

are being recognized with the National Association of Police Organization's prestigious TOP COPS Awards. These brave individuals are receiving these distinguished awards for their valiant efforts in protecting their community from an armed killer on November 10, 1998.

On that date, Sergeants Terry White, Steve Gumm and Billy Paul Miller, Patrolwoman Rebecca Caton, and Patrolmen Roy Wedlow, Henry Pena, Shawn Hamre and Bradley Arn, responded to a high-priority call to subdue an armed sniper who was randomly firing at vehicles attempting to cross a busy local intersection. The assailant fired approximately 200 rounds of bullets from his assault weapon, fatally wounding Officer Arn, before being shot and killed by sergeant Miller. Thanks to the quick response and undaunted courage of these brave officers, no innocent bystander lost their life as a result of this tragedy.

In addition, I wish to pay a special tribute to the family of Officer Arn. Survived by his loving wife Andrea and two-year-old twin daughters Molleigh and Mallorie, Officer Arn will be forever remembered in the hearts of the residents of St. Joseph for making the greatest sacrifices while protecting the community. He was truly one of America's finest, and I am honored to offer this tribute to him—as well as his family—today.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the heroic acts of these brave law enforcement officers have not gone unnoticed, and I rise today to express my appreciation to them for their dedication in protecting the St. Joseph community. Each of these officers exemplify the finest of traits one must possess to be a member of the law enforcement community, and I congratulate them on receiving these awards.

HONORING THE 200TH BIRTHDAY
OF SMITH COUNTY

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 200th birthday of Smith County, Tennessee, one of the most scenic and friendly communities you'll ever come across.

Smith County, the fifth county created in Middle Tennessee, was established by Private Act in October of 1799 and was named in honor of Daniel Smith, a Revolutionary War officer, surveyor and U.S. Senator.

Nestled among the gently rolling hills and the pristine fish-filled streams that meander through Middle Tennessee, the county is home to some truly wonderful folks, including Vice President AL GORE. The vice president's late father, Al Gore Sr., also called Smith County home and proudly represented the county and region in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, as did another famous resident, Cordell Hull, who also served the nation as Secretary of State.

I congratulate the county's residents for their invaluable contributions to the state of Tennessee and the nation as a whole. Happy Birthday Smith County and thanks to its residents for letting me serve them in the U.S. House of Representatives.

A TRIBUTE TO BERNT BALCHEN

HON. MARTIN OLAV SABO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, October 23, 1999 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of the late great Norwegian-American pilot, military leader, and Arctic and Antarctic explorer, Colonel Bernt Balchen.

Bernt Balchen was born in Tveit, Norway, on October 23, 1899, the son of a physician with an ancestry of military leaders and sea captains. His love of nature and wildlife, his artistic talents, and his sensitive, discerning eye were revealed in his sketch books begun at an early age.

His love of outdoor life and sports was coupled with a keen spirit of adventure and discovery which was kindled when he met the great explorer Roald Amundsen, shortly after his successful expedition to the South Pole in 1913. This meeting fired young Balchen's imagination and determination to explore the mysteries of the Polar regions.

After completing his education in Forestry Engineering at Harnosand, Sweden, interspersed with practical work in Norway's lumber camps, Bernt Balchen underwent training in the Norwegian Army. At 18, he volunteered for service with the White Army in Finland, serving first in ski patrols and then in the cavalry. A Russian bayonet almost cost him his life. He confounded doctors who predicted he would be permanently incapacitated by later becoming a member of Norway's Olympic boxing team, then setting records in cross-country skiing and bicycling. He built a strong physique, great endurance, keen perceptions and the quick reflexes which were to serve him, and others, so well in the rugged life ahead.

Bernt Balchen's eyes turned skyward. He entered the Royal Norwegian Naval Air Force, graduating at the head of his class and receiving his wings in 1921. He became an instructor in navigation and participated in the planning of some of the first Arctic serial expeditions from Norway. While working on preparations for Amundsen's first flight across the North Pole in the dirigible *Norge* based at Spitsbergen, Balchen was directed by Amundsen to assist Commander Richard E. Byrd in equipping his plane with skis of Balchen's design. This plane was to be flown by Floyd Bennett, with Byrd as a navigator, in an attempt to reach the North Pole.

Impressed with Balchen's many skills, Commander Richard Byrd asked that Balchen be given leave from the Norwegian Naval Air Force and join his party on its return to the U.S. Balchen then became chief test pilot for the famous aircraft designer, Tony Fokker, joining the Fokker Aircraft Corporation at Teterboro, New Jersey. In 1927, Balchen was assigned to Western Canada Airways at Hudson, Ontario, to teach Canadian pilots how to handle ski-equipped planes—the beginning of "bush flying"—then to transport men, equipment and supplies from Cache Lake, Manitoba, the northern terminus of the Hudson Bay railway, to Fort Churchill, Manitoba, within a prescribed period of time. As one of the two pilots selected for the job, he flew an open cockpit plane during six weeks of savage weather, with temperatures hitting 65 degrees

below zero. In paying tribute to the importance of this operation, which was an important factor in changing the economy of Canada, the government of Canada stated, "There has been no more brilliant operation in the history of commercial aviation."

After the crash-landing of the plane *America* on a test flight in which the pilot Floyd Bennett was badly injured, Balchen became involved in preparations for Byrd's Trans-Atlantic flight in 1927. He was chosen to be a co-pilot, along with Bert Acosta. As harsh weather conditions developed on that flight, Balchen took over the piloting of the plane for 40 hours, and finally saved the lives of all aboard by making an emergency landing off the coast of France. Balchen subsequently became the third person to successfully fly across the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1928, Balchen piloted one of the relief planes flying to the crash site of the German aircraft *Bremen* on Greenly Island, off Labrador. The next year he piloted now-Admiral Byrd across the South Pole in the *Floyd Bennett*—the first flight over the South Pole. In addition to his work as pilot for the Byrd Antarctic Expedition I, Balchen played a major role in designing equipment and working out problems in logistics, constructing snow hangars and other equipment. The following year, back in the U.S., he instructed Amelia Earhart and redesigned her aircraft for her successful flight across the Atlantic.

In 1931, through a special act of Congress, Colonel Balchen became a U.S. citizen.

Balchen served as chief pilot for the Lincoln Ellsworth Trans-Antarctic Expeditions (1933–1935). Upon completing this association, he returned to Norway to work in aviation and the development of the Norwegian Airlines, and the laying of the foundation for a united Scandinavian airlines system.

With the invasion of Norway by Germany, Bernt Balchen became associated with the British Royal Air Force in ferrying planes over the North Atlantic and in transport flights from San Diego to Singapore. He carried out the first flight from San Diego to Singapore.

In 1941, as the U.S. began to ferry bombers to England, Balchen was requested by General "Hap" Arnold to join the U.S. Army Air Force and to build a secret base in Greenland—code-named Bluie West 9 (8W-8). From this base, Balchen and his men carried out spectacular rescues of downed American bomber crews by dogsled and plane, one of which involved a belly-landing of a PBY by Bernt Balchen on the ice—a feat never before attempted. In 1943, he led successful bombing missions against German installations on the east coast of Greenland; later, in Iceland.

In 1944, Balchen became the commander of the Allied Air Transport Command for Scandinavia and the USSR, with a secret base in Leuchars, Scotland. This became part of the Carpetbagger Operation (OSS), involving the organization of an air route to Sweden using civilian plan markings and unmarked, black aircraft used for flights into Norway to supply underground forces and to carry out bombing missions. Close to 4,000 Norwegians were safely transported through the Sweden air route to England. His command supported Norwegian forces and helped in the evacuation of 70,000 Russians from slave labor camps in northern Norway, as well as participating in the destruction of the German "heavy water" development center. The Distinguished Flying Cross, the Legion of Merit, the