

A photograph of a modern brick building with large glass windows and a grey roof. In the foreground, a tall flagpole stands on a circular landscaped area with flowers and a fountain. The sky is clear blue.

# Shepherd

UNIVERSITY

*Dedication Ceremony*

## **ERMA ORA BYRD HALL**

*Tuesday, June 12, 2007 • 2:30 p.m.*

## ERMA ORA BYRD

Shepherd University and its Board of Governors are proud to remember Erma Ora Byrd by naming the new nursing education building Erma Ora Byrd Hall in her honor.

Mrs. Byrd, who was born June 12, 1917, was the childhood sweetheart and life partner of Senator Robert C. Byrd. The Byrds were married almost 69 years.

On the occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary in 2002, Senator Byrd said, “Erma and I are complete and whole, a total that is more than the sum of its parts. In my life, Erma Ora Byrd is the diamond. She is a priceless treasure, a multifaceted woman of great insight and wisdom, of quiet humor and common sense.

“I wish that more people could know the joy I have had in finding one’s soul mate early in life and then sharing that deep companionship over many happy years,” according to Senator Byrd.

The daughter of a coal miner, Mrs. Byrd met her husband while they were students at Mark Twain School in Raleigh County. They married in 1937, when both were 19 years old.

She once said in a newspaper interview that she left politics to her husband. “The people elected him, not me,” she said.

Devoted to her family throughout her life, Mrs. Byrd received the Mother of the Year Award in 1999; the award was presented in Grafton, the birthplace of Mother’s Day. She also has had three academic scholarships created in her honor in West Virginia, and she was selected to be a member of the inaugural class of the Graduates of Distinction of the West Virginia Education Alliance.

Mrs. Byrd passed away March 25, 2006. Her name will live on at Shepherd University as the building that bears her name provides a much-needed home for nursing education for the Eastern Panhandle and the state of West Virginia.



## SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY

Senator Robert C. Byrd has been a great supporter of Shepherd University, proving his dedication to education and to the people of the Eastern Panhandle by engineering funding for three state-of-the-art facilities on the Shepherd campus—Erma Ora Byrd Hall, which is being dedicated today, the Scarborough Library addition, and the Robert C. Byrd Science and Technology Center. Senator Byrd obtained \$10 million in federal funding for Erma Ora Byrd Hall, \$13.22 million for the Scarborough Library addition, and \$9 million for the Robert C. Byrd Science and Technology Center.

His exceptional assistance to Shepherd University is reflective of his commitment to higher education. Erma Ora Byrd Hall will house the University’s nursing department; Senator Byrd is deeply committed to health care in the state of West Virginia and to the training of nurses.

### ABOUT ERMA ORA BYRD HALL

A 37,000 gross square foot, two-story building with a single-story lecture hall, Erma Ora Byrd Hall is a state-of-the-art nursing teaching facility which houses specialized nursing classrooms, labs, office space, conference rooms, student study center, and general purpose classrooms.

Design Collective, Inc., of Baltimore, Maryland, is the architectural firm. The construction firm is Palmer Construction Company, Inc., of McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania.

### THE ERMA ORA BYRD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR NURSING

The Erma Ora Byrd Memorial Scholarship Fund was created to honor and recognize Mrs. Byrd for her dedication and service to the people of West Virginia by providing endowed scholarships to deserving nursing students. As a medical service provider, PrimeCare Medical of West Virginia fully appreciates the need for the well-trained nurses provided by Shepherd’s outstanding nursing program. After learning of Shepherd’s new nursing classroom building, the president of PrimeCare, Dr. Carl A. Hoffman, Jr., was inspired to endow this gift in memory Mrs. Byrd, a West Virginia institution and treasure.

# PROGRAM

Welcoming Remarks.....	Dr. David L. Dunlop <i>President, Shepherd University</i>
National Anthem .....	Chris Palffy <i>Shepherd University Music Department Student</i>
Pledge of Allegiance .....	Brandon French <i>Shepherd University Student</i>
Invocation.....	The Reverend Rudy Bropleh <i>Asbury United Methodist Church, Shepherdstown</i>
Remarks.....	Dr. Suzanne Shipley <i>President-elect, Shepherd University</i>
Remarks.....	Dr. Virginia Hicks <i>Dean, School of Education and Professional Studies, Shepherd University</i>
Remarks.....	Dr. Kathleen Gaberson <i>Chair, Department of Nursing Education, Shepherd University</i>
Introduction of Senator Byrd.....	President Dunlop
Keynote Address .....	The Honorable Robert C. Byrd <i>United States Senator</i>
Presentation of Erma Ora Byrd Memorial Scholarship for Nursing.....	Carl A. Hoffman, Jr., D.O., CCHP <i>President and Corporate Medical Director of PrimeCare Medical of West Virginia, Inc.</i>
Benediction.....	The Reverend Bropleh

Ribbon Cutting to Officially Open Erma Ora Byrd Hall.

*Reception to follow.*

## U.S. SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD

In every corner of West Virginia, the people of the Mountain State know that there is one man on whom they can always depend: U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd. He never has forgotten the hard life that he had as a boy growing up in the poverty of the southern West Virginia coalfields. He has always remained true to his faith and his family, while working to build a better future for his state and his country.

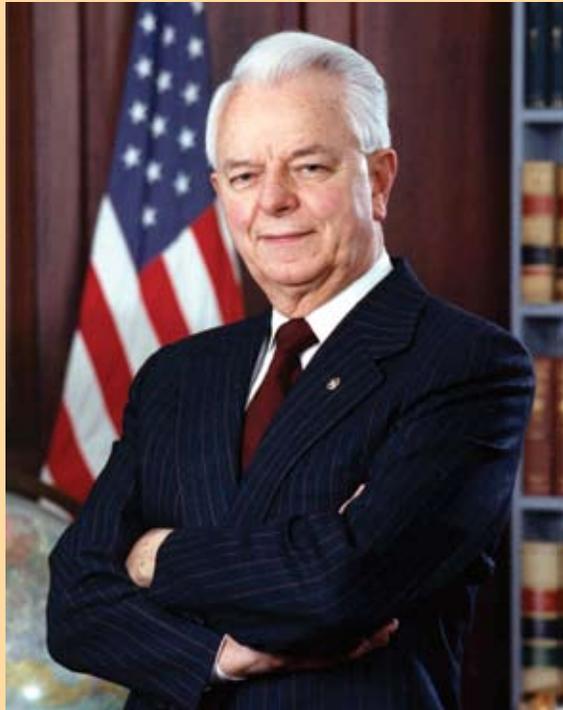
In the Senate, Robert Byrd works for the people. Better jobs. Health care that is affordable and close to home. A good future for our children and grandchildren. Each day in the Senate, Robert Byrd is focused on building a brighter future for the Mountain State.

Throughout West Virginia, thousands of new jobs have been created because of Senator Byrd's initiatives. New industries are taking root—biometrics, aerospace research, advanced manufacturing, computer research, defense innovations. And traditional industries—coal and energy, chemicals, steel—continue to serve as the economic backbone of our communities.

Byrd's efforts don't stop with new industry and economic opportunity. Senator Byrd is committed to bringing affordable, good-quality health care closer to home for West Virginians. For too long rural health care has meant inferior health care. Senator Byrd has worked throughout his career to make basic health care available in even the most remote parts of West Virginia. His efforts to build the new nursing building at Shepherd University underscores that commitment. This facility will help to elevate the education of Shepherd's students and lead to a better quality of medical care for people in the Eastern Panhandle and throughout the state.

Senator Byrd also has led an effort to give many of the nearly 300,000 uninsured West Virginians access to affordable, comprehensive health insurance. He cosponsored legislation in the Senate that would allow small businesses to band together through a trade association to purchase health insurance for their employees. For Senator Byrd, health care is a basic quality of life necessity that all West Virginians deserve.

Byrd's work is shaped by the West Virginia values that he learned from his parents, Titus and Vlumra Byrd. This couple never had much in terms of material wealth, often scraping by thanks to odd jobs and in-house boarders. But they shared with Robert their living example of faith in



the Creator, grounding the future leader in Scripture and in the simple wisdom of living life by the Golden Rule.

In the halls of Congress, Robert C. Byrd is best known for his fierce defense of the Constitution and the institution of the Senate. The *Almanac of American Politics* says that Byrd “may come closer to the kind of senator the Founding Fathers had in mind than any other.” Senators from both parties have paid tribute to Byrd's devotion to the Constitution. He endeavors to make sure that the wisdom of the Constitution's Framers is not forgotten and that the people's liberties are protected.

In the history of the Republic, Byrd has served longer than all but one member of Congress. In June 2006, Byrd became the longest serving senator in the history of the Republic and, in November 2006, he was elected to an unprecedented ninth consecutive term in the Senate. During his tenure, his colleagues have elected him to more leadership positions than any other senator in history. Throughout his career, Byrd has cast nearly 17,800 roll call votes—an amazing 98.7 percent attendance record in his nearly five decades of service in the Senate.

Growing up in Raleigh County, Byrd not only learned the values that have guided him in his life, but that is where he also met his life's love, Erma Ora James. They both attended Mark Twain High School and married shortly after graduation in 1937. For nearly 69 years, the Byrds were inseparable, traveling the hills and hollows of West Virginia and crossing the globe together. Mrs. Byrd passed away in March 2006 after battling a long illness.

While supporting his new family, Robert Byrd could not afford college. In fact, his diploma from Marshall University would have to wait until 60 years after high school, when Senator Byrd was 77 years old. In between high school and his undergraduate degree, though, Byrd enrolled in law school and, after ten years of classes taken while also serving as a member of Congress, Senator Byrd earned his law degree from American University in 1963.

Knowing the importance of education, Senator Byrd has helped thousands of young people earn their own college diploma. Through the Scholastic Recognition Award, which the Senator started in 1969, the valedictorian at each West Virginia public and private high school receives a savings bond and a special congratulations from the Senator. Then, in 1985, Byrd launched the first and only federal merit-based scholarship. Since its inception, tens of thousands of students across the country have helped to pay their tuition bills through this unique initiative.

If his West Virginia values define Senator Byrd, then the Constitution of the United States gives him a foundation to fight for liberty and freedom. Always close to his heart, the Constitution guides Byrd. Its words and wisdom serve as the foundation for his fierce defense of principle and of the people's liberties. It does not matter from where the danger comes. If the people's freedoms are jeopardized, if the Constitution's delicate balance is threatened, one will find Senator Robert Byrd leading the defense.

From his humble beginnings to the halls of power, Robert Byrd has never forgotten where he came from or where he is going. He is a statesman, a patriot, a defender of the Constitution, a proud son of West Virginia, and one of the most important leaders in America.

Senator Byrd has been blessed with a loving family, including two daughters, Mrs. Mohammad (Mona Byrd) Fatemi and Mrs. Jon (Marjorie Byrd) Moore; six grandchildren: Erik, Darius, and Fredrik Fatemi; Michael Moore (deceased), Mona Byrd Moore Pearson, and Mary Anne Moore Clarkson; five great-granddaughters: Caroline Byrd Fatemi, Kathryn James Fatemi, and Anna Cristina Honora Fatemi; Emma James Clarkson and Hannah Byrd Clarkson; and one great-grandson, Michael Yoo Fatemi.