

Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate John Diener on his Award of Distinction. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating John and wishing him many more years of continued success.

COMMENDING THE VIRGIN ISLANDS FRESHWATER ASSOCIATION, INC.

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, April 25, 2001

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this occasion to commend an outstanding group of Virgin Islanders—Helen George-Newton, Eldra Malone-Drew, Ava Stagger, Carol Stagger, Kenneth “Cisco” Francis and Renaldo Chinnery, who, as residents of New York, recognized the need to preserve and promote the culture of the Virgin Islands. In March of 1991, they officially established the Virgin Islands Freshwater Yankees, which was later incorporated as the Virgin Islands Freshwater Association, Inc.

Since then, the Association has grown to 75 dedicated members, who contribute to their Virgin Islands community through educational scholarships, supplying equipment to the health facilities on all three islands, helping our senior citizens and the underprivileged children, providing supplies during natural disasters or emergency occurring in the territory.

Although this organization takes their responsibilities seriously, they also find time to have fun and participate in the annual carnival activities on St. Thomas and St. Croix.

They also serve as an oasis for Virgin Islanders on the mainland by sponsoring yearly social events. They promote and offer guidance to the other Virgin Islands associations throughout the United States and continue to preserve the values that are the roots of their heritage.

For the past ten years, in commemoration of the day that the Virgin Islands were transferred from the Danish government to the United States, “Virgin Islands Transfer Day”, this organization has honored numerous outstanding Virgin Islanders in the area of sports, politics, education, health and community involvement. This year, the organization and all of its past honorees was recognized at the Tenth Anniversary Transfer Day Dinner Dance held in New York on March 31, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize and commend the Virgin Islands Freshwater Association, Inc. as an outstanding model for community involvement and the preservation of their culture. I invite my colleagues to join with me in congratulating the efforts of this organization.

A TRIBUTE TO BONNIE GARTSHORE

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, April 25, 2001

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Bonnie Gartshore, a

woman of letters and history who will be honored in Monterey, California on June 9.

The living memory of Monterey and Pacific Grove, Bonnie is a mild-mannered journalist, a determined educator, an accomplished poet and a lifelong human-rights activist.

She was a feminist before the term was coined. And as a devoted Catholic, she has always displayed her conviction, piety and humanity through her life and her work.

Bonnie was introduced at a tribute dinner at Carmel Mission in 1983 as “a true peacemaker and an incorrigible advocate for the poor and beleaguered.” At that dinner Bonnie, ever the teacher, called attention to the statues of Benny Bufano, pointing out that he always turned the palms of hands outward, “open to receive and also to let go.” That’s an important lesson, Bonnie explained. “Something I have learned: If you are busy hanging onto things, you are going to miss a lot along the way.”

Bonnie was born in Monterey 75 years ago—on Nov. 23, 1925—in the heyday of the sardine industry that was centered just a few blocks from her Filmore Street home. She called it a great place for living and learning, with few houses and a mix of people that included school principals, doctors, drunks and bums.

It was the Monterey that John Steinbeck wrote about. And it conditioned her for life. “I wasn’t surprised by anything because I had seen it all growing up,” she said later. As for childhood: “What I did as a young girl growing up in the New Monterey that used to be, was soak in the twin pleasures of forest and beach, develop a delight in reading and a curiosity about people and places, and absorb the values of my mother, who was a mixture of middle-class morality and liberal political views.”

Her parents tried to calm her independence by sending her to Catholic school in the 1930s, hoping the nuns would straighten her out. But Bonnie ended up writing some of the services and sermons for the priests of the diocese. Bonnie is one of the few women ever asked to deliver a homily at San Carlos Cathedral. She did it, of course, preaching on her theme: “Jesus doesn’t leave anyone out.”

She graduated from San Carlos School in 1939 and went on to Pacific Grove High School, where she discovered a knack for writing and became editor of the school newspaper. Bonnie then went to San Jose State College as a journalism major. She edited the campus paper, the Spartan Daily, of course, and graduated with honors in 1947.

Once out of school, Bonnie went to work for the Monterey Peninsula Herald and started what has become a 53-year association as a writer and editor through three locations and four owners. She began her career in the society section, where “the girls” were assigned in those days, as the assistant editor. Her first office was in the tower of the building at Pearl and Washington Streets, which was The Herald’s location in those days, Morgan’s Coffee & Tea these days.

Bonnie’s first stint with The Herald lasted for 15 years. Then she left to tour England and Scotland, work for the Paso Robles Daily Press, do research in Big Sur, and work as assistant editor of The Observer, the weekly

newspaper of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Monterey. She also took a variety of jobs that included writing advertising brochures, doing publicity for the Monterey County and Santa Cruz County Fairs and writing the introduction to an aphrodisiac cookbook.

Bonnie also handled special sections for The Herald and wrote occasional stories for The Herald’s Weekend Magazine until she eventually returned full time. In 1990, after establishing herself as Monterey’s “historian in residence,” she started a weekly history column, Looking Back, for The Herald. The Monterey History & Art Association recently published a collection of those columns as a book titled “Footprints from the Past.”

Bonnie also developed a writers’ workshop for the inmates at the Soledad Correctional Training Facility. She described it at the time as “something useful I could do.” Subsequently, she was hired by Hartnell College in Salinas to teach English and speech classes at the prison, an avocation that lasted for a 20-year stretch. During that time, Bonnie staged a poetry reading at the Carl Cherry Center for the Arts in Carmel in order to raise money to publish a book of the convicts’ poems.

She has also published two books of her own poetry, “Trying to Put it Together” in 1988 and “Taking My Cue from the Walrus” in 2000.

Beyond her professional pursuits, Bonnie’s devotion to religion has made her a lifelong activist for peace and social justice. “In the 1960s I came to understand that religion and activism go hand in hand,” she explained.

She picketed with the United Farm Workers before it became fashionable, marched with civil rights and peace groups, helped organize a Monterey memorial of the bombing of Hiroshima, interviewed the homeless and presented programs about humanity in Monterey, Pacific Grove and Carmel. She organized programs for Catholic women, presented retreats and wrote liturgies for the priests of the other gender.

Bonnie has made her home in Pacific Grove for the past 45 years, where she’s been active in anything literary, including the Monterey Peninsula Dickens Fellowship, The Robert Louis Stevenson Club of Monterey and the Cherry Foundation in Carmel.

In 1989, when Bonnie was presented the Woman of the Year award from the Quota Club of Monterey-Pacific Grove, she told that audience: “I’m learning all the time. . . . There were all these people along the way, all the wonderful people I was learning from.”

COMMEMORATING ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 24, 2001

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues to remember one of the great tragedies of the twentieth century: the deportations and massacres of more than one and a half million Armenians in the final