

Resources Subcommittee which was chaired by the late Mike Synar of Oklahoma—another friend of mine gone too soon—and on which I served as the very green Ranking Republican. I shall be forever grateful to Matt for so ably carrying out the thankless job of keeping me from making a complete fool of myself time and time again.

He also had another unenviable task as minority staff director which was to keep our friends in the majority from being too outrageous in their committee reports, criticizing what they viewed as the sins or omissions of the Reagan-Bush administrations. Matt was our equivalent of Hans Brinker or whoever it was who kept his thumb in the hole in the dike, to keep the flood waters at bay, and he would jawbone endlessly with the majority to tone down the inflammatory rhetoric in the committee reports.

In 1989, Frank Horton, my predecessor as ranking member on the Government Operations Committee and normally a very nice man, did a terrible thing to me. He lured Matt away from me and made him deputy staff director. But my loss—and it was enormous—was the committee's gain because Matt quickly became as indispensable to Frank and Staff Director Don Upson as he had been to me. Matt's extraordinary ability to master very complex and difficult issues always amazed me when we were dealing only with energy, environment and natural resources issues. In his new capacity, and later as minority staff director after Don Upson left, he expanded his expertise to the entire range of the committee's jurisdiction, which in essence meant every activity of the Federal Government.

In 1992, I became the ranking Republican on the full committee—a post I achieved largely because during the 12 Reagan-Bush years when all we Republicans in the committee could do was try to defend the administration, I was too dumb to get off the committee. Thus, as others above me in seniority jumped ship to get on supposedly more prestigious committees, I kept moving up until, lo and behold I was at the top of the ladder and I very quickly hired Matt as staff director to resume his previous role of keeping me from making a complete fool of myself.

Matt Fletcher took his job very seriously but he never even took himself seriously. He had a wry and mischievous sense of humor and an appreciation that we humans are all a little ridiculous and the world a trifle mad.

He was also a prankster which he coupled with a flair for the dramatic which emerged from time to time often during the Christmas season when Matt and his beloved dogs, Bear and Lupee, would hit the road as Santa Claus and two ersatz reindeer. Matt in full Santa Claus red suit, shiny belt and black boots, wire framed glasses and stuffed belly. Bear and Lupee with phoney antlers strapped to their heads. In Lupee's case it was especially hard to suspend disbelief that a spotted dalmatian with floppy antlers was a reindeer.

Any rate this motley entourage roamed the congressional halls offering gifts to all. Unfortunately, the gifts were usually withered apples from Frank Horton's district that had been lying around his office for months. But as we all know it's not the value of the gift but the thought that counts unless one is a Neiman Marcus freak.

At Halloween time, Matt would put on his eerily lifelike latex rubber Richard Milhaus

Nixon mask and roam the hall throwing candy into offices and flashing the famous Nixon victory sign.

It is important to note that while Matt Fletcher was a terrific employee he was also a wonderful boss. He took a real and personal interest in the lives and careers of all of the members of the committee staff. He went to great lengths to make every staff member feel truly appreciated. He made sure that good works were recognized by writing personal notes commending individual staffers for their contributions. Matt built a terrific team of first-class professionals and created an atmosphere of comaradery and mutual respect by constantly reinforcing each staffer's worth and value to the committee.

The tragedy, of course, is that the scourge of AIDS so cruelly cut short such a promising life and brilliant career. When Matt said goodbye to friends and colleagues on the Hill just 2 years ago in one of the most profoundly moving farewell speeches any of us, I'm sure, have ever heard, he made it clear that his only regret was not that he would never have the title or the power and prestige of majority staff director but rather that he would no longer be in the arena engaged in the debate on the central issues of our time. Matt's world was not the world of power but the world of ideas.

Matt has left us in person but he has also left us a rich legacy to remember him by. He was a man who—even though he was with us for only a brief shining moment in the long sweep of time, truly made a difference. Here was a man who strove for and in large measure achieved excellence in everything he did. And here was a man who taught us that the true worth of any human being is measured finally by the caring, the concern, the love that he bears for his fellow human beings.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NATIONAL GUARD ON ITS ANNIVERSARY

HON. G.V. (SONNY) MONTGOMERY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 30, 1996*

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and wish a happy anniversary to an organization I have seen grow from infancy to the largest of the National Guard associations and the largest of all Enlisted Reserve component organizations in this great country of ours, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States [EANGUS].

This organization truly holds a special place in my heart. I have helped nurture it over the past 20-some years and have watched it grow and branch out to do exceptional work for our enlisted men and women who serve in the National Guard of these United States.

When EANGUS was first formed in 1970, and incorporated in 1972 in Jackson, MS, I don't think any of its forefathers thought it would grow into being the extremely successful organization that it has become.

What has made EANGUS so successful? The answer is simple, we have to look at its history. It was nurtured by people like Bob Spencer from South Dakota, Virgil Williams (deceased) from my home State of Mississippi, Jim Garritson from Iowa, Tony Nathe

from Minnesota, John Ball from South Dakota, Nate Monastra from Ohio, and Bobby Dempsey from Arkansas. These individuals served the National Guard for many years in their military career. They continue to serve the National Guard as the founders and the forefathers of this great organization. Even in retirement today, they continue to serve and look out for the welfare of the enlisted members of the National Guard.

Look at EANGUS' leadership today. The president is M. Sgt. Blain D. Ross, an Air National Guard sergeant in South Dakota who is also a sergeant on the police force in Brandon, SD. The executive director, M. Sgt. Mike Cline, is a 25-year veteran whose lovely wife, Dian Cline, serves in the Maryland Air National Guard. His oldest son, Mike, is a 9-year Army veteran who lost his job during the Los Angeles earthquakes, but when the call came, he answered. His younger son, John, is a 4-year Air Force veteran who now serves in the Ohio Air National Guard.

The Guard is a family. The Guard is always there, ready to serve, whether the call is to fight a flood or a forest fire, to calm civil disturbances or to serve our country in time of the war such as Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Bosnia. The Guard is there.

Many of this association's accomplishments not only benefit the enlisted National Guard member, but they benefit all reservists, officer or enlisted, Army Reserve or Marine Corps Reserve. Some of EANGUS' accomplishments are the commissary privileges, gray-area retiree issues, PX/BX exchange privileges, the VA Home Loan Program, the VA burial bill for National Guard and Reserve members in national cemeteries, transition benefits, increase in IDT points; the list goes on and on. This organization today fights to preserve its heritage, the heritage of the National Guard and look out for the welfare of the enlisted people.

I will always have a special place in my heart for EANGUS. This organization has its reception area named in my honor, an organization which created an award, which is presented to a member of congress each year, in my honor, and an organization which I'm told has a chandelier hanging in it that is older than my good friend, Senator STROM THURMOND of South Carolina.

So it is my hope and desire that when this organization comes knocking on your door and is bringing an issue that they consider of dire importance, that you will take the time to listen because chances are, that issue is going to impact not only the 400,000+ enlisted members of the National Guard but more than 1,000,000 reservists who stand ready to protect and serve this great Nation, their families and their communities.

So on their 25th anniversary, I commend the work of this great organization and what it has done to enhance the lives of the enlisted National Guard member, and the reserve components in general. Happy anniversary, EANGUS!

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YOUTH CRIME

HON. RICK LAZIO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 30, 1996*

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, 6 months ago I stood here on the floor of the