

"blacks only." Although records do not date the funeral home start, events in history that took place associated with it gives an idea of the time and era. Then the funeral home was eventually purchased by Mr. Edward Thomas and sold to Mrs. Ann Coutee for \$33,000 in 1981, who is still the current owner. When she purchased it, the building was in need of repair and equipment. It came with one old hearse and outdated embalming equipment.

At a time when Mississippi was experiencing racial turmoil it played a significant role in the embalming and burying of black folks. On August 31, 1955, the Tutwiler Funeral Home prepared the remains of Emmett Till. At the time Mr. Woodrow "Champ" Jackson was the embalmer who prepared his remains. In October 1985, Michael Anthony Felton, a fifteen year old boy from Cleveland, MS, was believed to be the first Aids victim in the State after having contracted it from a blood transfusion. His family entrusted his remains to the Tutwiler Funeral Home. His death captured statewide attention in both Mississippi and Tennessee, and was even filmed for television. Robert Turner, who was the son of Mrs. Coutee and in line to take over the funeral home for his mother after becoming a licensed embalmer died suddenly. Well, as you will know, Mrs. Coutee stepped in and handled the entire arrangement of his burial. The Tutwiler Funeral Home has a presence and reputation that has withstood time. It has traveled beyond the city limits to handle the remains of loved ones all across Mississippi and the United States (e.g., Chicago, IL; Providence, RI; Mobile, AL; St. Louis, MO; Springfield, MO).

Black churches were significant sure enough for funeral, social events, and even civic meetings to say the least. But under the ownership of Mrs. Coutee the Tutwiler Funeral Home served dual roles. It was also a chapel for services and auditorium for blacks, as the town folks called it. The Tutwiler community was limited in its ability to provide recreational buildings, meeting halls, and public structures for blacks to meet. In 2002, Hurricane Isidore came through and toppled the historic Tutwiler Funeral Home. The remains of the building from the storm are still in place, where the ceiling buckled in on top of one of the hearse.

218 Hancock Street is home to the new Tutwiler Funeral Home. In 2002 after the original Tutwiler Funeral Home was destroyed, Mrs. Coutee immediately sprang into action to rebuild. She made sure the new structure maintained its ability to meet the needs of Tutwiler and all that have a need to use it because she included a chapel-meeting room.

In March 2013, Frank Ratliff, the son of Mrs. Z.L. Ratliff, the owner of the infamous Riverside Hotel in Clarksdale, MS, remains in the care of the Tutwiler Funeral Home.

Mrs. Ann Coutee is still the owner of the Tutwiler Funeral Home. She moved back to Mississippi in 1977 as a 43-year-old widow of six children. Her education and training span across several occupations, real estate, school librarian, hospital manager, and a licensed cosmetologist in both Illinois and Mississippi. So, the funeral home business was not her initial or preferred choice. But she wanted to be a business owner, provide steady support for her children and build a business she could pass on to them, and serve the community.

Mrs. Coutee is the mother of six children, two boys and four girls. Her children are Mar-

garet Turner, Sylvia Turner-Lottie, Patricia Turner-Sullivan, Reginald Turner, Robert Turner, and Sandra Hicks-Brown. Both Reginald and Robert are now deceased.

In the beginning she did all her own driving to pick up deceased individuals, traveling near and far, and oftentimes alone. She said embalming was never her choice but rather the cosmetics of preparation. Since the funeral home business was new to her, she joined the National Funeral Directors Association and maintained a membership for years. At her first meeting, she said, she could not figure out why she was the only black and a woman attending the meeting. Well, she soon learned the invitation to join was meant for the previous owner, Mr. Edward Thomas, a white male from Webb, MS. Not only did she learn that but while at the meeting, she was asked how she acquired the building because the all white membership said, "black women don't own funeral homes unless they inherit it." Well, just so you will know, she responded, "I do and I purchased it." Nevertheless, she stayed on because she was determined to learn the business and stay connected. Her struggles to stay on and learn the funeral home business is another story to be told later. Mr. Woodrow "Champ" Jackson remained on as her embalmer for many years. I am compelled to mention that under the ownership of Mrs. Coutee and funeral home director, Aaron Gunn III, the Tutwiler Funeral Home is open to people of all races and ethnic groups in need of burial services—that's right no more "blacks only."

Through that determination and grit, Mrs. Coutee managed to not only raise her children to be successful but as it turned out, none of them are in the funeral home business. Her success did not stop there because as time passed she managed to acquire other properties in Tutwiler. She is the owner of a large majority of the previously white owned businesses and vacant lots in town, 208 Hancock St., 210 Hancock St., 212 Hancock St., 214 Hancock St., 216 Hancock St., 218 Hancock St., 220 Hancock St., and 222 Hancock St.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Tutwiler Funeral Homes at 220 and 218 Hancock Street along with the owner Mrs. Ann Coutee for their contribution to the black community and black funeral home business.

DUANE G. DUNCAN, NATIONAL 4-H  
HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Duane G. Duncan of Carlisle, Pennsylvania who was inducted into the National 4-H Hall of Fame this year.

Mr. Duncan became an active participant in 4-H at the age of 12 and continued to contribute to the organization while attending college at Penn State University. After graduating from Penn State in 1958, he worked in Adams County as an Assistant County Agent where he continued to collaborate with 4-H. In 1967, Mr. Duncan was promoted to Cumberland County Extension Director. He continued to work with 4-H horse and dairy programs until retiring in 2003 after 45 years of service.

Throughout his many years with 4-H, Mr. Duncan has demonstrated leadership and dedication to both the organization and his community. He served as Secretary of the Pennsylvania Junior Dairy Show from 1972 to 1991 and was honored for his lifetime commitment at the 50th annual show in 2005. In 1974, he established the position of Superintendent of the All American Dairy Show 4-H and FFA Youth Dairy Forum, and he continues to fulfill those duties to this day. Additionally, he has served as treasurer of the PA 4-H Horse Program Development Committee since 1980, is on the Board of Directors of Therapeutic Riding Association of Cumberland County for handicapped children, and is a liaison to the Carlisle Rotary Club.

Mr. Speaker, for his outstanding service to both 4-H and the Carlisle community, I commend Mr. Duane G. Duncan and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the official Congressional Delegation to Johannesburg, South Africa to attend the memorial services for former President Nelson Mandela, I missed the votes on Tuesday, December 10, 2013 and Wednesday, December 11, 2013.

Had I been present, I would have voted: "yes" on rollcall No. 630, H.R. 3521—Authorize VA Medical Facility Leases; "yes" on rollcall No. 631, H.R. 1402—VA Expiring Authorities Extension Act; "no" on rollcall No. 632, H.R. 2019—Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act of 2013; "yes" on rollcall No. 633, H.R. 2319—Native American Veterans' Memorial Amendments Act of 2013; "yes" on rollcall No. 634, S. 1471—Alicia Dawn Koehl Respect for National Cemeteries Act; "yes" on rollcall No. 635, H.R. 3212—Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2013; and "yes" on rollcall No. 636, H.R. 1992—Israel QME Enhancement Act.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 631 I was unable to make the vote due to inclement weather.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CONGRATULATING JAMES CLEVELAND HUGHES III ON ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize, honor and congratulate an outstanding constituent of my district, James