

works. He also organized Rocky Hill's Memorial Day parade on many occasions, which earned him a citation from the city for exemplary service.

In 1990, he was recognized for his outstanding service to the community by the Wethersfield/Rocky Hill Elk's Club when they named him their "Citizen of the Year."

Bob also sat on the finance council at St. James Church for ten years, where he helped to strengthen this important house of worship.

But even greater than his commitment to his church and his community is his devotion to his family. Bob has been a devoted husband to his wife Mildred and together they have raised three children, and they enjoy the company of five grandchildren.

Bob also possesses a passion for politics. He has been active in local Democratic politics for years, and I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with him and to become his friend. I am particularly thankful to Bob for encouraging his granddaughter Adria to become involved in public service. For the past four years she has worked in my Washington office. It has been a pleasure working with her, and she has only enhanced my already high opinion of the Deasy family.

This Friday, the Rocky Hill Democratic Town Committee will bestow upon Bob their Chairman's Award in gratitude for their work for the party. This award is well deserved, and I congratulate Bob on this honor.

But, as I stated earlier, Bob Deasy's devotion was not to a political party, it was to a community. And thanks to Bob and people like him, Rocky Hill, Connecticut remains a tightly knit community with its own identity. It is a place with a strong sense of history that people are proud to call home. I thank Bob for all that he has done for the people of Connecticut, and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors. ●

A TRIBUTE TO DR. KENNETH JERNIGAN, PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, today I rise to pay tribute to a man who has dedicated his life to improving opportunities for others. He is Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, who served as President of the National Federation of the Blind from 1968 to 1986 and as the Federation's President Emeritus until his death on October 12, 1998. In these capacities, Dr. Jernigan has become widely recognized and highly respected as the principal leader of the organized blind movement in the United States.

On September 14, 1998, Mr. President, I was privileged to attend an especially moving ceremony to recognize Dr. Jernigan for worldwide leadership in the development of technology to assist blind people. The award, consisting of \$15,000 Canadian and a 2-ounce gold

medallion, was given by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, and the event was held at the Canadian Embassy here in Washington.

This recognition by our neighbors to the north was a tangible expression, Mr. President, of the respect which Dr. Jernigan has earned throughout his lifetime of service on behalf of blind people in the United States and around the world. Through his grit, determination, and skill, Dr. Jernigan achieved personal success. But more important than that, as a lifetime teacher and mentor, he gave others the chance for success as well.

Born blind in 1926, Kenneth Jernigan grew up on a small Tennessee farm with little hope and little opportunity. But, Mr. President, in the story of Kenneth Jernigan, from his humble beginning in the hills of Tennessee to his stature as a national—and even an international—leader, the story of what is right with American is told.

Dr. Jernigan may have been blind in the physical sense, Mr. President, but he was a man of vision nonetheless. In his leadership of the National Federation of the Blind, he taught all of us to understand that eyesight and insight are not related to each other in any way. Although he did not have eyesight, his insight on life, learning, and leading has no equal.

Mr. President, for those who knew him and loved him, for the blind of this country and beyond, and for the National Federation of the Blind—the organization that he loved and built—the world without Kenneth Jernigan will be difficult. But the world he has left in death is a far better world because of his life.

The legacy which Dr. Jernigan has left is shown in the hundreds of thousands of lives that he touched and the lives that will still be touched by his example and the continuing power of his teaching. This will be the case for many generations to come. Mr. President, Kenneth Jernigan will be missed most by his family and friends, but his loss will be shared by all of us because he cared for all of us. He cared enough to give of himself. With the strength of his voice and the power of his intellect, he brought equality and freedom to the blind. As he did so, Mr. President, Kenneth Jernigan taught us all to love one another and live with dignity. That is the real and lasting legacy of Kenneth Jernigan.

Mr. President, on September 24, 1998, an article entitled "Friends Pay Homage to Crusader for the Blind, Jernigan Still Working Despite Lung Cancer" appeared in the Baltimore Sun. Because it presents a fitting tribute to Dr. Jernigan's life and work, I ask to insert the text of this article in the RECORD at this point.

The article follows.

FRIENDS PAY HOMAGE TO CRUSADER FOR THE BLIND, JERNIGAN STILL WORKING DESPITE LUNG CANCER

(by Ernest F. Imhoff)

A steady stream of old friends—maybe 200 in the past months—have been visiting Ken-

neth Jernigan at his home in Irvington. Pals who followed the old fighter for the blind as he tenaciously led fights for jobs, for access, for independent living, for Braille, and for civil rights have come to say thank you and goodbye to a dying blind man they say expanded horizons for thousands of people. James Omvig, a 63-year-old blind lawyer, and his sighted wife Sharon flew from Tucson, Ariz., to visit with the president emeritus of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), who is in the latter stages of lung cancer. "The wonderful life I've had is all due to Dr. Jernigan," Omvig said. In the 1950s, he "was sitting around at home" in Iowa, after learning chair-making, until he met Jernigan and began studying Braille and other subjects. Omvig then graduated from college, got a law degree, became the first blind person hired by the National Labor Relations Board and later developed programs for the blind at Social Security in Baltimore, Alaska, and elsewhere.

One topic of conversation among the friends has been Jernigan's latest project, a proposed \$12 million National Research and Training Institute for the Blind for NFB headquarters in South Baltimore.

Last week, Larry McKeever, of Des Moines, who is sighted and has recorded material for the 50,000-member federation, came to chat and cook breakfast for the Jernigans. Donald Capps, the blind leader of 58 South Carolina NFB chapters, called to congratulate Jernigan on being honored recently at the Canadian Embassy for his Newsline invention that enables the blind to hear daily newspapers.

Floyd Matson, who is sighted and has worked with Jernigan for 50 years, came from Honolulu to be with "my old poetry and drinking buddy."

A dramatic example of the high regard in which blind people hold Jernigan came during the annual convention of 2,500 NFB members in Dallas in July. A donor contributed \$5,000 to start a Kenneth Jernigan Fund to help blind people.

Quickly, state delegations caucused and announced their own donations. The result: pledges of \$137,000 in his honor.

Jernigan, 71, who was born blind and grew up on a Tennessee farm with no electricity, learned he had incurable lung cancer in November. In the past 10 months, Jernigan has been almost as busy as ever. He has continued projects such as editing the latest in his large-type "Kernel Book" series of inspirational books for the visually impaired. But his focus has been the proposed four-story institute, for which \$1 million has been raised. It will house the nerve center of an employment program; research and demonstration projects leading to jobs and independent living; technology training seminars; access technology, such as applications for voting machines, airport kiosks and information systems; and Braille literacy initiatives to reverse a 50 percent illiteracy rate among visually impaired children.

In fighting for the blind, Jernigan has frequently been a controversial figure. Before he moved to Baltimore in 1978, the Iowa Commission for the Blind, which he headed, was the subject of a conflict-of-interest investigation by a gubernatorial committee. In the end, Gov. Robert Ray felt the committee's report vindicated the commission. The governor and the committee described the commission's program for the blind as "one of the best in the country."

There are good things in everything, even this illness," said his wife, Mary Ellen Jernigan. "You expect to hear from old friends. But in letters and calls, we hear from hundreds of people we don't know." ●