

Coach Meyer was not only good, he was resourceful. For many years, his recruiting budget was minimal. Enticing promising players to come to a school in the shadow of the North Side "L" was difficult. Finding housing for players near a campus with little student housing at that time was also a challenge. Sometimes, the players were fed from the Meyer kitchen or some extra meal tickets at the Roma on the corner of Sheffield and Webster, where they could enjoy a great Italian beef sandwich. But Coach was imaginative and diligent. He used both qualities to establish and operate a basketball camp in Three Lakes, WI, for 55 summers.

Ray Meyer left an impact on all of his players. He had some great ones Mikan, Jim Lamkin, Howie Carl, Dave Corzine, Mark Aguirre, Rod Strickland, Terry Cummings, and Dallas Comegys, among others. But he had an incalculable impact on his school, his family and friends, Chicago, the Midwest and the Nation. Hall of Fame coach and native Chicagoan, Mike Krzyzewski, may have said it best:

Coach Meyer casts a large shadow on the game of college basketball. . . . He truly loved the game and the kids he coached. It was so evident. In each game that he coached and each game that he announced, I love him. He served as a great example of what a coach should be."

To his children sons Tom, Joey, Bob and daughters Barbara and Pat and his 18 grandchildren, I send my most heartfelt condolences, and I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life and memory of a wonderful human being, Coach Ray Meyer.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN MEMORY OF BUCK OWENS

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today, I rise to honor the memory of the late Buck Owens, the Country Music Hall of Fame honoree who introduced a uniquely California sound to country music. Mr. Owens, a long time Bakersfield resident, passed away at his home on March 25, 2006. He was 76 years old.

Alvis Edgar Owens, Jr. was born in Sherman, TX, in 1932. At an early age, he nicknamed himself, "Buck," after a mule on the family farm. Seeking better fortune during the Great Depression, the Owens family moved west in 1937, settling in Mesa, AZ.

An avid music fan, Buck learned to play the guitar in his early teens. By his late teens, he was already a regular on local radio stations and was playing shows in honky tonks and bars around Phoenix. A precocious and determined young man, it was apparent to many that Buck was a prodigiously talented musician who was destined for great success.

Buck's many accomplishments amassed over a five-decade recording and performing career have rightfully cemented his status as one of the

greatest country-western entertainers ever. He was truly a trailblazer whose trademark stinging electric guitar and rhythm sound revolutionized country music. Buck's 21 country singles from 1963 to 1988 were a testament to his longevity and staying power. Buck's music was universally celebrated and embraced, as evidence by the Beatles' cover of his song, "Act Naturally" in 1965. The consummate entertainer, Buck's iconic television entertainment show, "Hee Haw" enjoyed a remarkable 25 year run on the airwaves.

I was delighted to have met Buck back in 1997 at his Crystal Palace in Bakersfield. He was kind and generous of spirit, as when I was invited to present one of his special red, white, and blue guitars to a promising music student named William Villatoro. I still vividly remember how the young man was deeply moved and inspired by his generous gesture. I will certainly remember Buck Owens as a man of great compassion who possessed a profound love for his country. Although he is no longer with us, I take great comfort in knowing that Buck Owens was not only able to be a shining light in the life of a young man from Bakersfield, but also to the millions of others who admired his musical gifts and were touched by his humanity.

Buck Owens has left behind a legacy of artistry and boundless love for his adopted hometown of Bakersfield and California's Central Valley. He will be dearly missed.

Buck Owens is survived by his three sons, Buddy Alan, Michael, and Johnny. •

HONORING JAZZ LEGEND AND COLORADAN DIANNE REEVES

• Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I rise to call attention to one of the world's most recognized jazz vocalists who also happens to call Denver home—Dianne Reeves.

Earlier this year, Dianne won a Grammy for Best Jazz Vocal Album, this time for her work on the soundtrack of the Best Picture-nominee, "Good Night, and Good Luck." The album is filled with standards like "Straighten Up and Fly Right," and "Too Close for Comfort."

Dianne grew up in Denver where she was raised by her grandmother, taking piano lessons before discovering her love of singing. She got her start in the jazz band at Denver's George Washington High School when she was discovered by trumpeter Clark Terry while performing with the band at the National Association of Jazz Educators Conference in Chicago. She went on to tour with Harry Belafonte while still in her twenties before being signed to the legendary Blue Note record label in 1987. Just 4 years ago, the world enjoyed her performance at the closing ceremonies of the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, UT, that critics called "spellbinding."

This Grammy award was not Dianne's first. Rather, it was her

fourth in six nominations. Previously, she won the Best Jazz Vocal award 3 years in a row, an unprecedented feat for an artist in any vocal category. She has joined with fellow jazz giants like Wynton Marsalis, recorded with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, performed with the Berlin Philharmonic, and was the first vocalist to perform at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

Dianne has been recognized around the world for her outstanding artistic accomplishments and contributions, and we in Colorado are proud that she still calls our State "home." •

PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, DULUTH, MINNESOTA

• Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Piedmont Elementary School, in Duluth, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Piedmont School is truly a model of educational success. The school has 220 pupils in kindergarten through grade 5 and provides school readiness services for 30 preschool children.

One program unique to Piedmont Elementary is its reverse-mainstreaming program, which makes it possible for kindergarteners to spend time in a special education classroom for kindergarten children with special needs. The experience helps these children to interact better with one another and to appreciate the challenges that some children must meet every day.

The school prides itself on its efforts to ensure that everyone will feel valued at Piedmont and that everyone—pupils, staff, parents, grandparents, and visitors—will know that they are always welcome. In keeping with this cordial theme, each child arriving at Piedmont for the first time receives the red-carpet treatment: A red carpet of construction paper, which is signed by all the children currently enrolled, is laid down as part of the welcoming ceremony.

Also along the lines of good citizenship, each month, a new character trait is taught in the classrooms and at monthly assemblies, focusing on respect, responsibility, compassion, citizenship, fairness, and honesty.

Much of the credit for Piedmont School's success belongs to its principal, Kris Teberg, and her dedicated teachers. The children and staff at Piedmont School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and children at Piedmont School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Piedmont Elementary School in Duluth for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and

for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

EVELETH-GILBERT PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ELEVETH AND GILBERT, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools, in Eveleth, MN, and Gilbert, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

The Eveleth-Gilbert Public School District is truly a model of educational success. About 10 years ago, the district initiated an accelerated reader program to teach literacy skills and an appreciation for reading at all grade levels. Originally, this unique reading program was established for the District's 10th-grade students and is now used in grades 2 through 12.

The accelerated reader program takes a fun and exciting approach to promoting reading, both at school and at home. The students read books and take a 10-question, computer-assisted assessment to score their comprehension, earning accelerated reader points for every assessment they pass. The students love to track their own progress, and teachers often involve the class in setting goals for accruing accelerated reader points. Students receive instant feedback and gain increased motivation to read more books. As students test themselves on more books, the accelerated reader system enables close monitoring of general levels or reading performance and other diagnostic information.

The success of the accelerated reader program is reflected in the students' scores on the reading portion of the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment tests. Over the past 2 years, Franklin Elementary and Nelle Shean Elementary, the district's two elementary schools, and Eveleth-Gilbert Senior High School, earned four- and five-star status from the Minnesota Department of Education for their test scores in reading.

Much of the credit for the success of the Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools belongs to the superintendent, Mike Lang; the building principals, Deborah Hildie, Jan Mesich, and Lyn Bol; and all the district's dedicated teachers. The students and staff at the Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools understand that, in order to be successful, a district must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools in Eveleth and Gilbert for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

DENFELD HIGH SCHOOL, DULUTH, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Denfeld High School, in Duluth, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Denfeld High School is truly a model of educational success. The teachers at Denfeld are noted for their outstanding teaching abilities and their strong emphasis on ethics and individualized instruction. Teachers challenge their students with consistently high expectations and also help students, according to their individual needs, to master difficult subject matter.

A unique part of school life revolves around lunchtime. Once a week, Denfeld students participate in integration learning lunches, to which an integration specialist brings foods from different cultures for students to enjoy while they discuss other cultural traditions and the benefits of a diverse society.

With respect to the arts, Denfeld High School focuses significant attention on its music programs. The school is extremely proud of its classic, acoustically pure auditorium, which accommodates an audience of 1,800. Denfeld's orchestra, band, and choir programs help foster the musical talents of all students.

Much of the credit for Denfeld High School's success belongs to its principal, Ed Crawford, and his dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Denfeld High School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Denfeld High School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Denfeld High School in Duluth for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Virginia Public Schools, in Virginia, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

The Virginia Public School District is truly a model of educational success. The district has superbly nurtured students' progress in academics and in the performing arts. Its educators are very proud of their students' accomplishments and believe that the school system provides young people with the highest quality of education in a wonderful learning environment.

Nestled in the center of Minnesota's Iron Range, the Virginia Public School

District has endured the ups and downs of a difficult economic climate and declining school enrollments, while continuing to produce extraordinary student successes, academically and artistically.

In 2004-2005, 100 percent of the seniors at Virginia Public Schools passed the Basic Standards Tests in reading, writing, and mathematics. Students at Virginia Secondary School are qualified to enrol in many challenging, upper-level courses, including honors British literature, advanced placement biology, physics, and Spanish 3, honors American literature, accounting, economics, history, and medical careers.

Much of Virginia's success has been attributed to a caring, well-seasoned staff of veteran teachers. Nearly 80 percent of Virginia's faculty have 10 or more years of teaching experience. Moreover, 54 percent of Virginia's teachers hold master's degrees.

In addition to strong academic programs, Virginia is justly proud of its extraordinary music programs. The band, orchestra, and choir students are second to none in the region and well known throughout Minnesota. The orchestra program, which is the only string program remaining on the Iron Range, is one of only a handful existing outside of the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The Virginia vocal music program has a strong tradition of excellence, reaching back decades. Virginia's A Cappella Choir, the school's premier choir, has consistently won superior ratings at the State music contest.

The Virginia band program is led by the award-winning Virginia Marching Blues, who have traveled across the United States and Canada, winning numerous awards and splendidly representing Virginia and the State of Minnesota. The jazz band and the concert band also consistently win superior ratings at the State music contest, achieving this distinction virtually every year for three decades.

Much of the credit for the Virginia School District's success belongs to its superintendent, Phil Johnson; the dedicated principals, Michael Krebsbach, Willie Spelts, and Craig Konietzko; and all the district's teachers. The students and staff at the Virginia Public Schools understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for a lifetime of success. All of the faculty, staff, and students at the Virginia Public School District should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Virginia Public Schools in Virginia for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. KENT WYATT

● Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to commend Dr. Kent Wyatt of