

company, OPERA! Lenawee, hosted Itzhak Perlman as the most famous of dozens of exceptional solo artists, been cheered in dozens of venues in four countries and two states, and has made us more proud of our orchestra and more excited about great music than we ever thought possible.

David Katz worked to break down the barriers which often separate classical music and opera from many people, instituting educational programs for both adults and children. His programming of concerts continually challenge the musicians, as well as the audience, through presentation of a broad variety of music and through increasing the breadth and scope of programming offered, adding opera, ballet and chamber music to the Adrian Symphony Orchestra during his tenure.

David's devotion and determination to both the Adrian Symphony Orchestra and his community is to be applauded and I am honored to recognize him and wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL WINNER

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2000

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mesa Verde Middle School in Scripps Ranch and its leaders, Principal, Sonya Wrisley and Superintendent, Dr. Bob Reeves. Mesa Verde has been designated by the U.S. Department of Education as a National Blue Ribbon School for 2000. I am proud to inform my colleagues that my district had an amazing record of eleven schools selected for that prestigious honor this year. I would also like to note that the Academy of Our Lady of Peace right outside my district in San Diego County was also named a Blue Ribbon School. I applaud the educators, students and communities in each of the San Diego County schools who pulled together in pursuit of educational excellence.

Blue Ribbon Schools are recognized as some of the nation's most successful institutions, and they are exemplary models for achieving educational excellence throughout the nation. Not only have they demonstrated excellence in academic leadership, teaching and teacher development, and school curriculum, but they have demonstrated exceptional levels of community and parental involvement, high student achievement levels and strong safety and discipline.

After schools are nominated by state education agencies for the Blue Ribbon award, they undergo a rigorous review of their programs, plans and activities. That is followed with visits by educational experts for evaluation. Ultimately, those schools which best demonstrate strong leadership, clear vision and mission, excellent teaching and curriculum, policies and practices that keep the schools safe for learning, family involvement and evidence of high standards are selected for this prestigious award. I am pleased that they are now receiving the national recognition they are due.

As school and community leaders head to Washington for the Department of Education

awards ceremony, I want to thank them once again for a job well done. More satisfying than any award, these leaders will have the lifelong satisfaction of having provided the best education possible and a better future for thousands of children. I am proud of what they have achieved, and want to share their achievements so that more people benefit from their accomplishments. I ask that a summary of Mesa Verde Middle School's superior work be included in the record:

Mesa Verde Middle School, located in Rancho Penasquitos, a suburb of northern San Diego, California, exemplifies the educational heights that can be attained when a solid partnership exists between school and community. All members of this team are completely committed to their philosophy of "doing everything possible to help each student succeed", while maintaining strong academic integrity. Their school vision for 2002 states that "Mesa Verde Middle School will create an enhanced learning experience and a unique community environment for all students." The success of Mesa Verde's rigorous curriculum is evidenced by consistently high performance on standardized tests and underscored by earning the maximum six-year Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation. Among their noteworthy accomplishments are two wellness programs. Mesa Verde's wellness budget enables them to have a teacher on special assignment (TOSA), devoting a full period each day to drug, alcohol, and tobacco prevention education. The second program, "Names Can Really Hurt You" was nationally recognized in Washington D.C. and fosters tolerance of diversity in the classroom and on campus. A 50% drop in negative name calling infractions best illustrates the success of this program.

Mesa Verde provides an excellent education to culturally and ethnically diverse middle class population. Their site is designed to accommodate students with a wide range of academic abilities and physical challenges. Designed with technology in mind, Mesa Verde has become Poway Unified School District's model school. Four computer labs are housed at Mesa Verde and each classroom is networked to the Internet and e-mail. A distinct feature of the campus is the village concept design. Classrooms are grouped together and house a single grade level.

And added strength of Mesa Verde is the varied "safety nets" in place to ensure that students progress and succeed socially as well as academically. Innovative programs such as Peer Mediation, Natural Helpers, Eagle Groups, and Student Outreach Services (SOS) teach students to deal effectively with their emotional needs and to interact successfully with their peers. A commitment to excellence is the cornerstone for all of Mesa Verde's programs. Providing excellence in all they do, Mesa Verde is exemplified by a dedicated, hardworking staff, who truly love children. They base all decisions on what is best for their students. The entire school community: staff, students, parents and community, works together to provide the best possible education for all students.

2000 PARALYMPICS

HON. THOMAS M. REYNOLDS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2000

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, as the eyes of the world are fixed on Sydney, Australia, and the games of the 27th Olympiad, I rise to ask this House to glance closer to home, to Western New York, to share in an inspiring story of personal triumph and the spirit of athletic competition.

On Wednesday, September 20, 2000, friends and supporters will gather at the Rochester Yacht Club to lend their support to sailors Keith Burhans, Paul Callahan and Richard Hughes and their quest for gold at the 2000 Paralympics to be held next month in Sydney, Australia.

Burhans of Monroe County lost both legs in a 1995 boating accident. Callahan, of Newport, Rhode Island, has been a quadriplegic since college. And Hughes is an amputee from Philadelphia. The three formed a world-class team that finished second in last year's World Disabled Sailing Championship.

But their story is even greater than their ability to tack around the tetrahedrons faster than their competitors. They have used their personal experiences to teach others to overcome barriers and test their limits.

Callahan reorganized and became CEO of the Shake-A-Leg program for the disabled in Newport. And Burhans joined the board of the Rochester Rehabilitation Center, which organizes SportsNet, a similar program that allows those with physical disabilities to participate in the able-bodied sports world.

In what became the first race of one of the oldest competitions in sport, the America's Cup, a young Queen Victoria watched as the yacht "America" plowed across the finish line. When she asked her courtier to search the sea and identify which boat was second, he took a long look through his telescope and replied: "Your majesty, I regret to report, there is no second."

To Keith Burhans, Paul Callahan and Richard Hughes, I am pleased to report that your personal courage, your triumph over adversity, and your devotion to athletic competition has already made each of you, like the 1851 crew of the "America," a winner.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this House of Representatives join me in saluting the achievements of these three extraordinary men, and that we further extend to them the best of luck at the games of the 2000 Paralympics.

IN HONOR OF RUSSELL BINNEY

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2000

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to a man who positively influenced the lives of many people. Earlier this month, Mr. Russell Binney of Ulysses, Kansas passed away. Russ fulfilled many important roles in his life—each of them with integrity, compassion, and dedication.