

[From the Burlington Free Press, Jan. 4, 1996]

BASEBALL, DOWNTOWN LEADER DIES
(By Mike Donoghue)

Tom Racine, the man who helped build a new downtown for Burlington and minor league baseball clubs for Vermont, died Wednesday in Fletcher Allen Health Care.

Racine, 65, was general manager for the Vermont Expos for the past two seasons, but may be better known for helping create the Church Street Marketplace.

Molly Lambert, director of the Church Street Marketplace, noted Racine had done yeoman's work in promoting downtown. She said Racine was president of the Downtown Burlington Development Association when Church Street was turned into an outdoor pedestrian mall in 1981. Two years later the association gave him the Nate Harris award for promoting downtown.

Racine and his wife, Jeanette, bought Bertha Church, an intimate apparel shop on the Marketplace, in 1974.

Racine also served on the Burlington Public Works Commission and was its chairman. The city named the educational wing at the new public works building after him.

He also won sports awards. The New York-Penn League in 1994 named him executive of the year for running the minor league team, which is affiliated with the Montreal Expos.

Racine, who was diagnosed with lung cancer last year, was admitted to the hospital about a week ago for unrelated medical problems, according to his son, Bill Racine. After further complications, he died early Wednesday, his son said. Racine also leaves another son, Robert, and a daughter, Lori.

Lambert said Racine was quick to give a hand to anybody. She said he was one of the first businessmen to befriend socialist Bernie Sanders when he was elected mayor.

Jeanette Racine said it was her husband's friendship with Sanders that helped bring minor league baseball back to the state in 1983 in the form of the Vermont Reds of the Eastern League. The Reds eventually left, but the city later got the Mariners and then the Expos.

Bill Racine said the message that he got from his father is that "we all have a little something to give to our community."

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BASEBALL COMMUNITY MOURNS LOSS OF
RACINE
(By Patrick Garrity)

Tom Racine was a baseball man.

So say those who knew and worked alongside the Vermont Expos general manager, who died Wednesday morning after a battle with cancer. He was 65.

The man who helped bring baseball back to Burlington should be remembered for his business savvy and his dedication to his work. But most of all, Racine should be remembered for his love for the game.

"He loved his work and loved to come to work," said Kyle Bostwick, Racine's assistant with the New York-Penn League team. "More often than not, he was the first person into the office or the ballpark and the last person to leave."

Racine was involved as a booster for the Vermont Reds and Mariners organizations in the 1980s, then worked feverishly with Burlington businessman Ray Pecor to bring a NY-Penn team to Vermont. Pecor was not available to comment on Racine's passing, but the general manager's work was recognized in a statement prepared by the team:

"Tom Racine was the motivation for bringing baseball back to Burlington. If not for his persistence and encouragement towards

the local community, baseball in Burlington may not have happened."

"He always stressed to us to make sure the fans were taken care of, and I think that was because he was one himself," Bostwick said. "Every one of his decisions, be it directly or indirectly, was for the fun of the fan. . . ."

Racine's success with the Expos' organization clearly was evident, as more than 230,000 fans streamed through Centennial Field's turnstiles the past two years. He was named 1994 NY-Penn Executive of the Year after the team set attendance records in its inaugural season.

"He was very well respected by his colleagues in the league," said NY-Penn president Bob Julian. "He was just a real man of the community. He loved Burlington, he loved baseball, and I think he had a ball doing his job. He loved the game."

A season-ticket holder since the days of the Vermont Reds, John Douglas of Essex Junction said Racine developed a rapport with fans and sought to make an Expos' game an enjoyable experience.

"Once, Tom mentioned to me that baseball is a game that is supposed to be enjoyed," Douglas said. "Consequently, he had that in mind when he was setting things up for Mr. Pecor."

"He was a gentleman who was very knowledgeable about the business of baseball. . . . Mr Pecor lost a very, very trusted, highly competent individual, and we're going to miss him."

[From the Burlington Free Press, Jan. 5, 1996]

THOMAS RACINE

Thomas Racine, 65, died Wednesday, Jan. 3, 1996, following a brief illness.

He was born April 24, 1930, in Brunswick, Maine, the son of Dr. Wilfred and Marion Racine. The family moved to Brandon, Vt., in 1943, where he graduated from Brandon High School in 1948. Following a year in the Army, Tom received his B.A. from UVM in 1953.

Tom worked in the pension department at Connecticut General Insurance in Hartford for five years before returning to Burlington. He was employed as a sales representative for Proctor & Gamble and Maidenform until 1973, when he and his wife, Jeanette, purchased Bertha Church, a retail shop they have managed together ever since.

Always a baseball enthusiast, in 1994 Tom received what for him was an opportunity of a lifetime: a chance to serve as general manager of the newly organized Vermont Expos baseball team of the NY-Penn League. In 1994 he was honored by being voted "Executive of the Year" by his peers in the league. He actively pursued his general manager's duties until the time of his death.

Community issues were a driving force in Tom's life. As co-chair of the Downtown Burlington Development Association from 1978 to 1982 and 1985 to 1987, he was a catalyst behind creation of the Church Street Marketplace. He was a founder of the Transportation and Parking Council and promoted numerous public parking alternatives. In 1983, he received the Nathan Harris Award in recognition of his efforts to improve the economic vitality of the business district. He served on the Public Works Commission from 1987 to 1993, the last three years as chairman. He served as head of the Downtown Middlebury Association from 1992 to 1993, a position from which he helped spread the secrets of Burlington's economic success.

While baseball was his passion and downtown Burlington his consummate interest, he was also devoted to youth activities. He coached Little League and umpired high school and college baseball, filmed South

Burlington High School football games for 12 years, volunteered for early morning duty with area youth hockey and served on various Boosters clubs. He also loved golf and the art of joke-telling.

Besides his wife, Jeanette, he is survived by two sons, William of Phippsburg, Maine, and Robert of Rutland; a daughter, Lori MacNeill of Mansfield, Mass.; and eight grandchildren.

SNOW

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, we have seen a fair amount of snow here in the last few days. I have sometimes taken the floor of the Senate and been critical of things closing down for 2 or 3 inches of snow, and have said we do not do it that way in Vermont. But I must admit, this would be a significant snowstorm even in Vermont. It would be a welcome one, because of our ski industry, and we would cope, but this would be a lot of snow in any other place.

I do know the distinguished Senator from Vermont, Senator JEFFORDS, had his office open during this time as did I. He is on the floor and, I might ask, Mr. President, my good friend and colleague from Vermont, would he agree with me that this is finally a Washington snowstorm that comes up to the standards of what we expect back home in Vermont?

Mr. JEFFORDS. If the Senator will yield, I would say it is getting close, anyway. It was, I think, an official 17 inches.

I would just comment, before I came down I shoveled off the roof of my house in Vermont. There was almost 4 feet of snow on the roof that I shoveled off. So, when I say it is getting there, it still has a way to go. On the other hand, I have noted drifts in front of my house here that have totally buried the car, which makes it drifting over 5 feet. I think the drifts are more significant than the snowfall and that has certainly created a lot of problems.

Mr. LEAHY. I would say to my friend from Vermont, Mr. President, I looked out the window. One of my neighbors usually parks a car on the street. I thought it had been stolen until I saw about an inch and a half of antenna sticking out and realized the car was under that.

I know the area where my friend from Vermont lives, one of the most beautiful ones. He at least got his roof shoveled off. We had a little trouble with the roof on my house, I might say, and have had a bit of damage. We have had a lot of snow back home.

I would note that, while the Congress might close down the Government, we would have reopened it, but we found out there was a much higher power, as I am sure the Chaplain would agree, that closed the Government right down again. I hope it will be back open. I know there are so many thousands of good, hard-working men and women who want to get back to work.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, could I just ask the Senator to yield for a second?

Mr. LEAHY. Of course.

Mr. WARNER. I have lived in this area all of my life, northern Virginia and the greater metropolitan area. I do not know that we have ever experienced anything like this, except perhaps the storm of 1979, which I remember very well.

Mr. President I want to say, on a serious note, how in the community here—certainly I can speak to northern Virginia but I am certain it is throughout the metropolitan area—citizens have really rendered help to one another in this crisis, be it shoveling snow or driving. The hospitals have asked for the 4-wheelers, and it is a great credit to the community and those who live in it, how they have reached out a hand to help their fellow citizens who are suffering as a consequence of this very severe storm.

Mr. LEAHY. If the distinguished Senator from Virginia will yield on that point, I absolutely agree with him. I told the distinguished Senator from Virginia I consider him my Senator when I am away from home. Of course, I consider Senator JEFFORDS my Senator when I am at home. But down here I have a home in northern Virginia where I live during the Senate session and I have seen exactly what the Senator from Virginia has said. People working hard, people come by asking elderly neighbors do they need something from the store? They were going to ski to the store, whatever.

When he talks about the hospitals and the 4-wheel drives, I know about that from firsthand experience. My wife is a nurse on a medical surgical floor in this area. She was on the shift that ended Saturday and Sunday and Monday night around midnight. As you know, the snow was coming down pretty hard at that time. Complete strangers were coming into the hospital with 4-wheel drives, people who were working at other jobs, to take nurses and doctors back and forth, pick up medical supplies, to take critically people back and forth. Total strangers were bringing her home. We could not get out at first, out of our street, to go ourselves. But they were doing that. There was that sense of cooperation that, frankly—and I mean this as a great compliment to the Senator from Virginia—it is the kind of cooperation we see in our State where we do get hit with heavy snowfalls like this, I know, whether it is in the little town of Middlesex, VT, where my farm is, or Shrewsbury, VT, the beautiful area where Senator JEFFORDS is from.

I yield to the distinguished colleague from Vermont.

Mr. HEFLIN. I wonder if the Senator will yield to the Senator from Alabama?

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I will be happy to yield to the Senator from Alabama.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, I just want to comment on the snow, that it

suits the people in Alabama and it suits the Senator from Alabama, that Vermont have most of this snow with the exception, I see as he leaves the chair, the Senator from Alaska is leaving, relative to his State.

They can have all of this snow. We will take 2 inches in Alabama every 3 years and let that suffice. Otherwise, we just want to leave it to Vermont and to Alaska.

Mr. JEFFORDS. I thank the Senator from Alabama for that generous offer, and I assure him that we will take him up on it. We will use every bit that we can.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AMTRAK

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I also want to make a couple of other comments which I am sure my senior colleague will agree with. One which proved to me the importance of Amtrak was how I got back here on Sunday night. I came all the way down from basically Vermont on through Massachusetts. The efforts which those crews put on, and how packed that train was when it finally got to New York City, and then on to Washington, emphasized how important that means of travel is in times of crisis like this. Without Amtrak passenger service we would be in trouble.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, if the Senator from Vermont will yield, I might comment on that.

The Senator from Vermont and I have joined together in an awful lot of fights for our State and for our area during the past 21 years. And I think it is the one that I am most proud of and join with him in. He and I throughout those years, with our former colleague, Senator Stafford, joined to keep Amtrak going up in our area. He is absolutely right to praise them. I know he uses the train. It is not just a case of saying, "I want it for others." He uses it as I do on occasion. This is something for which Amtrak deserves that credit.

THE VERMONT FLAG

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I also tell my colleague from Vermont that the distinguished senior Senator from Alabama once noticed a Vermont flag flying here. And the distinguished Senator from Vermont and I have both been to Antarctica and have flown Vermont flags. I commented that that is what has been done with it. It has been flown in Antarctica, the South Pole, the coldest spot on Earth.

The distinguished Senator from Alabama looks up and says, "From what I hear from Vermont, the flag probably felt right at home."

THE IMPORTANCE OF DAIRY

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, one other item which I would like to point out relative to Vermont and other

areas of the country is the importance of dairy.

I did not realize it until I struggled home last Sunday night and went to the convenience store. I found they had adequate food. However, the dairy case had but one quart of milk left. When I arrived again the next morning, it had been replenished, and there was only one gallon of milk left.

I point that out as to how important obviously in our lives dairy is; the dairy industry.

So keep that in mind as we go along and take up the dairy program later this year.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, let me also make a couple of comments about the District of Columbia, being the chairman of the subcommittee on District of Columbia appropriations.

This also points out how hard strapped the District is with respect to meeting emergencies such as we have had recently. I know I personally have not seen a single snowplow in the days that I have been walking back and forth. I do know that we have a fleet of 50 snowplows, 8 of which are out of service because of mechanical failure. Usually in the past they have had funds available to be able to hire plows. In fact, 4 years ago over 200 private plows were hired to clear the streets. However, sufficient funds were not available. Only 55 private plows have been able to help out. In addition to that, we have another 30 trucks that are sitting there idle because of the failure of the mechanical parts.

So I think it is important that we keep in mind that for the District that we have to get their physical matters in shape so that we can handle these kind of problems.

I also point out with respect to the District of Columbia that I will be meeting this afternoon with Congressman GUNDERSON in the House, and we will be communicating with subcommittee Chairman WALSH on trying to bring a reconciliation to our difficulties over the changes that are being recommended with respect to the District of Columbia educational system.

I will be proposing to them a hopeful compromise which will on the one hand allow us really to do something substantial to improve the educational capacity of our schools in the District of Columbia but at the same time will make it unlikely that we will have a filibuster in the Senate on the controversial issue of vouchers.

So I am hopeful that we will be able to take care of that. I anticipate that when we come back on the 22d of January that we will have a budget agreement for the House and Senate to vote on.

THE BUDGET IMPASSE

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to also comment on the budget negotiations.