

Soldiers Medal and the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters were among the many honors awarded to Bernt Balchen by the U.S. for his wartime service, in addition to high honors from Norway and Denmark.

Returning to civilian life in 1946, Balchen resumed work in the development of the Scandinavian airlines system, while working for DNL in Norway. Recalled to the U.S. Air Force in 1948, he took command of the 10th Rescue Squadron in Alaska. In 1949, he piloted the first flight from Alaska across the North Pole, landing in Norway—thus becoming the first pilot to fly over both the North and the South Poles. He served as a special assistant to the Secretary of the U.S. Air Force on Arctic Affairs, developing search and rescue techniques and equipment, defense concepts, and navigational systems for the transpolar route which was soon to be adopted by commercial airlines. He pioneered the building of the anti-missile base at Thule, Greenland, hailed for its strategic importance.

Through all the rugged years, Balchen's sketch pad and watercolor paints were close at hand. In 1948, however, inspired by the grandeur of the scenery and wildlife in Alaska, he began a serious study of watercolor painting techniques, acquiring a large collection of the best books on the subject. In 1953, he held his first one-man show in New York, in which 73 of his paintings won critical acclaim from critics because of their brilliant colors and thrilling scenes of the High North. This was followed later by one-man showings in other areas of New York, as well as other states and abroad.

Upon his retirement from the Air Force in 1956, Colonel Balchen was honored with the Distinguished Service Medal with a citation for "his understanding of the intricate Arctic conditions and for his firm leadership, extensive background and selfless devotion to duty." He was the holder of many other honors, including the Harmon International Trophy, awarded to him by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1954, and the National Pilots' Association Award. He held honorary Doctorate of Science degrees from Tufts College (1953) and from the University of Alaska (1954). His writings included "The Next 50 Years of Flight," his autobiography "Come North With Me" (Dutton 1958), and a cookbook published in Norway.

Until his death on October 17, 1973, Bernt Balchen served as a consultant to the U.S. Air Force and to leading corporations, including General Precision and General Dynamics, on Polar and Arctic matters, on energy problems and defense considerations.

In addition to Bernt Balchen's being honored by the 70,000 members of the Sons of Norway, Alaska's Governor, Tony Knowles, proclaimed October 23, 1999 as "Polar Flight Day." Furthermore, the Alaska Legislature as well as the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska proclaimed October 23, 1999 as "Bernt Balchen Day," a fitting tribute to this outstanding Norwegian-American on the anniversary of his 100th birthday.

Bernt Balchen is buried in Arlington Cemetery alongside Admiral Byrd. During the interment services, a red-tipped C-54 from his former Alaskan Command flew over Arlington Cemetery in a touching farewell.

Balchen's headstone at Arlington Cemetery reads: "Today goes fast and tomorrow is almost here. Maybe I have helped a little in the change. So I go on to the next adventure,

looking to the future but always thinking back to the past, remembering my teammates and the lonely places I have seen that no man ever saw before."

Mr. Speaker, on October 23, 1999, I ask that my colleagues pause to remember Colonel Bernt Balchen, a true hero who made significant contributions to the security of both Norway and the United States.

TRIBUTE TO THE BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON NATIONAL PARK AND THOSE WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with an overwhelming sense of pride that I now rise to pay tribute to a truly historic event in the proud and distinguished history of the great State of Colorado: the establishment of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

As the House sponsor of legislation that redesignated the Black Canyon as a national park, it gives me great joy to describe for this esteemed body's record the beauty of this truly majestic place. In addition, I would like to offer my gratitude to a community of individuals instrumental in the long process that ultimately yielded the establishment of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who has visited the Black Canyon can attest to its awe-inspiring natural beauty. Named for the dark rock that makes up its sheer walls, the Black Canyon is largely composed of what geologists call basement rocks, the oldest rocks on the earth estimated at 1.7 billion years old. With its narrow openings, sheer walls, and scenic gorges that plunge 2000 feet into the clear blue majesty of the Gunnison River, the Black Canyon is a natural crown jewel second to none in its magnificent splendor. Though other canyons may have greater depth or descend on a steeper course, few combine these attributes as breathtakingly as does the Black Canyon.

If ever there was a place worthy of the prestigious status that only national park status can afford, Mr. Speaker, it is the Black Canyon. But as you know, national parks don't just happen. In this case, it took nearly 15 years, several Congressional Representatives and Senators, innumerable locally elected officials, and a virtual sea of committed citizens in western Colorado.

Included in this group are the good people of Olathe, Colorado. During this long and at times difficult process, Olathe's civic leaders have given tirelessly and beyond measure in the hopes of making the Black Canyon a national park. Again and again these great Americans rose to the challenge, doing everything in their power to fulfill this dream. Without Olathe's leadership and perseverance, none of what we have accomplished would have ever been possible.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I give my thanks to the people of Olathe who played a leading role in making the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park a wonderful reality for Colorado, America, and the world to enjoy.

ON THE OCCASION OF NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very important date in the Florida educational community. Nova Southeastern University, Florida's largest independent university, will celebrate its 35th anniversary on December 2nd, 1999. This event, entitled "Celebration of Excellence," promises to showcase the outstanding achievements of NSU students and alumni alike, and I am honored to be a part of this joyous occasion.

Through Nova Southeastern University's quality educational programs, the university has made an immense contribution to the personal and professional advancement of thousands of Florida residents. In addition, NSU provides a wide range of community services and programs for the benefit of South Florida residents. Working to bring new skills and knowledge to the community around it, the work of Nova Southeastern University ultimately benefits Florida residents of all ages.

"Celebration of Excellence" is also notable because it features the fifth anniversary of the merger of Nova University and Southeastern University of the Health Sciences to form NSU in its current state. This synergistic merger of the two schools has resulted in the development of some of Florida's most impressive medical and health care education programs. Indeed, these programs benefit the entire community's health and well-being.

Nova Southeastern University has set itself apart in its ability to form partnerships with other educational institutions, state and local agencies, and community organizations. These successful cooperative efforts enhance local access to advocacy, counseling, health care, rehabilitative and other human services, raise community awareness on existing services and resources, and provide a valuable form to identify and address unmet local needs. It is without hesitation that I say that Nova Southeastern University has had a tremendous impact on the life of all South Floridians.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Southeastern University has spent the last 35 years demonstrating its strong commitment to the well-being and education of the Florida community. I am extremely proud to celebrate this anniversary with administration, students, and alumni of NSU. Reflecting on their success of the past, I wish everyone at NSU the best as the university turns its eyes to the immediate future.

RECOGNIZING THE 1999 RECIPIENTS OF THE MICHIGAN WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME

HON. DEBBIE STABENOW

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, this year the Michigan Women's Historical Center will induct ten members into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. These remarkable individuals from

the past and the present have made noteworthy inroads in expanding opportunities and creating greater equality for Michigan women. Tonight at the Sixteenth Annual Michigan Women's Hall of Fame Awards Dinner, each of these individuals will be recognized for their significant contributions. I would like to congratulate the 10 new Hall of Fame members and thank them for blazing a trail for women to follow in future.

Contemporary Honorees include writer and humanist Doris DeDecker; nature columnist Margaret Drake Elliot; Elizabeth Homer, who has fought for educational and professional equality for women; and Sister Ardeth Platte, who has committed her life to social justice and eliminating violence.

Historical Honorees include Patricia Beeman, a member of the Southern African Liberation Committee, who fought to educate Michiganites on apartheid in South Africa; the first woman minister in the United States, Olympia Brown, the first woman to head the Detroit Police Department's Women's Division, Eleonore Hutzel; dietitian, writer and child advocate Ella Eaton Kellogg; and Emily Burton Ketcham, a Grand Rapids woman who fought for women's right to vote.

Dr. Peter T. Mitchell, President of Albion College, was recognized with the Phillip A. Hart Award for his contributions nationally to improving educational opportunities for women.

STUDENT RESULTS ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 20, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2) to send more dollars to the classroom and for certain other purposes:

Mr. FORBES. Madam Chairman, efforts to achieve gender equity have made herculean strides in the past 25 years, but now is not the time to look back with nostalgia and congratulate ourselves on how far we've come. We must look to how far we still have to go to ensure that everyone has equal access to the opportunities presented by the 21st century, as well as the means to meet the challenges of the new economy. The Women's Educational Equity Act is a key to unlock that door. The Act has focused on combating gender bias in the classroom, and provided funds to programs that train teachers and supply instructional materials to encourage girls to pursue careers and instruction in those areas that will drive our commerce in the future—math, science, engineering and technology.

Since the implementation of the act in 1974, girls have improved in areas such as math and science, but they have been left behind in learning the technological skills needed to compete in tomorrow's economy. The new global economy demands these skills. Technological literacy is essential for success in the workforce. Next year, 65 percent of jobs will require some technological skills. Why, then, do a very small percentage of girls take computer science courses? Of the girls that do participate in computer classes, they tend to

cluster in lower-end data entry and word processing classes. Boys, on the other hand, continue on to higher-skill, more challenging computer courses such as computer programming and problem-solving. We cannot afford, as a nation, to waste such a precious resource in this way.

The trend in educational initiatives is to give every student access to a computer and the Internet by the year 2000. These computers and the Information Highway have become as essential to the learning process as pencils and paper. We must ensure that girls in the classroom are equal partners in these opportunities and that teachers recognize and encourage their participation in technological training.

While steps have been made in narrowing the gender gap, girls and young women still encounter barriers in the classroom. Congress has an obligation to ensure that all students attain the highest standards and obtain the resources and tools needed to succeed in the new millennium. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of including this act as an amendment to the Student Results Act, H.R. 2.

IN HONOR OF MR. GUILLERMO ESTEVEZ ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Guillermo Estevez, Director of the New Jersey Office of the International Rescue Committee, for 20 years of dedicated service, and to congratulate him on his retirement from the organization.

From volunteer to Director, Mr. Estevez has had a remarkable career with the International Rescue Committee, Inc. Mr. Estevez and IRC provided assistance to more than 25,000 refugees from all over the world in the quest for freedom.

Since his arrival in the United States in 1979, Mr. Estevez has been a pro-active leader in the human rights struggle in Cuba. A political prisoner himself, who served more than 20 years in the jails of Communist Cuba, Mr. Estevez has firsthand knowledge of the flagrant disregard for civil and human rights on the island.

Over the years, Mr. Estevez has spearheaded many marches and demonstrations against the Communist Regime in Cuba. Through the streets of New York City, Los Angeles, Washington, DC, Miami, Tampa, New Orleans, and various cities in my home State of New Jersey, Mr. Estevez has been instrumental in shining a light on the too often overshadowed abuses in Cuba.

In Mr. Estevez's fight for a free and democratic Cuba, he founded, organized, and served as first General Coordinator of the Cuban Civic Committee. Mr. Estevez's efforts were rewarded when he was recently named to the Free Cuba Task Force by the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Mr. Estevez was the first Hispanic member of the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey State Prison Complex and was a member of

the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Committee of the Hudson County Human Services Advisory Committee.

For his remarkable contributions to the fight against civil and human rights violations, specifically in regard to the fight against the Cuban Communist Regime, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Estevez on a truly exceptional career and to wish him luck in all his future endeavors.

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