

and in those cases patients must have adequate protections. Furthermore, this bill applies not only to HMOs, but also to hospitals, nursing homes, and long term care providers.

Senator GRASSLEY and I have worked diligently to craft a fair bankruptcy bill that addresses the true problems of the bankruptcy system. We believe that the increasing frequency of health care bankruptcy and the problems it creates for patients is a serious problem that deserves to be addressed in our bankruptcy reform effort.

Our bill would create several important patient protections. It would provide for the appointment of an ombudsman to monitor and assure continued quality of the care being provided to patients. The bill would set up procedures to ensure that the confidentiality of patient records is strictly maintained as a health care provider closes its operation.

Our legislation would also raise the priority in bankruptcy of the costs associated with closing a health care business. Those costs are often incurred by state agencies, and thus the taxpayers. Finally, the bill would require a bankruptcy trustee to use best efforts to transfer patients to alternative providers when a health care business fails.

The reality of today's health care system is that there will inevitably be providers who fall upon financial difficulties and seek the protection of the bankruptcy system. Given that reality, we must take the steps today to ensure that the patients of these providers have adequate protections.●

BILL MCSWEENEY

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, since coming to Washington, Marcelle and I have had an opportunity to meet very special people who have become special friends. Among those are Bill and Dorothy McSweeney.

A great regret I had was having to miss Bill's surprise 70th birthday party recently, but it showed the genius of Dorothy that she was able to keep it a secret. That so many turned out shows a great respect for this multi-faceted man—people across the political spectrum and including some of the best representatives of arts and entertainment. It definitely reflected all of his background.

I would ask unanimous consent that an article in Monday, March 15th Washington Post be included in the RECORD at this point.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 15, 1999]

A FULL-BLOWN SURPRISE FOR BILL MCSWEENEY'S BIRTHDAY, 70 CANDLES AND 200 FRIENDS

(By Roxanne Roberts)

Some men think birthdays are depressing. Some think getting older is preferable to the alternative, but nonetheless annoying. Then there are the few, the happy few, who think

each birthday is a passport to wonderful new opportunities.

"The great thing about being 70 is that you get to kiss all the beautiful ladies," said Bill McSweeney with only a slightly wicked grin. "When you're 70, you don't look dangerous. Little do they know."

The local businessman, arts advocate and community leader was the guest of honor at a surprise party Friday night at Ford's Theatre. What started out as a small gathering for family ballooned into a celebration with more than 200 friends and longtime fans. Everyone was sworn to not drop a single, solitary hint—and judging by the look at McSweeney's face when he walked into the theater, they succeeded.

"Who said people couldn't keep secrets in Washington?" said his wife, Dorothy.

This was no small feat, considering the guest list included the likes of Mayor Anthony Williams, former mayor Marion Barry, Education Secretary Richard Riley, Dorothy Height, Veterans Affairs Secretary Togo West, comedian Mark Russell, WJLA anchor Paul Berry, talk show host Diane Rehm, NASA administrator Dan Goldin, media moguls Arnaud de Borchgrave and Phil Merrill, and former FBI director Bill Sessions. The crowd was full of prominent Washingtonians—LaSalle Leffall, John Hechinger, Esther Coopersmith, Marshall Coyne, Peggy Cafritz and Frankie Hewitt, to name a few—a testament to McSweeney's lifelong involvement with his adopted home town.

"I met him more than 40 years ago and we've been friends ever since," said Height, the president emerita of the National Council of Negro Women. "He's so genuine. And in addition to everything else, he's lots of fun."

"When you think about people who have done something for the community, you think about Bill," said Leffall. "He's always been there."

McSweeney, former president of Occidental International, has spent most of his life trying to make Washington a better place to live. He was crucial in reopening Ford's Theatre and has served on the boards of the Kennedy Center, Folger Shakespeare Theatre and Helen Hayes Awards. He's been a long-time advocate for the D.C. schools, housing and inner-city youth, and a key fundraiser for the Lombardi Cancer Center and other charities.

"Bill is a real inspiration for this city," Williams said. "I think he's a real role model for every American citizen to contribute to Washington, D.C."

"I think Bill McSweeney is one of God's special people on Earth," said Cora Masters Barry.

They like him. They really, really like him. So his wife and friends wanted to do something special for his 70th birthday this month.

Problem was that the birthday boy already had decided how he was going to celebrate. McSweeney made a deal with his wife to bring their four children and grandchildren down to Mexico for two weeks. The official birthday is March 31, and he planned to scuba-dive and have a nice, low-key party on the beach.

So, naturally, his wife of more than three decades decided that a huge bash was exactly what he needed.

Dorothy McSweeney proceeded to issue invitations, juggle a thousand details, lie sweetly when her husband walked in on telephone conversations and lure her unsuspecting spouse to the theater with the help of pals Leon and Lynn Fuerth. It was natural to go to Ford's, where McSweeney—a longtime member of the board—thought he was going to see "Eleanor: An American Love Story," a musical based on the marriage of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt.

The hardest part for the guests was remembering not to blurt out something stupid in advance: "When you see someone an awful lot, it's hard not to let the cat out of the bag," said Victor Shargal, who serves with McSweeney at the Kennedy Center and Hayes awards.

The surprise worked, it seems, because the party took place two weeks before his actual birth date. McSweeney walked in, did a double take and slapped hand to forehead as his friends sang a ragged rendition of "Happy Birthday." There was much hugging and kissing. Everyone looked terribly pleased, probably because the surprise was not on them.

"I love surprise parties—for others," said Leon Fuerth.

"I want to choose the people who come to my birthday party," said Diane Rehm.

"It's about control," Rehm's husband, John, said knowingly.

Luckily, McSweeney is one of those rare creatures who like surprise parties. "I think it's the most wonderful way of all," he said. "You don't have to worry about anything. It's a very emotional thing to walk in and see all your friends."

In this case, he also got to see "Eleanor"—any resemblance to the current first lady is strictly coincidental: Then the party moved downstairs to the Lincoln Museum, where there were more hugs and kisses, a telegram from Vice President Gore, a medal from the VA's West and a presentation and testimonial by NASA's Goldin.

"He helps people," Goldin said of McSweeney. "In addition to knowing people, he helps people."

The menu consisted of McSweeney's favorite foods: hot dogs, Boston baked beans, corn pudding and Black Forest cake. McSweeney was having such a good time he kept inviting everybody to his 100th birthday party.

No wonder they like him: This is an optimist, count-your-blessings, look-to-the-future kind of guy. "Hey, Bill!" shouted Mark Russell. "Seven more years and you'll be old enough to be an astronaut!"

Meanwhile, there are plenty of ladies to kiss.●

RHODE ISLAND RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION 75TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to congratulate the Rhode Island Department of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States (RIROA) on the 75th Anniversary of its founding.

The Reserve Officers Association was established in 1922 to link together Reserves from each of the armed services. The fighting force of the 21st century is a joint force, yet Rhode Island's Reserves implemented this concept 75 years ago when the Army, Navy Reserve, and National Guard joined together to form the RIROA.

The purpose of the Reserve Officers Association is to support a military policy for the United States that will provide, promote, and develop the execution of adequate national security. The RIROA has dedicated itself to this purpose and to bringing all military services closer in a common bond. The RIROA is a leading proponent of developing strong Reserve forces in each of the uniformed services to work for the welfare of citizen soldiers in Rhode Island and the interests of the national security of the entire country.

The Reserves are essential members of the national security force, facing greater challenges than ever before. Today's military is leaner, yet the number of missions has steadily increased. Therefore, the services are relying more and more on reserve forces to carry out the task of protecting the U.S. and its principles. Reservists are not only an integral part of any mobilization overseas, but are increasingly on the front lines of protecting the home front from terrorist acts, information warfare, and attacks on our critical infrastructure.

With over 85,000 members nationwide, and over 600 members from Rhode Island, today's Reserves are a significant and vital part of the United States' military force. The United States military would not be the finest fighting force in the world without the commitment and professionalism of the Reserves, an integral part of the Total Force.

I commend the Reserves' commitment to the nation's defense, and I salute the dedicated members of the RIROA on this historic occasion.●

FOCUS: HOPE

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an article which appears in the April 19, 1999, edition of *Forbes* magazine regarding Focus: HOPE, an extraordinary organization in Detroit, Michigan which is dedicated to human development.

The article follows.

[From *Forbes*, Apr. 19, 1999]

TEACH A MAN TO FISH

(By Srikumar S. Rao)

Eleanor Josaitis can remember the moment in March 1965 her life changed. She was in her comfortable home in a Detroit suburb watching a television program on the Nuremberg trials. A news flash cut in: Selma, Ala. Mounted troopers, wielding electric cattle prods, charged peaceful protesters. Minutes earlier she was pondering what she would have done if she had been in Nazi Germany. A new question intruded: "What will I do now?"

Two years later Detroit exploded in flames. Touring the decimated area with Father William Cunningham, her weekend parish priest, they swore to alleviate the suffering. But what could be accomplished by a housewife with two young children and a radical priest trained as an English professor?

Quite a bit, actually. Focus: Hope, the non-profit organization they birthed in Detroit's rubble, today occupies well over a million square feet on 40 acres of that once-devastated area. It started with urgent but limited goals—feeding poor mothers and their infants. Now it has grown into a powerful and world-recognized job-training machine. An education boot camp has lifted nearly 5,000 city residents to high school equivalence and placed them in real jobs. A machinist institute has trained 1,800 urban youngsters in reading blueprints and operating numerically controlled machine tools, and put them in high-paying positions with outfits like GM, Ford and Chrysler. A Center for Advanced Technologies has just started to churn out engineers with bachelor's degrees. Next up: an information technology

center, funded by the likes of Microsoft and Cisco Systems, to teach computer skills.

Josaitis, age 67, built Focus: Hope on the simple proposition that many of the chronically underemployed yearn for an opportunity to haul themselves into the middle class. She says: "We are failing our poorest citizens when we don't provide them the means to break out of their poverty."

What welfare official has not echoed precisely that thought? The Focus: Hope difference is one of execution. Josaitis runs the centers with businesslike efficiency and sets demanding standards for the students. She coddles no one: Use profane language after two warnings and you're out. Steal something and you're out immediately. She believes that discipline and responsibility are keys to improvement. Rewards must be earned.

That philosophy has made Focus: Hope a landmark in Detroit. It has attracted more than 50,000 Detroit-area volunteers, including big names at the car companies, like Ford Chief Executive Jacques Nasser. A sizable business itself, Focus: Hope employs more than 800 people and has a budget of \$68 million, half from government, a third from contracts with for-profit companies and the rest from private contributions.

That's eons away from the rather inauspicious beginnings. To get closer to the problem, Eleanor and her husband, the owner of a chain of hobby shops, sold their house and moved into an integrated neighborhood in 1968. Her mother, alarmed for their safety, even hired a lawyer to try to wrest custody of her children away. Eleanor retained custody and bears no animosity toward her mother.

She and Father Cunningham, who died of cancer in 1997, began with food. Tapping federal funding, they launched a tiny program to distribute food to pregnant women and small children. It still does that, at last count for 46,000 people a month (half the peak in 1991). The program succeeded so well that it became a model for similar efforts in other states. A food program for senior citizens followed.

But Josaitis and Father Cunningham wanted to turn the recipients into productive jobholders. They browbeat and cajoled federal agencies and private foundations to raise \$250,000 to start a job-training program. In 1981 they opened the Machinist Training Institute to train Detroit's youths in machining and metalworking, especially for the automobile industry.

It's an intensive program that can last for 57 weeks if students choose the entire curriculum. Students spend the first 5 weeks, eight hours a day, learning blueprint reading and some math and working the lathe. On the shop floor they later learn to work with mills, grinders and computer-controlled machine tools. In the classroom they learn more about manufacturing theory and quite a bit about computer-aided design and manufacturing.

In a more advanced program they work on commercial production contracts for about \$7 an hour in between doses of classroom instruction.

Among the students who start the machinist school, 70% stay to the end. For those that do, the job placement rate is 100%. "We have placed our graduates in all sorts of machine shops," says Josaitis. "Some had never previously hired a minority or a female."

Josaitis has structured tuition to reflect her philosophy: a helping hand—with strings attached. Tuition for MTI is \$14,500. Government grants pay about half that, depending on income. The balance is paid through a 5% loan from Focus: Hope. Repayment begins 90 days after graduation—by which time most students have jobs. A further incentive to

land and keep a job is that many employers, like General Motors, will pick up half of the student's loan payments.

William Motts is one of the success stories. He dropped out of high school in the 11th grade and got his girlfriend pregnant at 18. He pulled in \$6 an hour as a maintenance worker at a hotel, struggling to help support his daughter.

But he caught a break. He was steered to MTI by his father's friend who knew Father Cunningham. He entered the program in 1992 and never looked back. In 1998, he got a bachelor's degree in manufacturing engineering from the University of Detroit, Mercy. Today Motts, 25, is an engineer at General Motors earning around \$45,000, and married to a dental hygienist.

"Focus: Hope challenged me to push my boundaries," Motts says. "It forced me to be disciplined. It gave me very marketable skills."

Focus: Hope helps students surmount practical problems. For examples, it runs a day care center and before- and after-school programs, so parents can attend classes without worry.

Josaitis also doesn't want to discard potential candidates who don't have the math, reading or social skills to succeed in a program for machinists. So for the past ten years an educational boot camp called Fast Track has taken students—average age 26—with 8th grade math and reading skills and brought them up two grade levels. And two years ago, realizing some students needed even more help, she started First Step, to offer more remedial work.

More than 80% of those who enter Fast Track finish the program and go on the Machinist Training Institute. Thomas Murphy, a former sergeant major for American troops in Europe who runs Fast Track, can take some credit for that. He is bluff, tough and good-natured. The seven-week Fast Track program runs all day Monday through Friday, and Saturday mornings.

"Saturday classes serve clear notice that we expect real hard work and commitment from them in return for the opportunity we provide," Murphy says. Clock in at 8:01 and you get a demerit. Enough demerits and you get booted out.

Murphy was initially shocked when a candidate asked him if there was a place where he could nap during breaks. Turned out that he left the institute at 4 p.m., worked an eight-hour shift at a job to support his family and was back at 8 a.m. the next day. Murphy found him a place to nap and overlooked occasional tardiness.

"One of our graduates called me up the other day to announce that he was missing his first day of work in years," says Murphy. "He was closing on a brand new home. His home. The first home anyone in his family had ever owned."

Josaitis also understands that getting and holding a job requires certain social skills. Thus trainees are taught how to shake hands, make eye contact and absolutely, positively get to jobs on time.

Every month Josaitis brings a group of students to a formally laid out dining room where she teaches table manners, from which fork to use to how to make small talk. "I want you to feel comfortable when you are invited to the White House," she tells them. She also takes trainees to formal affairs, such as the opening of the Michigan Opera hosted by Ford's Nasser.

In 1993 Focus: Hope decided to offer its best and brightest students a further step up the ladder. It opened the Center for Advanced Technologies, which, in collaboration with local colleges, offers bachelor and associate degrees in manufacturing engineering and technology. The executive dean is Lloyd