

HON. JEFF MILLER
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, June 16, 2009

- Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor retired Navy Captain John J. Coonan, Jr., who passed away on June 12, 2009. Captain Coonan served our nation, our Navy and the people of Northwest Florida with honor and distinction, and I am humbled to recognize him.
- Known to his friends as Captain JJ Coonan, John was an American patriot who served over 30 years as a career Naval Officer. He worked as a single-seat jet pilot in carrier aviation and accumulated over 5,000 flight hours and 1,000 carrier landings. JJ's command assignments varied among squadron, Carrier Air Wing, and deep draft ship command. His most notable assignment came in 1988 when he served as Commanding Officer of the USS America, a Kitty Hawk class super carrier of the U.S. Navy. Captain Coonan's distinguished naval career is a testament to his profound dedication to his country.
- Upon his retirement from active duty in 1996, Captain Coonan joined the staff at the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation in Pensacola, Florida. He began as Director of Development and later transitioned to a position as Vice President of Education and Chief Operating Officer. Captain Coonan's leadership at the Foundation had a tremendous impact on all those who visited the museum; however, his most lasting contribution is his stewardship of the National Flight Academy. The academy will be the leading aviation-inspired education program in the country. In a tribute to the life of Captain Coonan, today the National Flight Academy broke ground on the new facility, paving the way for construction and completion of the academy in May of 2011. His dedication to the service of others will live on through the academy long after his passing.
- The people of Pensacola and our entire area have many reasons to be proud of Captain Coonan. My wife Vicki and I will keep his entire family, especially his wife, Kathryn, children Michael and Kelly, and grandchildren in our prayers. Northwest Florida we'll truly miss Captain JJ Coonan.