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Bridge Dedicated To Civil Rights Activist McCray

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Saturday Named 'Herman McCray Jr. Day' In Riviera Beach

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RIVIERA BEACH, Fla. -- This weekend, a Riviera Beach bridge was dedicated to Herman McCray, of McCray's Backyard BarBQ.

The Congress Avenue bridge wasn't dedicated for McCray's tasty ribs, but for his tireless efforts to fight for civil rights.



"I was there when the KKK called our house," said McCray's son, Derrick. "I was there when they were hanging a noose and when my dad went to jail fighting for the rights of people."

Derrick McCray spoke to hundreds about his father's fight during the civil rights movement. His father couldn't fight back the tears as he recalled painful memories during a disturbing time in U.S. history.

On Saturday, Palm Beach County commissioners dedicated a bridge to Herman McCray. The sign on the bridge reads, "A True Bridge Builder."

"I would hope that people would see that and understand that we all need each other and that they can bridge the gap between each other," Herman McCray said. "Because the scripture says, 'If a man wants a friend, he must be a friend.'"

Newspaper clippings dating back to the 1960's offer an idea of the powerful voice the man had in Riviera Beach. In one photo, he's seen is standing with civil rights activist Rosa Parks.

"He was one of those soldiers who was able to stand up and withstand over the course of time being a champion for other people, garbage pickups, streets to be fixed, fair housing education for kids," Derrick McCray said.

In addition to the bridge dedication, Saturday was also named "Herman McCray Jr. Day" in Riviera Beach.

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