

served in the U.S. Air Force from 1954 to 1974 in both Thailand and Vietnam; Franklin, who served in both U.S. Air Force and Army from 1956 to 1976; Vernon, who joined the Army and served from 1958 to 1979; Linden, who served in the Army from 1965 to 1967; and Clifton, who served in the Army from 1959 to 1981.

Selfless service and sacrifice are the twin pillars supporting our Republic. Surely, these values, so important to the future vigor of our democratic principles, were instilled in the Adkins Brothers by devoted and dedicated parents. Such a record of service is not happenstance or coincidence; rather, it is a record built with an abiding faith in the Almighty's continued blessings on this land of liberty.

Mr. Speaker, in sum, the Adkins brothers share 104 years of U.S. military service, a milestone record of service, that I hope the U.S. Department of Defense will soon formally recognize. I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging my fellow West Virginians as true American patriots and to thank them for their distinguished service to our great Nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall 932, I was away from the Capitol due to prior commitments to my constituents. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

CELEBRATING THE 84TH BIRTHDAY OF HIS MAJESTY KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, December 5 marked the 84th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand. I would like to take this opportunity to send warm wishes to him and to the people of Thailand as they commemorate his 65-year reign as King of Thailand.

The world's longest-serving monarch, His Majesty King Bhumibol ascended to the throne on June 9, 1946. Throughout his reign, King Bhumibol has both witnessed and been instrumental in the transformation of Thailand into a prosperous, modern state, with a strong agricultural sector and modernized manufacturing and services industries. His contribution to such progress and the devotion and compassion he has for the Thai people has earned King Bhumibol the love and respect of his people as well as worldwide recognition for his leadership.

As a leading advocate for sustainable, human-centered development, King Bhumibol has worked hard to address the critical development issues facing his country and his people, applying scientific knowledge and initiating development projects that take into account the topography, traditions and culture of a region. Focusing on agricultural development, King Bhumibol has overseen thousands of de-

velopment projects undertaken to improve the food security and welfare of the Thai people. His concern about the sustainability of Thailand's natural resources has spurred several water resource and reforestation projects throughout the country.

I would also like to celebrate the 178-year diplomatic alliance and friendship between Thailand and the United States—one that reflects both common interests and shared values, namely: democracy, good governance, and the rule of law. Indeed, on March 20, 1833, the United States and Thailand (then known as Siam) signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, making the Kingdom of Thailand the first treaty ally of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region. His Majesty King Bhumibol's state visit to the United States in 1960 further cemented the excellent relations between our two nations.

Lastly, I would like to express my deepest sympathies to the people of Thailand for the recent historic floods in Thailand, and reiterate my support for both ongoing and additional humanitarian efforts aimed at providing civilian and military assistance to save lives, restore health, and facilitate Thailand's economic recovery. The United States remains committed to supporting Thailand's long-term recovery. The United States government has contributed significant humanitarian assistance, United States citizens and private sector have donated to reconstruction efforts, and the United States will continue working to help improve Thailand's capacity to prepare and respond to such disasters in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join our long-standing friends, the people of Thailand, as they celebrate the 84th birthday anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej and his esteemed 65-year reign of and dedication to Thailand.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN FRANKLIN THAMES

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to pay tribute to a constituent who has dedicated his professional career to coaching high school basketball and—over the past half century—has developed generations of successful young women while breaking and setting winning records for women's basketball in South Carolina. I commend Coach John Franklin Thames for his 50 years of coaching women's basketball in the Palmetto State. It is very fitting that a scholarship for gifted athletes will be established in his honor at his alma mater, Manning High School.

John Thames grew up in Alcolu, SC and graduated from Manning High School in 1953. At that time, America was at war with Korea. He spent six months as Executive Officer of Training Company at Fort Jackson, and served 13 months in Korea as an Army Tank Platoon Commander. Following his military service, he matriculated at Presbyterian College in Clinton, South Carolina, graduated in 1958, and returned home to serve his alma mater for the next half century.

Over his 44-year career as the Lady Monarchs head coach, Coach Thames' teams

amassed two State Championships, three State runner-ups, 15 Regional Championships, and seven Regional Tournament Championships. He was named Region Coach of the Year 14 times and the Sumter Item Area Coach of the year three times. In 1969, he was selected as the Pee Dee North-South All-Star South head coach. He served as head coach in the South Carolina Athletic Coaches Association North-South Girls All-Star Game in 1984 and 2000. He was also one of two South Carolina coaches chosen to coach the South Carolina All-Star Girls against the North Carolina All-Star Girls at Winthrop University.

Coach Thames was nominated in 1991–92 as the Converse High School Coach of the Year and the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Coach of the Year in women's basketball. That same year, he was named Florence Morning News Class AAA Girls Coach of the Year. He has been a South Carolina Coaches Association of Women Sports MVP Honoree, and a 2000 High School Sports Report State Coach of the Year in AAA Girls Basketball. He was a 2009 Inaugural Inductee into the South Carolina Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame, and a 2011 Inaugural Inductee into the Clarendon County Athletic Hall of Fame.

Coach Thames has also had great success in other sports. He served as the Manning High School baseball coach for 14 years and as an assistant football coach for 36 years.

In 1993, his high school alma mater—and 50-year employer—named its gymnasium in his honor for "his lifetime of contributions to Manning High School." Presbyterian College also honored their esteemed graduate by recognizing Coach Thames as the 2011 recipient of the Bob Waters Award. This honor was given for his outstanding leadership and service to society and the profession of athletic coaching and for personifying those values and qualities of excellence and integrity held dear by his college alma mater.

Despite all the accolades he has accrued over his career, Coach Thames will be remembered most for his generosity and love of his players and all students. Since 2004, Coach Thames has conducted a free one-week basketball camp for girls. He is committed to ensuring that the inability to pay is not an obstacle for any girl to participate in the sport. For years, Coach Thames has used his personal funds to buy shoes for all of his players. He has done so because he doesn't want to single out the ones who cannot afford new shoes. He provides transportation and other clothing for many of his students who have limited resources. Coach Thames is also dedicated to helping students get into higher education institutions so they can pursue their dreams. "Coach," as he's lovingly known to everyone including non-athletes, is a mentor and father figure.

In addition to his coaching accolades, Coach Thames has twice been named the Manning High School Teacher of the Year. He received the 2008 Outstanding South Carolina Teacher of U.S. History by the Daughters of the American Revolution. He was inducted into the Kappa Alpha Order Court of Honor in 2009. Coach Thames is a recipient of the Silver Crescent, the highest civilian recognition awarded by the State of South Carolina for outstanding dedication to a local community, and has been inducted into the Clarendon County Education Hall of Fame. Coach