

focus on disseminating information on health services available to veterans, as well as the various health benefits provided in private insurance plans.

A model of such outreach to veterans is operated by the Sacramento Community Veterans Alliance. Every year, the Alliance hosts an all-day health fair and free clinic to provide health screenings and eye exams to underserved and homeless veterans at no cost, as well as advising them on their service benefits and connecting them to resources on healthcare, mental health, and homelessness.

HAPPY 150TH BIRTHDAY TO WELD COUNTY, COLORADO

HON. JARED POLIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to recognize the 150th birthday of Weld County, Colorado. Weld is the sunny, rolling home to 31 towns filled with Coloradans of all backgrounds and aspirations. In 1821, Major Stephen H. Long made an expedition to the area now known as Weld County and declared the land was not fit for human prosperity. Almost two centuries later it is without question that Major Long did not have the vision or the admiration for this great place as those of Weld County have today.

Located in the north central part of Colorado, Weld County provides an impressive supply of opportunity and industrial support being the State's leader in production of cattle, grain, and sugar beets and the second leader in production of oil and gas. It is ranked as the third leading agricultural area in the United States.

But it is not the natural resources or the environmental make up of Weld County that make it what it is today, on its 150th birthday. It is the people of this county that have taken it from a prairie region first settled by railroad workers, to a vibrant and growing home to thousands of Colorado families. Beyond its industrial value, one of the State's strongest public universities, the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, is located within Weld County and provides thousands of students the opportunity for higher education and a more fertile future every year.

I congratulate the people of Weld County on 150 years of progress and prosperity and eagerly anticipate what the future holds for this forward-looking Colorado County.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LLOYD DOGGETT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote number 822 on H.R. 2112, I mistakenly recorded my vote as "no" when I should have voted "yes."

IN RECOGNITION OF BIG SISTER ASSOCIATION OF GREATER BOSTON

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston on their 60th anniversary. Big Sister is the largest mentoring program in the region that specifically serves women and girls. Volunteers enthusiastically dedicate their time and service to the communities in the Greater Boston area. Their actions are deserving of this body's recognition.

The Big Sister Association was founded in 1951 by three Cambridge residents: The Reverend Harold Taylor, Assistant Rector at Christ Church in Cambridge; Edith Taylor, a Cambridge police officer; and Frances Marley, an administrative assistant and legal consultant for the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Believing that girls in their community could benefit from the guidance and support of an older female friend, they created a one-to-one mentoring program where girls, Little Sisters, were individually matched with caring and committed volunteers, Big Sisters.

They continue to welcome new women and girls to the Big Sister program. In their first year, they matched six girls—in 2009, Big Sister served more than 2,700 girls throughout 69 Massachusetts cities and towns. What keeps them growing is the steadfast belief that by focusing on the healthy development of girls, they are preparing the next generation of mothers, teachers, doctors and business leaders. By continuing to implement new mentoring programs this has led to the creation of a vibrant community where girls know that there is no limit to what they can achieve. Their humble actions and service to the community are commendable.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in leading this body in acknowledging the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston, as they celebrate their 60th anniversary. The Big Sister Association of Greater Boston community is tremendously valued in my district and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TUSKEGEE AIRMAN LT. COL. LUKE JOSEPH WEATHERS JR.

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Lt. Col. Luke Joseph Weathers Jr., a Tuskegee Airman in the 332nd Fighter Group. He was born to Luke Joseph Weathers, Sr. and Jessie Rita Hawkins on December 16, 1920 in Grenada, MS. In 1925, he and his mother moved to Memphis, Tennessee to reunite with his father who had moved to Memphis earlier with his brother, William "Bill" Weathers.

Luke Weathers was baptized at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Memphis and later attended St. Anthony Catholic School. Weathers transferred and completed his high school

education at Booker T. Washington where he excelled academically and athletically. Upon completion, he was accepted into Xavier University and studied from 1939–1942. He returned to Memphis in 1942 and read an article in a newspaper about an experimental training program for African-American pilots and aviation in Tuskegee, Alabama. After speaking to his parents about the program, Weathers met with Mayor E.H. Crump who made a call to President Roosevelt informing him that he would be sending Luke to the program. On July 27, 1942, Luke Weathers arrived in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and trained for nine months and one day. On April 29, 1943 he began his active duty as a Fighter Pilot Single Engine in the 302N Fighter Squadron flying P–51 bombers. The 302N Fighter Squadron was later merged into the 332nd Fighter Group, also known as the "Red Tails." Weathers named his plane the "Spirit of Beale Street."

Lt. Col. Weathers departed for Italy January 3, 1944 to begin his tour in WWII, traveling to North Africa, Italy, France, Europe, and Germany. For his courage and service, he earned an Air Medal with 7 clusters, a Distinguished Flying Cross medal and an American Theater Ribbon Victory Medal WWI. Weathers was credited with shooting down two German fighter aircrafts while on a mission to protect U.S. Army Air Corps bombers in Europe. During this tour, the Tuskegee Airmen never lost one of their bombers. Lt. Col. Weathers returned to Memphis on March 13, 1945 and became the first African-American to receive the key to the City of Memphis. He was also honored with a parade down Beale Street and the day was declared "Capitan Luke Weathers Day."

Luke Weathers met LaVerne Nalling while in Memphis. Together, they owned and operated several businesses including the Weathers Jeffery vocational school in Jackson, Tennessee where Weathers was a flight instructor. He was also the Director of Boone-Higgins Trade School for Negro Veterans in Jackson. They also operated a beauty shop, Laundromat/dry cleaners and a carpet cleaning service. In 1959, Weathers founded The National Defense Cadet Corps, NDCC, for the Memphis City School System at Manassas High school. This program created an opportunity for African American males who had a desire for military training but did not have access to a ROTC program. For a brief time afterwards, Weathers moved his family to Anchorage, Alaska where he had accepted a position with the Federal Aviation Administration, FAA. He moved his family back to Memphis and became the first African-American Air Traffic Controller in Memphis. During his tenure with the FAA, he accepted tours of duties in Atlanta, Georgia and Washington, DC.

In 1985, Lt. Col. Weathers retired from the FAA in Washington, DC and the Air Force Reserves. In his retirement he stayed active with Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. and continued to promote African Americans in the military including women. Lt. Col. Luke Joseph Weathers Jr. died on October 15, 2011 at 90 years of age. He is survived by his wife, Jacqueline Moore Weathers; two sons, Luke Joseph Weathers III and Andre M. Weathers; daughters Wanda Weathers Smith, Renee Weathers Powell, and Trina Weathers Boyce; and 12 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. Mister Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Tuskegee Airman, Lt. Col. Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr. His was a life well-lived.