in Boyle Heights, which George participated in numerous times. My thoughts and prayers go out to all mourning the loss of this great man."

Tenth District Councilmember Herb Wesson said: "George Ramos had roots in many communities, and the fact that he cared about those communities was reflected in his writing. He was a fine journalist, and a great role model. The many young journalists he trained, and who maintain his high standards, are the important legacy he leaves us."

"George Ramos had a monumental impact because he was fearless in seeking out the truth and sharing it with the public. I am among the many fans who greatly admired him for his journalistic skills, personal and professional integrity and incredible dedication. Most of all, I appreciate how much he accomplished not just through the printed word but through his own humanity, as he was a wonderful and caring person who mentored countless others, giving them tools and wisdom with which to build a better career, life and world," said Fifth District Councilmember Paul Koretz.

Ramos and former Times editor Frank Sotomayor were co-editors of a groundbreaking series on Latinos in Southern California that won the paper the Pulitzer Prize Gold Medal for Meritorious Public Service in 1984. Seventeen Latino journalists worked on the 27-part series. Ramos also was part of the Times reporting teams that were awarded Pulitzer Prizes for coverage of the 1992 Los Angeles riots and the 1994 Northridge earthquake.

Seventh District Councilmember Richard Alarcón said: "Molded by the mentorship of Rubén Salazar and Frank del Olmo, George Ramos had a very personal connection to his Los Angeles roots and his writing reflected this. By embracing his background, Ramos helped shape the conscience of Los Angeles."

In 2003, Ramos left the Times to return to San Luis Obispo where he served as Cal Poly Journalism Department Chair. Ramos, a mentor to young Latino reporters, also

served as president of the California Chicano News Media Association and was inducted into the National Association of Hispanic Journalists Hall of Fame in 2007. Ramos returned to the teaching ranks and continued to serve as the faculty advisor to the Mustang Daily, the student newspaper. He also volunteered as an editor for CalCoastNews, a San Luis Obispo-based website. He admitted, however, that he missed Los Angeles.

Ramos was quoted as saying: "I can't just sit on my laurels. I didn't get into journalism for the rewards. I still consider myself as the kid from East L.A."

George Ramos, the kid from East L.A., served Los Angeles well, the city said in a press release.

[From the Los Angeles Times, July 27, 1983]

GOING HOME: AMERICAN DREAM LIVES IN THE BARRIO

(By George Ramos)

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[The following story from The Times' archive was part of a series that won the 1984 Pulitzer gold medal for public service for an in-depth examination of Southern California's growing Latino community.]

It is a ritual observed nearly every day. The mail carrier approaches the small cluster of hillside barrio homes in East Los Angeles, armed with spray repellent in case one of his antagonists gets too close.

The neighborhood dogs, sensing the moment, spring to the ready.

Just as he approaches one mailbox a pack of dogs, separated from the mail carrier by a chain-link fence, lets go a chorus of howls that alters all other canines in the area.

The mail carrier quickly deposits his cargo and steps back to his Jeep. No matter, the dogs keep up the yelping. The roosters and chickens in coops on the hills overlooking this noisy scene crow their presence.

MUSIC DROWNED OUT

As the mail carrier wheels his vehicle for a getaway, one dog scales the fence and gives chase. The howling now seems to drown out the musica Mexicana drifting from the windows of the small homes.

Moments later, the mail carrier is gone. The dog that gave chase nonchalantly returns to his resting place. Mission accomplished; ritual observed.

Welcome to the world of 812 N. Record Ave. After 18 years, I went back to 812 N. Record Ave., to the house where I once lived, at the Belvedere Gardens barrio where I grew up.

My barrio is unique in this megalopolis that is Los Angeles, an obscure corner of an affluent society, a place seldom visited by progress. For example, sidewalks and curbs were installed only recently. English is heard only occasionally.

Downtown Los Angeles is only 4½ miles away, but there is no hint that shiny skyscrapers are just over the horizon. Some neighborhood businesses on Hammel Street, near Record, have deteriorated beyond hope. Dogs, chickens, cars under constant repair, graffiti, homes valued under \$35,000 and neighborhood tortillerias are fixtures in the landscape.

Nestled in a rural-like setting, yet ringed by three urban freeways (San Bernardino, Pomona and Santa Ana) Record is a quiet, out-of-the-way street north of Brooklyn Avenue that trails off in the surrounding hills of another East Los Angeles barrio, City Terrace.

The inhabitants of Record are poor but proud people, comfortable in the knowledge that they own their homes and owe little to an Anglo-dominated society. To them, life on Record is as American as that in Kansas, and

hopes are as resilient as tall wheat in the summer breeze.

No one really knows what to expect when he goes back to the old neighborhood.

I remember rampaging on the surrounding hills, building cabins out of abandoned furniture, auto doors and bamboo, and killing imaginary enemies with a crudely constructed gun made of clothespins. In an ongoing scenario, one close friend, David Angulo, was Tarzan and his brother Stephen was Cheetah the chimp. I was a hunter—I can't remember if I ever used the term "Great White Hunter"—always seeking Tarzan's help.

FENCES TAME THE JUNGLE

Now the property owners look after their investments with fences, forcing local jungle warriors to play elsewhere.

There were organized activities for the area's Chicano youngsters. After-hours softball games at Hammel Street School (Panthers vs. Dragonflies) routinely attracted 40 to 50 youngsters, prompting teachers to let them play all at once. Trying to get a ground ball past two shortstops and three third basemen was hard.

As a Dragonfly I remember one game, 6 to 5, on a disputed call at third base. No amount of intervention by the teachers avoided the game's real outcome later—two bloody noses for the Panthers and one scraped knee for us.

But Hammel, where actor Anthony Quinn went to school as a boy, is a far different place today. In my time, the early 1950s, boys and girls were segregated on the playground during recess. Baseball cards, tops and yo-yos were confiscated as unauthorized items.

The school's tough rules extended even to the after-hour softball games. I was once called out simply because I had entered the batter's box before I was told to do so by a teacher.

Youngsters at Hammel were prohibited from speaking Spanish, a common restriction at the time.

Once a classmate whispered something about a movie on television that night. I told him in Spanish that I would see it at a cousin's house. Hearing the chatter, the teacher approached me.

"Not only do I not like talking in class," he said, "but I especially don't like it in Spanish."

I stood in the corner, back turned to the class for an hour. The same offense later earned me a shaking—the teacher shook you until he thought all the knowledge of Spanish had fallen-out-of-your-head.

BILINGUALISM PREVAILS

These days, all office workers at Hammel are bilingual. All the school signs are bilingual.

Charles Lavagnino, Hammel's outgoing principal, was vice principal when I first entered school there. Lavagnino told me that his fondest years as an administrator were in East Los Angeles.

Looking back he conceded that he had supported some of the restrictive measures imposed in the 1950s, mainly to keep a tight rein on unruly students. But improved teaching methods as well as sensitivity to the reality that East Los Angeles is 95% Latino have made Hammel a better school today, Lavagnino told me.

"This is a good school, we try to involve the parents," he said.

I was reminded of other aspects of life on Record as I revisited old haunts;

—La Providencia, the nearby mom-and-pop corner store, still extended credit to its faithful, my 81-year-old grandmother assures me. The owner trudges up Record with Grandma's groceries about twice a month.

—The neighborhood church, Our Lady of Guadalupe, still chimes its invitation every morning.

—The vatos locos (crazy street guys) have changed hardly at all. Dressed in cholo-type "uniforms" (khaki pants, flannel shirts and bandanas around the head) they still cruise neighborhood streets in lowered autos and ask passers-by for money. They are distrustful of outsiders and are quick to confront anyone who challenges their "turf rule" of the area.

—Many of the families I remember have remained in the area. A close friend of my mother provided some insight: "Yes I'd like a nicer home, pero aqui estoy contento. The kind of people who still live here are maybe not the type of people who want to advance, but I am content."

A POSITIVE RESIDENT

In many ways, life on Record has not improved much since my parents bought the small, wood-frame house at 812 for \$3,500 from relatives in 1946. But don't dwell on the negative when you meet my grandmother, the current resident of 812 N. Record.

Living there has given her a freedom she cherishes in old age. No one tells her what to do. She is free to run her life without interference. And there has been no threat to her safety—neighbors look out for one another, and the dogs herald the arrival of any stranger.

The 530-square foot house, built during the Depression, is currently assessed at \$9,873 and may need a lot of work, but Grandma is an optimist. Soon, she said, a shower to replace the old bathtub will be installed. "And look," she promised in Spanish. "I'm having new pipes for the plumbing put in."

Felicitas Ramos, born in the Mexican state of Chihuahua, has a heart that is as loving as it is coy. She is always offering food and is sometimes critical because I am still single, but there are some subjects best not discussed. For one thing, don't scold her about her oven.

OVEN HEAT PREFERRED

Grandma has this peculiar idea about heating. She'll turn on the oven and lower the oven door.

"It works fine and I'm comfortable," she says.

"But it's dangerous," I remind her. "Something could happen."

"How?"

Concerned grandchildren, fearful that the dreaded would occur, purchased an electric blanket. But during last winter's rains, I noticed that the oven door was still open.

"Oh," she said, "I'm just drying clothes." She then draped clothes over the oven door. "But there would be a fire," I said.

"How?"

Then she changed the subject: "Want something to eat?"

LITTLE VARIATION

Grandma's daily routine varies little. There is the music from the Spanish-language radio station KWKW, the morning chat outside with the neighbor ("Can I borrow some eggs?") and the puttering in her garden.

At midmorning, she will collect clothes for a wash. In the old days, the washing machine was in the bathroom, making it difficult to use the bathroom for most other purposes. Now the washer is in the bedroom. People on Record don't rely much on dryers. Clotheslines are still in vogue.

Cooking seems to be Grandma's favorite pastime. Flour tortillas are made from scratch and beans and rice are the backbone of any meal—beef, eggs, hamburgers or quesadillas. If you're not ready to eat right away, everything is left warming until you

are finally hungry. All meals are accompanied by milk.

By noon it's time for the soaps.

I've never understood how a person with such limited English ability can give a running commentary in Spanish of "Days of Our Lives." But she does.

"Mira, hay 'sta el vejito (describing one of the main thugs). Si, el es papa de Jessica, pero ella no lo quiere. (Why doesn't Jessica like her father, Grandma?) Oh porque el es muy malo con la mama de ella y los parientes de ella lo saben (And how did Jessica's relatives find out about this cruelty?) El abuelito trabaja en un hospital y la esposa supo todos los problemas que Jessica tenia con su padre."

Maybe working in a hospital does give one insight.

Then she pops her favorite question: "Tienes hambre?"

I decide I'm not hungry yet.

By nightfall, it's time for a movie on Channel 13. Again, Grandma will let me know if I miss anything.

GLIMPSES OF A LIFE

One particular night as the movie unfolded, so did Grandma's life story, an off-limits topic if there had ever been one.

Born in 1902, she said she hardly knew her parents. When she was 17, my father was born. Six years later she moved to the Mexican border town of Ciudad Juarez across from El Paso to find work. There she gave birth to my aunt Hortensia.

She and her two children were on their own when she met a Ft. Bliss soldier, Marcelino Ramos. They were married in a Mexican civil ceremony in 1930, and later repeated their vows in a church in 1933.

In 1936, Marcelino, Grandma and her two offspring came to Los Angeles, settling in an area near 8th and San Mateo streets on the southern edge of downtown, now an industrial area.

Well, things didn't work out. Marcelino left, the Army was looking for him, he married someone else. (What happened to the divorce, Grandma?) By now her memory seemed to be getting deliberately hazy.

Finally she concluded with the inevitable, "Are you hungry?" I finally decided to eat.

If life at 812 N. Record Ave. is pleasurable for Grandma, then the opposite was true for my parents.

Miguel Antonio Vargas Ramos and Maria Santos Medina were newlyweds when they moved into 812 N. Record Ave. in 1946. The prospect of living there did not excite them at all.

—They saw no future in the house for a young family, given the surroundings and the condition of the dwelling. It didn't come close to the post-World War II housing tracts being built in places like Lakewood.

—There was no possibility of expanding the house. It already had been expanded to add the bedroom, bathroom, porch and garage.

—There was no door-to-door mail delivery. Mail had been delivered down at the corner of Record and Floral Drive, about 300 yards downhill from our house, since the homes on Record were built.

—The same situation existed for trash collection. It had to be hauled down to Record and Floral, no easy task for residents living up the hill where Record trailed off, a distance of about half a mile.

LOOKING ELSEWHERE

My father, who was employed at the now-abandoned Uniroyal tire plant off the Santa Ana Freeway in Commerce, had tried to find other housing—the Aliso Village project on the edge of downtown, the Ramona Gardens project near County-USC Medical Center in Lincoln Heights and a Boyle Heights trailer park that eventually gave way to a Times-Mirror press plant.

He made too much money to qualify for the subsidized housing, but too little to leave Belvedere Gardens.

"I didn't like the area (Record)," he said. "I wanted to leave, but we couldn't do it economically."

"The area was a dumping ground for everything. You'd wake up in the morning and find a car left there . . . no tires, no engine . . . nothing. We had to call the tow truck to haul them away."

And there were the dogs. Mom hated them:

"I always had to clean up after them. And with you guys (my brother and I) around, I had to be careful. Complain about the dogs? Are you kidding? They (the neighbors) would just ignore you."

And the mail.

No one seems to know why the mail was dropped off at Record and Floral. Maybe the dogs were as ferocious in the early 1950s as they are now. Probably no one bothered to ask for door-to-door delivery.

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

But it changed one day when a thief stole a federal income tax refund check from our mailbox. It wasn't a lot—"something like \$120," my mother recalled—but it seemed a lot to us then and its arrival had been anxiously awaited.

With no support from the neighbors, Dad campaigned for door-to-door delivery. It was instituted after a few calls to the right people at the post office.

Mom in the meantime began petitioning for trash collection at each home. She too succeeded, but only after a false start. On the first day of the scheduled collections (this was in the early 1950s) the neighbors placed their trash in front of their homes. The garbage men never came.

"There I was with egg on my face," my mother recalled.

"So I called again and sure enough the next week they came (to collect the trash). They have been doing that ever since."

Mom even joined the PTA at Hammel Street School, becoming PTA president in 1954. Every time I got into trouble, I was reminded of my mother's good work on the PTA.

Now, when I look back I realize that life was tough on Record. But it didn't seem so at the time.

Yes, my yard was too small to play in, but my ragtag gang of friends considered the streets and hills our playground.

Yes, the house was too small for a growing family, but it seemed adequate to me and I remember how proud my mother was of the new furniture that was bought for the house. (There was no eating allowed in the living room, Mom decreed. Grandma was more lax about such things.)

Dogs? Well, we stayed out of their way. But if someone was challenged to a rock-throwing contest, the dogs turned out to be handy targets. Now, the main objective seems to be to separate neighborhood dogs from other canines and the mail carriers.

A DREAM ACHIEVED

In 1957, my parents finally realized their dream of getting out of East Los Angeles. The found a small tract home for \$12,900 in Downey.

Grandma then moved into our home on Record, but I continued to spend a lot of time there until I went to college because I felt strange in our new environment.

My parents were excited by this new beginning in Downey. It was the end of their rainbow. I thought I should be excited too, but I wasn't sure. I wondered how I would fit in the neighborhood where there were very few brown faces.

An indication of why I had doubts about life beyond Record was as rude as it was puzzling. A classmate called me a nigger.

The term was unheard of on Record.

George Juarez was one of the neighborhood kids I grew up with. He was a street-wise guy who seemed to know a lot. And showed it. But the years have not been kind to George.

He is a victim of the Eastside's street-gang reality. The facts seem hazy; the neighbors, as well as Grandma occasionally whisper about it.

But it seems that George, now 41, was with some friends who brawled with other Eastside youths in a rather ugly incident back in 1961. George was run over by a car and left for dead. He recovered from some of his injuries after time at County-USA Medical Center and two years of rehabilitation at Rancho Los Amigos Hospital in Downey.

But a brief conversation with George these days betrays his pain. One leg is damaged, and he needs the help of railing to get up the stairs of his home, where he lives with a brother and his mother. His speech is slurred and his memory is hazy—he still asks about my brother Michael who died in 1954.

"Pues ya 'stuvo, Georgie old boy," he says in Eastside street lingo. "I dropped a few pills, drank a lot of hard stuff . . . y pues era muy loco."

"Ahora, I know better, My leg hurts a lot. I drink a little beer, but that's about it."

Several other guys on Record have had run-ins with the law. One neighborhood guy had drug problems after he returned from military service in Korea. Several of my friends joined the local street gang, Geraghty Loma (named after the hill that Geraghty Avenue winds around), and sheriff's deputies paid occasional visits to unsuspecting parents, who insisted that their sons were good boys in school.

GANG RIVALRIES

Another companion and I were friends with a rival street gang, Los Hazards (named after nearby Hazard Avenue). The conflict occasionally meant defending oneself with more than fists. Two friends from Record who were part of that conflict eventually became part of California's burgeoning penal system.

But for every problem kid, there is a success story.

Two brothers on nearby Herbert Street, for example, have done well by neighborhood standards; one is a career soldier and the other is a Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy, and one resident became a reporter.

Some in the area are alarmed at the street-gang violence and say they won't go out at night. Others bristle at the suggestion that the area is unsafe, Raquel, one of George Juarez's sisters, is eloquent in the street-wise vocabulary that is Record Avenue.

"I tell people I'm from East L.A. And they tell me, 'Wow, man, you must have been chola. Or you're my homegirl.' I'm no chola. I come from a good area. I went to school there."

"I live in Whittier now and I wouldn't have any problems if my kids went to school here."

I have often wondered what will happen to Record Avenue. Will its rural ambiance remain? Will Record still be an obscure corner of society in 20 years?

I don't know all the answers. But of this I am certain.

Spanish will still be the neighborhood language, but the dogs won't always heed it.

Grandmothers like mine will still be there. Life's many chores will be done as they always have been, haphazardly on occasion and other times with meticulous care.

A family's success will not be measured by how much money it earns. It will be evident in the accomplishments of its young.

Record still will nurture dreams of young families for a better life, as well as hold old families to an area where they have grown comfortable.

For those of us who lived there, the world of 812 N. Record Avenue will never be obscure. It will never die.

TRIBUTE TO THE OUTSTANDING
WORK OF THE CALIFORNIA
PROSTATE CANCER COALITION

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 5, 2011

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask Congress to raise awareness for prostate cancer and recognize the California Prostate Cancer Coalition (CPCC) for its outstanding efforts to fight prostate cancer. The CPCC is a coalition of health professionals, prostate cancer survivors and families, and support groups concerned about this disease across the state of California. I ask my colleagues to join me today to extend our appreciation for CPCC's work on behalf of the men and families affected by prostate cancer.

Until we find a cure for this disease, we need organizations like the CPCC. The men and women working in this organization educate the public, advocate for legislation and funding, and involve communities in the fight against prostate cancer. In my home state of California, prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer among men in almost every ethnic and racial group.

More men are diagnosed with prostate cancer in California than any other state. California also suffers from the highest number of deaths from this disease. I want to thank the CPCC today on behalf of the estimated 25,030 men who will be diagnosed with the disease across the state this year.

Sadly, 1 in 6 men will develop prostate cancer in their lifetime. Prostate cancer is one of the most diagnosed and deadliest types of cancer for men today. Every fifteen minutes an American dies from this disease and over 2.3 million men alive have a history of prostate cancer.

The early stages of prostate cancer usually show no symptoms and there are no self-tests. Early detection is the key to surviving the disease. The exact causes of prostate cancer are still unknown, but awareness allows men to make more informed decisions about their personal health. Organizations like the CPCC help educate men about prostate cancer and guide them through their fight with the disease.

On behalf of my wife, Barbara, and my children, Councilman Joe Baca Jr., Jeremy, Natalie, and Jennifer, we would like to bestow our thoughts and prayers to those men and their families suffering from prostate cancer. As we recognize the important work of California Prostate Cancer Coalition, we stand by all those affected by this disease. I would like to thank the health care professionals, researchers, and advocates who are working tirelessly to cure prostate cancer. I would especially like to recognize Dr. Manouchehr Lalehzarian for his commitment to this cause. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the California Prostate Cancer Coalition. God bless the fathers, sons, and brothers battling this disease, and their families for their patience and love.

PROVIDING GREATER AUTHORITY
AND DISCRETION TO CONSUMER
PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

SPEECH OF

HON. PAUL TONKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, August 1, 2011

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud House passage of H.R. 2715, the Enhancing CPSC Authority and Discretion Act of 2011, ECADA.

I voted in favor of this long-awaited bill, because it addresses the needed reforms of the 2008 Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, CPSIA, without undoing its core protections of consumers from unsafe toys and other products.

This landmark legislation came in the wake of one of the biggest waves of consumer product recalls in American history. In excess of 10 million toys were estimated to have been recalled due to lead paint and other product safety standards, standards that have been on the books for decades. This was and is unacceptable, and Congress responded accordingly.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, this bill adequately addresses what I believe is the key provision of CPSIA—that consumer products, especially children's products—should be tested as being in compliance with mandatory safety standards.

And testing is the key. We live in a global supply chain environment, where any given product has a dozen or more part suppliers from a dozen or more countries, where safety standards may be weaker than our own.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I am proud and pleased that the final ECADA bill passed by the House today maintains the requirement that products be tested to CPSC lead and other standards. But I am equally pleased that the final bill reflects the need to make such testing affordable.

Additionally, H.R. 2715 directs the CPSC to look for "other techniques for lowering the cost of third party testing consistent with assuring compliance with the applicable consumer product safety rules, bans, standards and regulations."

Mr. Speaker, this last language is critical because it will protect consumers and create jobs here in America. I know this because in my Congressional District a company, XOS, Inc. has developed state of the art instruments for detecting lead, mercury, cadmium and other heavy metals in children's toys and other products.

This new technology is the only CPSC approved method for the detection of lead paint without using wet chemistry. This method was also adopted by one of the most widely respected voluntary standards development organizations in the country (ASTM).

Finally, I would suggest that, as this bill is on the precipice of becoming law, we consider that, if a small company in upstate New York can find a solution to "how much lead is in this product," we can find more home-grown solutions to many of the other pending issues facing our country. We need to focus all our efforts on investing in our people and in creating jobs and this bill does just that.

SUPPORT H.R. 1154, THE VETERANS
EQUAL TREATMENT FOR SERVICE
DOGS ACT

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 5, 2011

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, in 1985, Army Ranger Light Kevin Stone's life changed when the Army vehicle he was in tumbled over a mountain edge and down 144 feet. Stone broke his neck and suffered severe brain trauma to the point of losing every memory prior to the six months before the accident.

A true miracle, Stone now lives an independent life thanks to his service dog, Mambo. But sadly, rules at some Vets Hospitals welcome seeing eye dogs while preventing service dogs like Mambo from coming in.

The working best friends of our wounded vets must be allowed with them at all times in order to do their jobs—including during VA visits. That's why I'm proud to cosponsor Judge CARTER's effort, H.R. 1154, legislation which will close the working-dog loophole and welcome all dogs into VA care centers.

The VA considers service dogs like Mambo needed prostheses, like legs or arms. And Stone compares Mambo to a crucial tool—a wheelchair.

Current policy allows each VA center to set dog guidelines. That means, Stone is given care at some facilities if Mambo is with him.

We can fix this problem by passing the Veterans for Equal Treatment of Service Dogs Act, or the VETS Dogs Act.

This will ensure working service dogs can accompany their owner to every single VA facility, just like seeing eye dogs are allowed to do. This will be a permanent solution for our wounded veterans.

Kevin Stone credits his service dogs—Mambo, and Mambo's predecessor, Jonah—with allowing him to successfully represent his country around the world. He's no longer in camouflage, but another type of uniform: Kevin Stone used his service dog to compete on the U.S. Paralympic team. He won bronze in Athens and he's set American records in Beijing. With Mambo at his side, Stone continues to represent the U.S. Olympic Committee on the U.S. Paralympic Committee's Military Program as a coach and mentor.

Not all wounded vets compete with their service dogs, but they do everyday things like other Americans: when they get on the bus, get their groceries, get their mail and go to the doctor's office, their service dogs are there.

Colleagues, you may not know a veteran personally injured in Iraq or Afghanistan, but go to a VA in your district, and you'll meet hundreds of our nation's heroes who gave so much, but had so much taken away.

If service dogs allow our wounded vets to lead happy and independent lives, then we have a duty to ensure government regulations help, not hinder, the relationship between dog and owner.

Join us as we work to better the lives of our vets and as our veterans are empowered to overcome challenges. Because retired Army Ranger Light Fighter Kevin Stone isn't playing a game when he tells Mambo to "fetch".