

a proclamation establishing the Ottawa National Forest as a means of reviving the barren forest. Seventy-five years later, the restoration of the Ottawa National Forest has been described as a true success story.

Now managed for multiple uses, the Ottawa National Forest provides many products and services based on its mission of caring for the land and serving people. The Ottawa National Forest also provides a great economic impact to the region. It supplies local communities both with wood products as well as jobs. Additionally, the Ottawa National Forest is an incredible draw for tourism with such recreational activities as hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, boating and snowmobiling to name a few.

Mr. Speaker, the success of the Ottawa National Forest in revitalizing the cherished natural resource of Michigan's western Upper Peninsula pine forests is a shining example of how effective a mission carried out over time and the implementation of sensible management practices can make such a significant impact in the world.

I ask the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the Ottawa National Forest employees from past and present on 75 years of living the proud tradition of the Forest Service mission and wish them all the best in the future toward another successful 75 years.

MR. BENJAMIN SOLOMON, LETTER
TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW
YORK TIMES

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 2006

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of my colleagues a letter that was published in the November 8th edition of the New York Times. The letter was composed by my constituent—Mr. Benjamin Solomon of Evanston, Illinois. Mr. Solomon writes about the critical importance of openness in government, the serious nature of war, and the importance of honoring our nation's veterans. I hope that the words of Mr. Solomon, who is a veteran of World War II, are taken into serious consideration.

[From the New York Times, Nov. 8, 2005]

KILLED, THEN EXPLOITED

To the Editor:

"The Mysterious Death of Pat Tillman," by Frank Rich (column, Nov. 6), left me sick at heart. I am a World War II veteran in my later 80's who still thinks of his tent mates who were lost to enemy action.

Pat Tillman, the Arizona Cardinals defensive back who volunteered for the Army, was killed last year in Afghanistan, apparently by friendly fire. The cynical exploitation of his death and the lies surrounding it are a betrayal of this brave soldier and his family, of all the others who made the same sacrifice in Iraq, and of the ideals of decency we claim for our nation.

The thought that the responsible high-level officials in the Pentagon and the White House are still in power frightens me.

BENJAMIN SOLOMON,
Evanston, Ill., Nov. 6, 2005.

HONORING BILL FERGUSON

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 2006

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of my constituents and a personal friend, Bill Ferguson. Bill Ferguson, or "Fergie" as friends like to call him has had a long and distinguished career as a rancher and public servant in Ouray County, Colorado.

Bill Ferguson was raised in Colorado. In the late 1970s he settled in the town of Ridgway. While Bill worked hard as a carpenter and his wife Liza as a waitress, they were able to save enough money to start their own business. The Park Nursery Garden Center soon became the premier native nursery in the area. Fergie also established a 120 acre ranch where he and Liza continue to raise 80–100 head of cattle per year. Both his ranch and his nursery are a great asset to the county and reflect Bill's life long ethic of caring for the land he was part of.

In the 1990's, Bill was instrumental in developing a Geographical Information System program that eventually became the Southwest Data Center. The Center is still a vital tool for land use planning and management for Ouray County, surrounding governments and local citizens in Southwest Colorado.

In 1999, Bill was appointed to the Ouray Board of County Commissioners and won reelection in November of 2000. Bill fought hard for the best interest of his community through the end of his term in 2005. He worked to protect Ouray County's financial interest, preserve the open government process and helped restore the people's faith in government. As a county commissioner, Bill was noted for being the primary force behind legislation to designate Ouray County as a "Right to Farm" community, preserving the rights of farmers and ranchers to conduct their business without interference.

A water rights' owner, Bill was appointed by Ouray County for two terms to sit on the Colorado River Conservation District Board of Directors, which is the oldest and most prestigious water conservation district in Colorado. As Ouray County's representative to the Colorado River District, Bill worked on land and water conservation projects for conservations trusts. According to fellow board members, Bill was always the best joke teller—a tough title to earn on a water district board, which is typically filled with amateur comedians. Bill also served on the Colorado River Water Users Association developing GIS-based maps for educational purposes.

With such a long list of accomplishments, it is easy to see that Bill is a leader in every sense of the word, but especially when it comes to water. Bill always has helped lead the fight to protect Western Slope water. I was honored to fight alongside him on many crucial battles to defend our rural way of life.

I have been proud to know and work with Bill Ferguson on issues that are important to the Western Slope of Colorado. He has been a great personal friend, colleague and mentor on many water issues and I am honored to represent him in Congress.

GOLD FOR GREENSBORO'S JOEY
CHEEK

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 2006

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, when someone thinks sports and the Sixth District of North Carolina, most thoughts turn toward basketball, baseball and auto racing. I think it is safe to say that not many people would immediately leap to speed skating on ice. That's no longer the case, however, thanks to Joey Cheek of Greensboro. The Sixth District is now the speed skating capital of the world because Joey Cheek captured the gold medal in the Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy, by winning the 500 meter long-track speed skating event.

Proving he is a true champion in every sense of the word, immediately after he won the gold medal, Joey Cheek announced he was donating the \$25,000 he won from the U.S. Olympic Committee to refugee relief efforts in Africa. As reported in today's edition of the Greensboro News & Record, Joey said his thoughts are turning back to North Carolina. "I am really excited about going home," the News & Record reported. "Honestly, it doesn't even feel real. I'm so thrilled and so happy. But it doesn't seem to make sense. It's like it happened to someone else, and I'm just happy to sort of receive the good will for it. I'm just really excited and looking forward to the next couple of days to maybe realizing I'm an Olympic champion, will be forever, which is the coolest part of it."

Cheek is scheduled to compete in the 1,000 and 1,500 meter events next. In fact, the 1,000 meter race is considered to be Joey's strongest event, so there may be more Olympic hardware coming his way. Four years ago, he won the bronze medal in the Salt Lake City Olympics in the 1,000 meter race, so this gold medal is not at all surprising to those who follow the sport. Joey Cheek has been a skater since he was eight years old and used to skate in roller rinks in Greensboro. At 15, he switched to the ice and it's been a straight line to the winner's podium in Turin.

Joey's mother is in Turin to witness family history first-hand, while his father is following from his home office in Winston-Salem. Once all of the racing is completed, Joey hopes to return to Greensboro where he plans to obtain a law degree and practice law in North Carolina. Whatever he decides to do, as he has shown both on and off the ice in Italy, Joey Cheek will be a champion and the Sixth District of North Carolina is proud to call him one of our own.

UT SOUTHWESTERN, MEDICAL
CENTER AND BAYLOR HEALTH
CARE SYSTEM-DALLAS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 2006

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute UT Southwestern Hospital and Baylor Health Care System, Dallas for their ranking in the top 5 percent of hospitals in the United States. Over