

Following his retirement in 1992, Gen. Blaz published a memoir, as well as books and television documentaries about Guam's history and culture. He also spent time in Virginia's 10th District in Fairfax County, where he passed away last month. He is survived by his two sons, Tom and Mike Blaz, as well as two brothers, one sister and five grandchildren.

I submit the following obituary from the Washington Post on Gen. Blaz's amazing story.

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 27, 2014]

VICENTE T. 'BEN' BLAZ, MARINE GENERAL AND GUAM DELEGATE, DIES AT 85

(By Matt Schudel),

Vicente T. "Ben" Blaz, who survived a Japanese prison camp during World War II and later became a Marine Corps brigadier general and Guam's representative in Congress, died Jan. 8 at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital in Fairfax County. He was 85.

The cause was acute respiratory failure, his son Tom Blaz said.

Gen. Blaz was 13 when he was captured by Japanese forces who overran the U.S. territory of Guam on Dec. 8, 1941, one day after the Japanese attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He was one of many native Chamorros, as natives of Guam are often called, held in a detention camp and pressed into forced labor, building airfields for the Japanese.

He was later held in a Japanese prison camp, where he saw fellow inmates beheaded.

"As a boy, I stood behind barbed wire," he told The Washington Post in 1977. "There was a pervasive sense of personal insecurity. That probably is more damaging to your feeling of wellbeing than hunger."

In 1944, he was freed when U.S. Marines reclaimed Guam from the Japanese. He asked a young Marine how he could go to the United States.

"The first thing you have to do is learn to speak English," he recalled the Marine saying. Gen. Blaz spoke primarily the local Chamorro language at the time. "He taught me a few words and told me, of all things, to listen to the radio, and talk as they do."

After graduating in 1951 from the University of Notre Dame, in Indiana, Gen. Blaz joined the Marine Corps. He served during the Korean War and was an artillery officer in the Vietnam War, where he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

He held several jobs with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and once served under Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr., a Marine general who led the U.S. forces that recaptured Guam in 1944.

When he was promoted to brigadier general in 1977, Gen. Blaz became the first person from Guam and the first non-white Marine to reach the rank of general. At the time, he was director of information for the Marine Corps, in charge of rebuilding the image of the Marines after the Vietnam War.

After retiring from the military in 1980, Gen. Blaz returned to Guam to farm and to teach. He made an unsuccessful bid as a Republican for Guam's non-voting congressional seat in 1982.

Two years later he won a closely contested election, defeating Antonio B. Won Pat, who had served as Guam's delegate since 1973, when the territory first received representation in Congress.

Gen. Blaz, who was a member of the Armed Forces and Foreign Affairs committees, was the only retired general serving in Congress at the time. He had few legislative victories in his limited role in Congress, but he was instrumental in reorganizing the judicial system on Guam and was a strong advocate for improved educational benefits for veterans.

Gen. Blaz served four terms before losing a reelection bid in 1992 to Robert A. Underwood.

Vicente Tornas Blaz Garrido was born Feb. 14, 1928, in what is now Hagatna, the capital of Guam, and grew up in a farming community. Guam, which is about 30 miles long, has a population of about 140,000 and is the southernmost island in the Marianas chain. It became a U.S. territory after the Spanish-American War in 1898.

In 1947, Gen. Blaz received a scholarship to attend Notre Dame. After a 22-day boat trip, he arrived in San Francisco and told a cabdriver to take him to Notre Dame. He was dropped off at a Catholic girls' school with a similar name, where he presented his papers to the nuns. They put him on a train to Indiana.

While serving in the Marine Corps, he received a master's degree in public administration from George Washington University in 1963. He had a home in Fairfax County since 1969 and was a member of St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church in Fairfax.

His wife of 58 years, Ann Evers Blaz, died in May 2013. Survivors include two sons, Tom Blaz of Fairfax and Mike Blaz of Fairfax Station; two brothers; a sister; and five grandchildren.

After Congress, Gen. Blaz wrote a memoir and books about Guam and also made a series of historical and cultural television documentaries about his native island.

In Congress and later in life, Gen. Blaz became known for a useful description of the people of Guam, U.S. citizens who serve in disproportionate numbers in the military but do not have full representation in Congress: "Equal in war, unequal in peace."

IN HONOR OF MILLIE MARSHALL  
ON HER RECEIPT OF THE MANUFACTURING INSTITUTE'S WOMEN  
IN MANUFACTURING STEP  
AWARD

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Millie Marshall of Hurricane, West Virginia on the occasion of her selection to receive a STEP Award from The Manufacturing Institute. As an inspiration to young women interested in technical careers, I am pleased to recognize her contributions to Toyota, the automotive industry, the state of West Virginia, her community, and our country.

Manufacturing is revitalizing our economy and making America strong. Investments in manufacturing, particularly in automotive manufacturing, multiply across the economy, creating jobs and growth in other sectors. Manufacturing is the backbone of our nation's middle class. Today's manufacturers offer competitive wages in high-tech fields while working hard to encourage women into the field.

STEP Award Honorees, such as Ms. Marshall, help to attract more women to manufacturing careers by educating young workers that this is not your grandfather's manufacturing industry. By telling the real stories of these women, we can inspire the next generation to pursue careers in the industry and encourage women currently working for the manufacturing industry.

Ms. Marshall's 20-year career progression, beginning as a specialist all the way to her

current position as president of Toyota's West Virginia engine plant, is a direct result of her technical knowledge and ability, her drive and determination, and her passionate commitment to her fellow team members and Toyota's customers. Her accomplishment of becoming the first female president in Toyota's history is tied to her many successes.

Ms. Marshall is a lifelong learner. She has always seen her career as a journey. Her desire to learn and try new things led to many different positions, functions, and locations. In every experience at Toyota so far, she has left her positive mark. She has always been a strong advocate for self-development, team development, and for the growth of Toyota as a whole.

Ms. Marshall is a role model and mentor for other women in business. She shares her talents with women internally and is also actively involved in SOAR, a program that assists in the professional development and career advancement of women in business. With the support of her family, she has learned balance, patience and the ability to see the bigger picture with a variety of perspectives.

We are thankful for the years of dedication and hard work by Millie Marshall. We congratulate her for setting an example of professional excellence and advocacy of women in manufacturing, as well as her commitment to the greater community.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND WAYNE  
BRIDEGROOM

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Reverend Wayne Bridgroom for receiving the Martin Luther King Legacy Award. After 40 years of being a pastor, this is a well-deserved recognition.

In 1973, Rev. Bridgroom started at Central Baptist Church in West Modesto, where he still lives today. In 1981, he became the pastor and opened his doors to many ethnic groups. He began by ministering to Southeast Asian and Latino immigrants, but soon Central Baptist became home to the Laotian, Hmong, Cambodian and Hispanic populations as well. In 1980, he brought many of the Anglo churches from across town to form Modesto Outreach Ministry, which later became the Christian Challenge Ministries.

Pastor Bridgroom has a unique ability to develop networks and put his talent to work, becoming the co-founder of Harvest of Hope. Harvest of Hope is a collaboration of church, neighborhood and county government which focuses on providing goods for needy families. In 1989, he spearheaded a group called Love Inc., which paired people in need with agencies and volunteers in churches. He also helped in the founding of Weed and Seed, which led to First Tee, a golf mentoring program on the city's municipal course, and started Boy and Girl Scouting programs on the west side.

In the last 20 years, Rev. Bridgroom has worked with the West Modesto King Kennedy neighborhood collaborative and helped improve relationships between police and the community. In 2000, Pastor Bridgroom