

PAYING TRIBUTE TO EIGHTH
STREET MISSIONARY BAPTIST
CHURCH

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church in Pueblo, Colorado. For many years, the church has been spiritually uniting members of the Pueblo community, and I am privileged to join my colleagues in recognizing its positive impact on the community before this body of Congress and this nation today.

The Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church has been a place of worship and friendship for members of Pueblo for well over a century. The church's roots can be traced back into the 1870's, but the exact date of its inception is unknown as a result of a flood destroying the documentation. Many early members of the congregation can be identified as freed slaves, relocating in Pueblo to establish a new life with new opportunities. Now, many members of the community find comfort in the Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church. Recently, the church announced plans for a new building to house the church to better serve its members.

Mr. Speaker, the Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church remains an important part of the lives for many community members. The church has a century old record of bringing people together and creating a strong community. I thank the leadership and the members of Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church for their service to the community, and wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, because of an emergency in my district, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 359, 360, 361 and 362. If present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 359, 361 and 362 and "nay" on rollcall vote 360.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN
WILLIAM SOMRAK

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to pay tribute to the life and memory of John William Somrak of Gunnison, Colorado. "Johnny," as he was affectionately known, recently passed away, and he will be remembered as a pillar of his community. As his family and community mourn his passing, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize his life before this body of Congress and this nation.

Johnny was born and raised in Crested Butte, Colorado. After losing his father at a young age, he went to work for Colorado Fuel

and Iron's Big Mine when he turned seventeen to help support his family. This responsibility taught him a strong work ethic early in his life. Harry's personal loss of his father to a mining accident inspired him to become active in workplace safety at the mine, and join a team to compete in Colorado's Industrial First Aid and Accident Prevention competitions. When the coalmines closed he went on to work as a Forest Service technician, a job that required him to be a man of many talents. He did everything from providing the necessary maintenance of campgrounds to acting as a supervisor for the summer work crews.

A devoted family man, Johnny was married to Frances Starkovich, for over fifty years. In his free time, he enjoyed dancing with his wife and cultivating flowers in his garden. In addition to those passions, his love for skiing kept him active throughout the winter.

Mr. Speaker, the Gunnison community will sorely miss John Somrak. He will be remembered as a dedicated worker and committed family man. I wish to express my deepest condolences to Johnny's family and friends in this difficult time of bereavement.

HONORING THE JOHN MERLO
SPORTS PROGRAM

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to recognize the contributions of the John Merlo Sports Program for its tireless efforts in providing sports programs and other activities for children and senior citizens in the Lakeview Neighborhood of Chicago, on the occasion of its 23rd Annual Awards Dinner.

The annual Sports Program Dinner, hosted again at Chicago's own Wrigley Field, is an opportunity to recognize both the great work the Sports Program has accomplished in the past year, as well as the achievements of so many members of our community who help make Lakeview one of the best neighborhoods in the City of Chicago. This year, I am pleased to congratulate Senator Emil Jones, Andy McPhail, and Paula and Peter Fasseas on being recognized for their unwavering commitment to Chicago.

The John Merlo Sports Program has consistently demonstrated its commitment to providing the Lakeview community with a variety of excellent athletic programs as well as funding for the renovations of Chicago Park District Playlots. Its fundraisers, programs, and honorees, are an integral part of the success of the program, and I thank everyone in attendance for their assistance and dedication to this outstanding program.

Founded in 1981, the John Merlo Sports Program is a charitable organization named after the late John Merlo, a beloved former Alderman, State Representative, State Senator and Democratic Committeeman, who represented the Lakeview community for nearly 30 years. Mr. Merlo, a staunch advocate for the benefits of participating in sports, felt good sportsmanship, and the ability to interact with others were important skills that everyone should possess.

This year's awards are led by the Civic Leader of the Year, Senate President Emil

Jones, Jr. Senator Jones has been serving the people of Illinois as a state legislator for more than 30 years. Throughout his career, he has been a dedicated supporter of education and the disadvantaged. A life long resident of Chicago, Senator Jones has provided a passionate voice for Chicagoans as the leader of the Illinois State Senate.

President and Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Cubs, Andy MacPhail has a long connection with the Lakeview Neighborhood, first working for the Cubs in 1977. As one of the most successful executives in Major League Baseball, Mr. McPhail has also worked for the Houston Astros and the Minnesota Twins, a team that won two World Championships while he was at the helm. Under Mr. McPhail's management, the Cubs were the National League Central Division Champions last year, and are again fighting for the pennant. Accordingly, I applaud the selection of Mr. McPhail as Business Leader of the year.

Last, but not least, I congratulate Paula and Peter Fasseas on being selected as the Business Leaders of the Year. Metropolitan Bank Group Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Peter Fasseas and Vice Chairman Paula Fasseas have been involved in all facets of the Lakeview community since purchasing North Community Bank in 1978. The number of civic organizations that have been touched by the Fasseas is too numerous to mention, but I am particularly proud of their work with Pets Are Worth Saving (PAWS), the non-profit organization founded by Mr. and Mrs. Fasseas in 1998 dedicated to encouraging pet adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the leadership of The John Merlo Sports Program, its founder Bernie Hansen, and current President Mike Quigley on the incredible work they are doing for Chicago's youth and seniors. I would also like to commend the tremendous leaders being honored this year, and wish the program continued success in the future.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO KAREN
GREEN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Karen Green, of Aspen, Colorado. Karen is a talented teacher that motivates students to study our nation's history. Her dedication to learning inspires students in many ways, and I am privileged to acknowledge her before this body of Congress and this nation today.

Karen has been an educator for twenty-two years and has also taught in Glenwood Springs, and Cherry Creek in Denver. This year Karen was the only Colorado educator to be awarded the inaugural Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award. The newly established national award program was created by first lady Laura Bush and is co-sponsored by the Preserve America Foundation and Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. In addition to her award Karen was also complimented with a one thousand dollar donation to the High School, 20 history books, multimedia, copies of primary documents and some meaningful works of literature and philosophy in original form.