

I know the Members of the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to his family: his son, Eric; his three daughters, Sheila, Robin, and Heather; and five grandchildren.

HONORING FIRE CHIEF ANGELO
PETRARCA

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2000

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Fire Chief Angelo Petrarca who retired on January 31, 2000 after 40 years of service in South Chicago Heights.

Fire Chief Petrarca joined the South Chicago Heights Fire Department in June 1970. He became a Lieutenant in May 1971 and was appointed Assistant Fire Chief in May 1973. On May 1, 1974, Mr. Petrarca was appointed as Fire Chief.

Chief Petrarca has been a resident of South Chicago Heights since 1959, and is known to be completely dedicated to his career as well as to ensuring the health and well-being of the community. The major highlight of Chief Petrarca's career this past year involves the improvement of the fire departments response time which was previously, on average 6–7 minutes, before November 1998. The response time is now an impressive two minutes from the time of call to the actual arrival of EMS personnel on site. This is mostly due to Chief Petrarca's decision to staff the fire department with a 24 hour a day on duty paramedic along with another EMS professional on call seven days a week.

Chief Petrarca also believes in giving of his time to various organizations both professionally and for the good of the community. Some of his affiliations include: Member of the Illinois Fire Chief Association; Past President of the WILCO Fire Chiefs Association; Member of the International Association of Arson Investigators; Chairperson of the ETSB; Member of the National Emergency Number Association; and Member of South Chicago Heights Y2K Readiness Committee.

Fire Chief Angelo Petrarca's commitment and impact on his community is not only deserving of congressional recognition, but should serve as a model for others to follow.

At a time when our nation's leaders are asking the people of this country to make serving their community a core value of citizenship, honoring Fire Chief Petrarca is both timely and appropriate.

I urge this body to identify and recognize others in their congressional districts whose actions have so greatly benefitted and enlightened America's communities.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN V. HAYS

HON. HELEN CHENOWETH-HAGE

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2000

Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Mr. John Hays, president of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association and owner/operator of Rouse Brothers Ranch in Unity, OR. John Hays is a fierce-

ly independent man who is committed to preserving and protecting the rights of America's farmers and ranchers.

Through hard work and dedication, John has had a stellar career championing the rights of private property owners. When John is not fighting to preserve the rights of land owners, he is speaking out against the high levels of agribusiness consolidation and the many related problems affecting agricultural producers, rural communities, and consumers.

After thinking about various events in John's life, I am reminded of a passage in Theodore Roosevelt's letter to Marcus Alonzo Hanna (June 27, 1900): "I am as strong as a bull moose and you can use me to the limit."

Mr. Speaker, I must tell you, it has been an honor to know John and to be his friend. Truly, he is dedicated to preserving the unique integrity of our proud western heritage.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I commend the example of John Hays to my colleagues, and hereby submit to the RECORD for their consideration a January 11, 2000 article appearing in *The Bulletin* (Bend, Oregon).

[*The Bulletin*, Jan. 11, 2000]

CATTLEMEN'S LEADER WORKS TO PRESERVE
RANCHING

(By Jim Witty)

JOHN DAY.—It's not easy being a cattleman in Oregon at the dawn of the 21st century.

To hear John Hays tell it, the Western rancher should join the northern spotted owl, the blackfooted ferret and the gray wolf on the endangered list.

Hays, a bull of a man with a gregarious streak a mile wide and at least as deep, sees red when the topic turns to cows and those who would interfere with their unfettered husbandry.

"We kind of look at ourselves as an endangered species," Hays says. "If you look at the last five or six years, we've been nearly regulated out of business."

Hays, the newly elected president of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, has come out with both guns blazing.

One of his first communiques is illustrative.

Shortly after a federal court ordered the Bureau of Land Management to eliminate cattle grazing along 18 miles of the Owyhee River in Southeastern Oregon, Hays shot out a press release to Oregon media outlets accusing U.S. District Judge James Redden of bias and calling the principal litigant—the Oregon Natural Desert Association of Bend—the "eliminate the food chain group of America."

Hays concluded the news release by declaring: "This type of judgment is why people fled Europe during the time of Hitler. It is a very sad time in my life as president of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association."

Strong words. But Hays is no shrinking violet.

He has vowed to fight a triple threat he believes is ripping the guts from the ranching industry: the Endangered Species Act, which cattlemen complain has produced a spate of unwanted regulations (listings or potential listings of steelhead, salmon and trout species, for instance, have restricted the way ranchers can do business on their property); the buyout of dozens of medium-size packing plants by a couple of large corporations, IBP and Con Agra; and the subsequent homogenization of the market—the loss of ranchers' ability to command a premium for premium beef.

This day, Hays is at the senior center in John day taking a break from the environmental wars, rallying the troops for an assault on the marketing front.

'We want to get back in control of our market,' says Hays, 57, sipping coffee in an anteroom before he's scheduled to outline his plans before several dozen ranchers in the main hall.

To regain that control, the former restaurateur and sports agent is promoting a premium product produced by the state's ranchers, called Oregon Trail Branded Beef, that will be processed in a cattlemen-owned plant. That way, says Hays, ranchers can sell contaminant-free beef that they control from rangeland to retailer.

'People get E. coli and who do they point to?' says Hays. 'The cattlemen, right off the bat. We don't have any control of the product.'

While the ambitious co-op marketing campaign is occupying most of his time these days, the battle on the ground is never far from his mind.

'Grazing is a target,' says Hays. '(Environmentalists) found out with the spotted oil that they could get rid of the timber industry. Grazing is the next thing they're pushing for.'

Bill Marlett of Bend-based Oregon Natural Desert Association is Hays' arch nemesis. The two have never met.

'As a human being, I give everybody a chance,' says Hays. '(But) I hate to see anything progressive being torn down.'

ONDA argues that cows have trampled riverbanks, fouled streams and chewed up fragile desert topsoil on more than 13 million acres of public land in Oregon. And the organization's goal is to remove all cattle from the state's BLM- and Forest Service-administered land.

Marlett says he doesn't quite know what to make of Hays.

'I don't know where he's coming from to be honest,' says Marlett. 'To make the inference about Nazi Germany—aside from being irrelevant—is crazy. Why would you say something like that? If he's going to base policy on rhetoric, there's probably not a lot of progress we can make communicating. . . . It's kind of extreme.'

Hays, in turn, argues that those pushing to rid the range of cattle are outside the mainstream.

'We are the table,' says Hays, referring to the cattleman's place in the scheme of things. 'I don't consider the people who don't own property as even the tablecloth, the salt and pepper shaker. . . . A lot of it is lifestyle. They could care less about lifestyle.'

But Hays is concerned that lifestyle is in trouble as are communities dependent on ranching.

He contends that ranchers are the best land stewards because their livelihoods depend on it.

'You don't make a living if you trash your ranch,' Hays says. 'We're some of the better environmentalists in the world. . . . It's like anything else, if you don't harvest the grass, it will turn to weeds.'

But Hays says he sees the Endangered Species Act being used as a tool to take cattle off the range. For instance, he says, when a threatened trout is found on a rancher's grazing allotment, they can't use the creek anymore unless they invest in a costly fencing regimen.

Hays subscribes to the theory that there is an overarching plan guiding the environmental movement that will move more and more private land into government ownership.

'These are apostles of the one world movement to get people off the land,' he says. ' . . . Eventually it's a government takeover.'

Most environmentalists pooh pooh the notion, saying that it's difficult enough organizing their own groups, let alone a monolithic movement.