

A TRIBUTE TO MY MOTHER

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 28, 1996

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am saddened today to bring to your attention the recent passing of one of this Nation's finest, most caring, and gentlest women—my mother.

Catherine C. Weldon, as she is known to others, was a devoted mother. And devoted she had to be to be put up with raising myself, my six brothers, and my two sisters. Yet she cared for each of us as if we were an only child, giving every one of us the individual attention that children need from their mother. And she did so happily and from the bottom of her heart.

One would think that simply raising the nine of us would have been a full-time job, yet she still found time to become an activist in our church. There she volunteered her time at the Sunday school and various other church activities. She also was the founder and leader of the Pioneer Girls of Marcus Hook Baptist Church.

My mother served her community in other ways as well. She was a regular volunteer for the Red Cross and their local bloodmobile. Additionally, she served on the Parent-Teachers Association at Marcus Hook Elementary School, the school my brothers, sisters, and I attended.

She was married to the late Stephen Weldon, Sr., mother of 9 children: Harry Weldon, Dick Weldon, Kay Weldon Nass, Don Weldon, Betty Weldon Doyle, Bob Weldon, Paul Weldon, myself, and the late Steve Weldon, Jr.; 37 grandchildren: Stephen W. Weldon III, Lillian Weldon Speakman, Doris Weldon, Catherine Weldon LeMand, John Weldon, Jennifer Weldon Higgins, Harry Weldon, Jr., Earl Weldon, Lisa Weldon Cowper, Paula Weldon Chaplin, David Weldon, Richard Weldon, Jr., Kerry Weldon McDermott, Timothy Weldon, Craig Weldon, Robert Nass II, Curt Nass, Scott Nass, Tracy Nass Brown, the late Christopher Nass, Donald Weldon, Jr., Glen Weldon, Sandra Doyle Moon, Sharon Doyle Freeman, the late Robert Weldon II, Jeff Weldon, Greg Weldon, Julie Weldon, Clay Weldon, Clint Weldon, Chad Weldon, Christie Weldon, Karen Weldon, Kristin Weldon, Kimberly Weldon, Curt Weldon, Jr., and Andrew Weldon; 54 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great grandchildren.

Her funeral service will be held at Marcus Hook Baptist Church, in Linwood, PA, on April 2, 1996, at 11 a.m. Friends may call from 9:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. at the church. Internment will follow the service at Lawncroft Memorial Cemetery in Linwood. The Catherine Weldon Christian Education Fund has been setup to receive donations in lieu of flowers. Contributions will be used to provide educational funding for children of families throughout the area. Donations can be sent to the Catherine Weldon Christian Education Fund, c/o the First National Bank of West Chester, P.O. Box 523, West Chester PA 19381.

My mother was truly a remarkable woman. Words cannot express how deeply she will be missed by her friends, neighbors, and relatives.

150 YEARS FOR THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF DALLAS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 28, 1996

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the First United Methodist Church of Dallas. This church has seen the city of Dallas grow from the small town that Dallas was in the late 1860's to the booming metropolis of today.

The history of the First United Methodist Church of Dallas begins in 1846 when the Methodist Church sent a minister to the small town of Dallas. The population of the city was about 200. The reverend from the Methodist church met with several resident, formed a small congregation and proceeded to build Dallas' first church on the corner of Commerce and Lamar. In 1879, the church was destroyed by fire. The second church resided at the corner of Commerce and Prather from 1894 to 1916. Then, the church purchased land on the corner on Ross and Harwood and began the construction of the church we know today. It was not completed until February 7, 1926, exactly 80 years after its formation.

During the 1960's, the church was a meeting place for civil rights activists in downtown Dallas. No other church would let blacks meet in Dallas, but the First United Methodist Church has never discriminated and has always allowed groups to congregate non-violently within their walls. They believe in accepting people into their church and not turning away people who need their help.

The First United Methodist Church of Dallas, today, is a downtown church which has a distinct identity and culture all of its own and has been able to flourish. People come from as far as north Texas and Waco making the trek downtown, and they pass more convenient churches along the way. Music and the arts are the First United Methodist Church's outreach to its congregation. Many people attend the other activities at the church during the week as well as on Sunday. On Wednesday, the church holds a weekly midday music program where the music is free and a hot home-cooked meal is provided for \$5.

While downtown churches in many cities are shutting their doors, and are experiencing a decline or moving to the suburbs, the First United Methodist Church of Dallas is holding its own with no plans of abandoning its home in the inner city.

The church is a spiritual landmark for anyone who has lived in Dallas, and everyone has come to know the First United Methodist Church of Dallas and the people who work there as friends. It provides a wealth of services in support to the community and should truly be congratulated for its commitment to Dallas and the people who attend this church. This 150th anniversary celebration recognizes all that the church has given to Dallas, and now it is our turn to give back to it. We wish the First United Methodist Church of Dallas a happy 150 years and many more.

TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

HON. GLEN BROWDER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 28, 1996

Mr. BROWDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay special tribute to the 1.7 million men and women across America who serve as firefighters. They risk their own lives each day to protect our communities from the destruction that fire causes. They are truly American heroes.

Our Nation, rich in so many things, cannot escape fire's grasp. The United States has a higher incidence of death and property loss due to fire than any other industrialized nation in the world. Each year, we are painfully reminded of the death and destruction fire can cause. Last year alone, 4,275 people died in fires—an average of one death every 2 hours. Fires injured over 27,000 others.

Specifically, I rise today to commend our volunteer firefighters for the excellent job they do in protecting our country's and my State's rural areas. These special people take their own free time, after working long hours on their regular jobs, and volunteer so that others might rest assured that they are well protected. They give everything and expect nothing.

Almost 90 percent of our Nation's fire service is volunteer. In my State of Alabama, 30,000 men and women proudly serve as volunteer firefighters. These dedicated volunteers often must overcome more than just deadly fires. Their fire departments often operate on small budgets, using old equipment, and with small water supplies.

The value of volunteer fire departments extends beyond fire and safety protection. In Alabama's small communities, the building often serves as the community center. Firefighters bind communities together, and they truly embody the idea of people helping other people.

Last fall, after Hurricane Opal's destruction came through Alabama, I accompanied the volunteer department in Gold Hill one Sunday cleaning up the yard of an elderly woman. A huge tree lay across her driveway. We spent several hours removing the limbs and debris from the blocked driveway, clearing a path for her in case of a medical emergency. Being part of such a show of community spirit after such a devastating storm was truly remarkable.

On the way home that evening, I spoke with a crew of power company employees who had just returned from their job of restoring power to homes. One employee told me that were it not for the thousands of volunteer firefighters who began clearing downed trees from the road, it would have been impossible for the power company to reach many of Alabama's hardest hit areas and restore electricity.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the three Alabamians who were among the Nation's fallen firefighters. Their names were inscribed on the Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Maryland last fall. Jay Boothe, a 17 year old from Shelby County, Bedford Cash, a member of the U.S. Forest Service in Tuskegee, and Herbert Smith, also of Shelby County, paid the ultimate price—giving their lives in the line of duty. In the January edition of the Volunteer,