

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

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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