

his Washington debut: "Le veau d'or" from Gounod's "Faust," and "Ella giammai m'amo" from Verdi's "Don Carlo." Tenor John Matz had his role unexpectedly expanded when he filled in for Domingo in "Granada." Washington native Graves had the widest repertoire, with a French aria and an American spiritual, and the Three Mo' Tenors were also all over the map with the classic "La donna e mobile" followed by "Let the Good Times Roll."

The good times kept rolling after the concert, when 300 guests joined Casey for dinner and dancing at the Organization of American States across the street. The grand ballroom was lavishly decorated with spring bouquets, Peter Duchin kept the dance floor hopping, and the speeches were short but sincere. "I am so impressed by Betty," said Washington Opera Chairman Jim Kimsey. "Without her the opera would not be what it is today."

The hostess was characteristically low-key about the evening. "I thought it was wonderful, really great," she said, "Perfect, really, except for Placido" not being here.

Washington Post music critic emeritus Joseph McLellan contributed to this report.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNITION OF OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

• Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to America's senior citizens. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy designated May "Older Americans Month" to acknowledge the accomplishments of our Nation's elder generations. I welcome this opportunity to pause and reflect on the contributions of those individuals who have played such a major role in shaping our great Nation. For those of us in the Senate who have worked to ensure that the members of America's "greatest generation" will be able to enjoy their later years with dignity and independence, this is a chance to honor them for their hard work and the countless sacrifices they have made during their lifetimes, and to look forward to their continued contributions to the welfare of our country.

Today's senior citizens have witnessed more technological advances than any other generation in our Nation's history. Seniors today have lived through times of extreme economic depression and prosperity, times of war and peace, and have seen incredible advancements in the fields of science, medicine, transportation and communications. They have embraced these new technologies and used them to further develop their vital roles in America's communities. Older Americans are working and volunteering far beyond the traditional retirement age to give younger generations the benefit of their wisdom and experience. Moreover, they are in much better health than their counterparts in previous generations and far less likely to be impoverished, disabled, or confined to nursing homes.

Recent census figures reveal that the number of older Americans continues to grow. The population of those 85 and older grew 37 percent during the 1990s,

while the Nation's overall population increased only 13 percent. Approximately 35 million people 65 and older were counted in the 2000 census as well as 50,500 Americans who were 100 or older. Baby boomers, who represented one-third of all Americans in 1994, will enter the 65-years-and-older category over the next 13 to 34 years, substantially increasing this segment of our population.

These figures reinforce the need to demonstrate our commitment to programs such as Medicare and Social Security, and to stimulate investment in biomedical research and treatments that are improving the lives of older Americans. One of our national goals must be to ensure all older Americans benefit from these improvements. In Congress, we must ensure our legislative priorities reflect our dedication to the support that older Americans deserve. This includes expanding and strengthening those programs that effectively aid older Americans, and addressing those that fall short of assisting this valuable and constantly expanding segment of our society. I have worked with my colleague from Maryland, Senator MIKULSKI, in her efforts to provide a \$5,000 tax credit for individuals with chronic care needs. I regret this credit was not included in this year's budget resolution but I will continue to support her efforts to see that Congress passes the Family Caregivers Tax Credit Act.

By 2020, Medicare will be responsible for covering nearly 20 percent of the population. Though Medicare meets the health care needs of millions of Americans, it was created in a different time before the benefits of prescription medicines had become such an integral part of health care. Sixty percent of Medicare beneficiaries lack affordable, prescription drug coverage. Although people 65 and older are 12.5 percent of the population, they fill 34 percent of all prescriptions. Today it is impossible to imagine quality health care coverage that does not include affordable medicines to treat and prevent illness.

I have and will continue to fight for Medicare prescription drug coverage for all seniors. Earlier this year, I again cosponsored legislation to provide coverage of outpatient prescription drugs under the Medicare program and to provide greater access to affordable medications. I recognize the predicament of many older Americans as they struggle to live independently on a fixed income and at the same time spend money on costly prescription drugs. The tremendous advances in biomedical research that have led to life-saving drugs and treatments are of little use if the population that stands to benefit the most cannot afford them. It is imperative that we address the needs of the Americans who have sacrificed so much for the benefit of our society. Like all Americans, they deserve access to comprehensive health care.

One of the strengths that I admire most about older generations is their

devotion and concern for younger Americans. As we face the dilemma of funding Social Security and some of my colleagues make proposals to privatize the program, older Americans have been the most outspoken advocates of ensuring its existence for future generations. Their determination to preserve this important social insurance program is not weakened by questionable reports that privatization proposals would not alter or reduce their benefits. Instead, they fight on, trying to ensure the benefits of Social Security will be there for others for years to come. I support their efforts and strongly oppose altering the fundamental social insurance nature of the current system, the strength of which is the guaranteed benefit concept. It is our responsibility as legislators to make certain that this Nation's fiscal priorities reflect our enormous appreciation for America's senior citizens.

I continue to be impressed with the degree to which our elders contribute to American society. Our Nation's older generations are an ever-growing resource that deserve our attention, our gratitude, and our heartfelt respect. In accordance with President Kennedy's vision of Older Americans Month as a time to honor our older generations, I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to implement public policies that recognize their contributions to our society. We have the opportunity to ensure the well-being of this Nation's most respected citizens, and it is my sincere hope that we pursue it with the same vigor that America's seniors have demonstrated throughout their many years of service to our country. ●

FEDEX CORPORATION AND HYBRID VEHICLES

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I want to bring to my colleague's attention to great step forward for the environment that the FedEx Corporation is undertaking. The company recently bought 20 hybrid trucks and has announced that it is planning to replace 30,000 of its delivery trucks with hybrid vehicles over the next 10 years.

This means that the FedEx Corporation is one of the first big commercial fleets to move toward using environmentally friendly hybrid vehicles.

The 20 hybrid trucks that have already been purchased are the delivery trucks that we see in cities across the Nation every day. These low-emission, hybrid electric-powered delivery vehicles will decrease particulate emissions by 90 percent, reduce smog-causing emissions by 75 percent and increase fuel efficiency by 50 percent.

FedEx Express, a subsidiary of FedEx Corporation, has been working on this project for 3 years with Environmental Defense. The company and the environmental organization worked together as partners to develop the concept for manufacturers to create an "environmentally progressive commercial delivery vehicle."

I own two hybrid cars. They are amazing because as the driver I do not have to change anything. I still fill up the car—although less often—at any gas station. I don't need to change how I drive my car.

Similarly, these new hybrid delivery trucks will have no impact how FedEx does its day-to-day business. But it will improve the environment and ultimately save the company money in fuel costs. It is a win-win situation and shows yet again that what is good for the environment can also be good for the economy and business.

I congratulate FedEx Corporation for this action, and I urge other companies with large fleets to follow FedEx's lead in transforming their fleets to protect our environment.●

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF CHARLES E. "BUCK" CONRAD

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a member of "the greatest generation," a World War II veteran who passed away on January 11, 2003. Buck Conrad was born in my hometown of Baltimore in 1921 and was raised just blocks from my childhood home. He is survived by a former neighbor of mine, Evelyn Dasch Conrad, his loving wife of 61 years, who now resides in Alexandria, VA. He was the proud father of two daughters, Karlene Conrad and Cindy Schafer, and Cindy's husband George Schafer, formerly of Catonsville, MD, as well as three grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He is also survived by numerous relatives in the Baltimore area, including his brother and sister-in-law, Tom and Joyce Ronci of Glen Burnie.

Buck graduated from Baltimore Polytechnic Institute and received his undergraduate degree from the University of Maryland. He was an avid Terapins fan who would not let his illness stop him from cheering the Terps on to their victory last year in the Peach Bowl.

Buck entered the Army in 1944 and retired as a regular Army colonel in 1974. He was involved in personnel and logistics for most of his career, which included tours of duty in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and as Chief of the Ordnance Branch. Overseas and wartime assignments included the Philippines, Germany, France, Korea, and Vietnam. His military decorations include the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster, the Joint Service Commendation, and the Army Commendation with oak-leaf cluster. He was a member of the Infantry OCS Hall of Fame and was designated a Department of the Army Logistician in 1970.

COL Conrad was well educated by the Army. He was a graduate of the Artillery School, the Chemical School, the Infantry School, the Command and General Staff College, and the Naval War College. He received a master's degree in business management from Babson College and received a second

master's degree in international relations from George Washington University.

After retiring from the Army, Buck moved on to a successful career in the private sector and later served as a faculty member of the University of Maryland, University College.

Funeral Services were held at the Fort Myer Chapel on Wednesday, February 5, 2003 and COL Conrad was buried at Arlington National cemetery with full military honors.

We owe a debt of gratitude to men such as Buck Conrad who quietly served their country when our freedom was in peril. His son-in-law informed me that up to his dying day, COL Conrad expressed concern about the United States becoming embroiled in a war in the Middle East that could take the lives of thousands of our soldiers. Having witnessed personally the impact that war has on our young people and, just as importantly, their families, COL Conrad was hopeful that a peaceful resolution to this conflict could be achieved before any lives are lost, both our own troops and innocents in Iraq and throughout that region.●

JAMES C. McALLISTER III

● Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I rise to acknowledge the accomplishments of Mr. James C. McAllister III of Chapel Hill, NC. Mr. McAllister has been a leader in pharmaceutical management for decades. June 3, 2003, he will receive the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists' 2003 Harvey A.K. Whitney Lecture Award.

As director of pharmacy at the University of North Carolina, Mr. McAllister established a Pre-residency program for pharmacy students to work at local hospitals. This provides students with hands-on experience and gives hospitals extra resources to better assist patients. Prior to his successes at the University of North Carolina, Mr. McAllister worked at Duke University, where he served as associate chief operating officer overseeing the pharmacy.

Mr. McAllister is well known for his expertise dealing with many pharmaceutical issues, particularly pharmacy practice and medication safety. He is also widely respected for his knowledge of pharmaceutical efficiencies such as automation and information technology, which save money and save lives by reducing medical errors. Mr. McAllister is the first American pharmacist to implement an operating room pharmacy and a medication dispensing robot.

Mr. President, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the contributions of James C. McAllister III.●

SOUTH CANYON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to congratulate the South Canyon Ele-

mentary School in Rapid City, SD, which celebrates its fiftieth anniversary of service on Friday May 16, 2003.

Plans for South Canyon Elementary began in June 1949, when the current school area was a quiet alfalfa field. An area rancher, Ernest Schleuning, herded his livestock down Nordbye Lane, where the school is now. Due to overcrowding at Upper Rapid School, previously on West Main Street, South Canyon Elementary School was built in 1952 and opened for the 1952-1953 school year, with 25 to 30 students in each class. Fifty years later, the school continues to serve Rapid City and the needs of its citizens.

South Canyon Elementary School commemorated its fiftieth anniversary of service in the Rapid City school district with an all-school assembly, potluck picnic, and evening program. During the evening activities, the school was also open for tours, inviting all current and former teachers, staff members, students, parents, and alumni to attend. Attendees and guest speakers included South Canyon Elementary student council members, State Representative Ed McLaughlin, and Police Chief Craig Tieszen.

Over the last half century, the South Canyon Elementary School has provided quality educational services to the children of Rapid City. Their vision, "expecting excellence to happen, we affirm that all children can learn," has been carried out in all the children who have graduated and gone on to excel in their school careers. Not only has this school encouraged learning, but South Canyon Elementary School also strives to bring the community together in the education of its children. Their mission states just this in that, "In partnership with staff, parents, and neighborhood, we provide each child an opportunity to reach his/her potential and become a contributing member of the community."

I am pleased to announce that the South Canyon Elementary School is planning to commemorate this occasion by burying a time capsule. The capsule includes a current photo album of the school and items chosen by the students. Students from each class collected items from their classroom, such as popular books and baseball cards, and one second-grade class added a collection of popular snack wrappers to the capsule. Graduation speeches written by each fifth-grade student describing what school is presently like at South Canyon Elementary School were also added.

I am proud to have this opportunity to honor Principal Charles McLain and the South Canyon Elementary School for its 50 years of outstanding service. It is an honor for me to share with my colleagues the exemplary leadership and strong commitment to education South Canyon Elementary School has provided. I strongly commend their years of hard work and dedication, and I am very pleased that their substantial efforts are being publicly honored and celebrated.●