

and outcomes that exist for people of color. It is unconscionable that the quality of health care may be determined by skin color, rather than need or proven medical practice.

An individual's health is the key to their ability to achieve the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that this nation was founded on. To ensure these rights are conferred, we must be certain that everyone—regardless of their income, race, education, or job status—can access health care of equal, high quality. Today, only prisoners in the U.S. enjoy this right.

Other countries—both developed and undeveloped—recognize the importance of health care and have guaranteed the right to health care through their constitutions, including Afghanistan, the European Union, Iran, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Somali, and South Africa. Even the provisional constitution of Iraq—written in part by the current Bush Administration—guarantees health care as a right. It is shameful that the U.S., the shining example of prosperity and democracy throughout the world, still leaves so many people on their own when it comes to health care.

For more than 30 years I have served in this body as an advocate for health care for all people. Unfortunately, time and time again I have seen efforts to expand and improve access to health care squashed under the weight of special interests protecting their individual fiefdoms. I firmly believe that until all people have an equal right to high-quality health care guaranteed through the Constitution, their interests will continue to be ignored as those who profit off the existing system maintain their opposition to reform. It's time for a grassroots movement to put the interests of the people first! I look forward to working with the advocacy community to make the shared vision of quality health care for all a reality.

On a final note, I am introducing this amendment today to extend a specific right to all people, which is the purpose of such amendments. Unfortunately, this Congress is likely to consider other amendments to our Constitution that will remove rights and codify discrimination against certain groups of people. Our Nation's most sacred document must never be amended to set aside certain rights for select groups, while barring others from ever realizing these rights. I can only hope that my colleagues take their responsibility to protect equal rights for all people in our democracy as seriously as I do.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF JEMEZ SPRINGS

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Jemez Springs, New Mexico on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. The citizens of Jemez Springs celebrated its golden anniversary this past weekend with games, food and a chili cook-off in the Jemez Village Park.

I want to offer my sincere congratulations to Mayor John Garcia and all the residents of Jemez Springs on this historic occasion.

Incorporated in 1955, Jemez Springs' caring citizens, diligent community leaders, superior schools, and growing economy have made for an exceptional and unique civic life for its citizens.

Located in the Jemez River canyon, Jemez Springs is nestled amid the high, volcanically layered mesa walls of the Jemez Mountains. The Village is located along Highway 4, the Jemez Mountain Trail. This scenic route has been designated as a National Scenic Byway, an honor given to only 55 routes in the Nation, historic NM 4, and is the main downtown road. There you can find restaurants, galleries, a natural springs bathhouse and several bed and breakfast inns. Horseback tours, cross country skiing and snowshoeing trips are available.

Native Americans inhabited the area as long ago as the 14th century. These were probably the ancestors of the current residents of nearby Jemez Pueblo. The community of Jemez Springs dates from the 19th century. It was originally known as "Hot Springs" and provided services for area ranchers. Today, the community is still best known for its hot springs which are warmed by geothermal activity beneath the Jemez Mountains. The principal industries in the area are tourism and forestry.

New Mexico may have a shortage of open water, but what it lacks in shoreline it makes up in volcanoes—and hot springs. When the Spanish explorers of the 15th and 16th centuries stumbled across New Mexico's natural hot springs, they discovered the healing properties that the Native Americans had known about for centuries. The Jemez Mountains are the remnants of a volcanic peak more than 14,000 feet high and date from 14 million to about 40,000 years ago. The hot springs in Jemez Springs are a product of the relatively recent eruption of the Valles Caldera. Naturally occurring minerals in the hot springs include acid carbonate, aluminum, calcium, chloride, iron, magnesium, potassium, silicate, sodium, and sulfate.

The spectacular crimson-colored formations known as Red Rocks and the narrow and dramatic walls of the Jemez River valley as well as the surrounding public lands have helped preserve the intimate village setting of Jemez Springs. The U.S. Census in 2000 counted just 375 people in Jemez Springs; 218 women and 157 men.

Major attractions include year-round recreational opportunities in the Santa Fe National Forest, the hot springs, Jemez State Monument, and fishing the Jemez River. Fenton Lake, Bandelier National Monument, and the Valles Caldera National Preserve are also unique features in the region. The community also hosts a Fourth of July celebration and a fiesta in August.

There is a saying that you find so much red in the Jemez Valley because it is the living, beating heart of New Mexico. Indeed, Jemez is where the sky, mesas and the water meet. I am proud to represent Jemez Springs where residents and visitors alike can find both peaceful sanctuary and fun recreation.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask you and my esteemed colleagues to please join me in congratulating Jemez Springs on their five decades of success.

ON THE PASSING OF HELEN ANTON VALANOS

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, in the constantly changing world of Capitol Hill, all of us who are privileged to serve here recognize that people come and go—Members, staff, journalists, lobbyists and others.

And, if you work hard and have some luck, you can make your mark and make a difference in this great city and the life of our Nation.

Today, we mourn the loss of a truly wonderful woman who clearly did just that by establishing, along with her husband, one of Washington's enduring institutions—the Monocle restaurant. For 25 years, Helen Anton Valanos and her husband, Conrad ("Connie"), operated the Monocle, which the Washingtonian magazine recently said "remains a Hollywood East of political stars," and "a sort of political refuge flying a white flag . . . a place where Republicans and Democrats mix over food and drink and the bad blood between political parties seems to get bottled and checked at the door."

Mrs. Valanos passed away on January 4th in Boca Raton, Florida, where she had lived since 1985. But the memories of her—like the political lore that has been generated at the Monocle for more than four decades—will always be with us.

She was born in Anderson, Indiana, and graduated from the University of Miami before settling in Washington with Connie in 1950. She worked with her husband in their accounting firm, and then, in 1960, they opened the Monocle. As the Washingtonian recounted: "The Monocle opened with no advertising, no sign outside and all 86 seats filled for lunch." And thus was born, in September 1960, a place to see and be seen.

Today, says John Valanos, who since 1989 has run the restaurant that his parents started, three-quarters of his customers are "people coming to the Hill to do business or to show friends or family what Washington is all about. They stop to see the photos on the wall, to experience some of the history that makes us unique. They say this is where JFK dined, where Mark Russell taped his CNN shows."

During much of that time, as The Washington Post recently noted: "Mrs. Valanos, a stylish presence at the restaurant for 25 years, would leave her bookkeeping duties upstairs, enter the restaurant and sweep through the room, greeting customers and making sure the regulars had a momentary chat with the owner."

The secret to the Monocle's success is not only its proximity to Capitol Hill, its great food and its unique ambience, but also the fact that Connie and Helen—and now their son John—have nurtured a politically nonpartisan establishment and worked to protect the privacy of the public figures who dined there. Personally, I remember going to the Monocle when I was still a Congressional aide in the 1960s, and still go there for dinner and political fund-raisers.