

fairness and respect. Decorum and civility were not ideals but practiced standards.

Biff initiated a monthly forum for lawyers because he saw that solo practitioners and young attorneys from small firms were not getting the mentoring they needed, and also, as he said, that “[t]here was a need for people to be nice to each other.” That effort to promote professionalism and ethics—one lawyer described it as a “blue-collar Inn of Court”—is now called the Judge Bifferato Superior Court Trial Practice Forum. And for his leadership in that undertaking and in countless others, formal and informal, Biff received the inaugural Distinguished Mentoring Award from the Delaware State Bar Association.

As Resident Judge for New Castle County, Biff also made it his mission to ensure that the courthouse staff was appreciated as it should be. His emphasis was never on hierarchy but always on the common effort, never on the power or prestige of his office but on the contribution of each person who helped make the justice system work. It was the Court’s staff Biff talked about most at his retirement reception, concluding simply, “I love them all.”

“Love” is a word heard often in relation to Vincent A. Bifferato. It was striking how often it was used at his retirement. Alongside words more expected at such occasions, like respect and esteem, “love” for Judge Biff was expressed by almost every speaker, including the Governor, the Mayor and the President Judge of the Court. No amount of ability, no standard of professionalism earns that kind of affection; it is, rather, a response to this man’s grace of spirit, to the warmth and sincerity he brings to relationships, to the openness of his heart.

That heart was on generous loan to the Superior Court and to the people of Delaware, but it belongs, first and always, to Biff’s family—to his wife, Marie, to his children and grandchildren, to his sister and to his mother, who was there, sitting in the front row, 37 years after that first swearing-in ceremony. She had always been proud of him, she said, long before any of his public accomplishments and contributions, because he was always “a nice, young boy.”

Biff remarked at his send-off that it was “a hell of a tribute for just doing your job.” But it was, of course, much more a tribute to who he is, a “nice, young boy” who made the most of his opportunities and then sought relentlessly to open opportunity for others; a leader who not only recognizes but genuinely feels his common humanity with those in need of help; a man who fulfilled and enriched his father’s dream—for his family and for all of us.

Biff will have a successor but never a replacement. As he begins to write the next chapter of his life, he has our immeasurable thanks and, indeed, our love.●

QUINCY MINE HOIST ASSOCIATION HONORS MR. BURTON H. BOYUM

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Mr. Burton H. Boyum, who on April 13, 2000, is being honored by the Board of Directors of the Quincy Mine Hoist Association. Mr. Boyum is being recognized for his many contributions to the history and preservation of the iron and copper mining heritage in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula.

Mr. Boyum was born in Minnesota in 1919. In 1941, he came to the Upper Peninsula, and from that time until his retirement in 1984, he served Cleveland Cliffs International as a Mining Engineer. Mr. Boyum is considered the foremost expert on the geology, mineralogy, and mining heritage of the Upper Peninsula. He has published two books and two historical videos on the subject, and has also provided many fortunate citizens with free tours of the area.

In his time there, Mr. Boyum has been an active member of many groups that help to preserve not only the history, but also the pure natural beauty, of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. What is important to note, I believe, is not only Mr. Boyum’s involvement in these organizations, but his leadership within them. In 1957, he served as Chairman of the U.P. Section of the American Institute of Mining Engineers, and worked to preserve the World’s largest steam hoist. He is the only serving member of the Board of the Quincy Mine Hoist Association who took part in its foundation in 1961, and thus has played a pivotal role in making the Association the premier preserved mine site in the State of Michigan. He hosted the first Michigan State Historical Society Annual Meeting in Marquette. He organized the first Marquette County Historical Society county-wide conference. He led the charge in forming the Michigan Iron Industry Museum; the Marquette Range Iron Mining Heritage Theme Park; the National Ski Hall of Fame, located in Ishpeming, Michigan; and the Great Lakes Olympic Training Center, located in Marquette, Michigan. And in 1996, under President Boyum’s leadership, the Quincy Mine Hoist Association built the first Cog Railroad in the Midwest.

In 1998, due to his incredible efforts for the organization, Mr. Boyum was named the Quincy Mine Hoist Association’s first Chairman of the Board. He was also recognized in perpetuity by his peers, who created the Burton H. Boyum Award in his honor. On behalf of the entire Senate, I extend a much deserved thank you to Mr. Boyum for all of his incredible work.●

KELLOGG-HUBBARD LIBRARY

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Montpelier, Vermont is a very special city. It is our state’s capital, but it is also one with a great sense of community. Much

of that community pride comes from the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.

The happiest memories of my childhood in Montpelier revolve around my family and the Children’s Library in the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.

I ask that an article I wrote for our local newspaper, *The Times Argus*, about the Kellogg-Hubbard Library, its children’s wing and its former librarian, Mrs. Holbrook, be printed in the RECORD.

[From the *Times Argus*, June 13, 1996]

MONTPELIER BOY REALIZES MISS HOLBROOK WAS RIGHT

(By Patrick Leahy)

The 100th anniversary of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library triggers memories for all of us who have lived in Montpelier. And they are great memories.

While I was growing up, Montpelier did not have television. We children did not have the advantage of cable TV with 10 channels giving us the opportunity to buy things we didn’t need and would never use or another 10 offering blessings or redemptions for an adequate contribution.

Deprived as we were, we made do with the Lone Ranger and Inner Sanctum on the radio and Saturday’s serials at the Strand Theater on Main Street. For a few minutes on Saturday afternoon, we could watch Hopalong Cassidy, Tarzan, Flash Gordon, Jungle Jim or Batman face death-defying predicaments that would guarantee you would be back the next Saturday, 14 cents in hand, to see how they survived (and I recall they always did).

Having exhausted radio, Saturday matinees, the latest comic books (I had a favorite) and childhood games and chores, we were left to our own imagination.

That was the best part.

We were a generation who let the genies of our imagination out of the bottle by reading. Then, as now, reading was one of my greatest pleasures.

My parents had owned the Waterbury Record Weekly newspaper and then started the Leahy Press in Montpelier, which they ran until selling it at their retirement. The Leahy family was at home with the printed word and I learned to read early in life.

At 5 years old I went down the stairs of the Kellogg-Hubbard Children’s Library, and the years that followed provided some of the most important experiences of my life.

In the ‘40s and ‘50s, the Kellogg-Hubbard was blessed with a white-haired children’s librarian named Miss Holbrook. Her vocation in life had to be to help children read and to make reading enjoyable. She succeeded more than even she might have dreamed.

She had the key to unlocking our imagination.

With my parents’ encouragement, the Kellogg-Hubbard was a regular stop every afternoon as I left school. On any day I had two or three books checked out. My sister Mary, brother John and I read constantly.

In my years as U.S. senator, it seems I never traveled so far or experienced so much as I did as a child in Montpelier with daily visits to the library. With Miss Holbrook’s encouragement I had read most of Dickens and Robert Louis Stevenson in the early part of grade school.

To this day, I remember sitting in our home at 136 State St. reading *Treasure Island* on a Saturday afternoon filled with summer storms. I knew I heard the tap, tap, tap of the blind man’s stick coming down State Street and I remember the great relief of seeing my mother and father returning from visiting my grandparents in South Ryegate.