

As a young seminarian, John joined 35,000 others in rallying with Dr. Martin Luther King at Soldier Field in Chicago and then marched with him as he went to Chicago City Hall to post his demands on its doors. He remains, to this day, a life member of the NAACP. Making a difference has always been part of who John Ostenburg is as a person. He witnessed firsthand the violence at the 1968 Democratic Convention while working as a campaign manager for Eugene McCarthy's Presidential campaign.

Upon leaving the seminary, John became a reporter at the Springfield State Journal covering the African-American community. He would go on to be an editor for the Joliet Herald-News, a sports editor for the Tinley Park Crescent Newspapers, and a reporter for the Hammond Times. He even was part-owner and managing editor for the Lockport Free Press.

What brought him to Park Forest was education. He took a job as communications director for Prairie State College. John has been a classroom teacher at the grade school, high school, community college, and university levels. His expertise teaching and administrative work made him an ideal leader in the Chicago Teachers Union. He edited the Union's publications, chaired the communications department, and was legislative director and chief of staff from 2007 to 2010. He also helped move the organization out of debt into fiscal stability.

John's love of Park Forest and its residents always came through to everyone. It was the late Marge Friedman Scherr, a legend in the community, that talked him into running for the Park Forest village board. She saw greatness in him. He lost in 1983, but he didn't give up. He won a 2-year term in 1985, and after the board approved a staggered 3-year term, won again in 1985.

In 1992, John ran and won a seat in the Illinois Legislature for the 80th District. He lost reelection 2 years later, but it was a blessing in disguise. John returned to the Park Forest village board in 1997, and in 1999, he ran and won his first term as mayor. He would go on to win reelection in 2003, 2007, 2011, and 2015, becoming the longest serving mayor in the history of Park Forest.

During his time as mayor, John helped Park Forest continue its tradition as a place of progress. His visionary approach made the town an All-American award finalist in 2000 and 2006. John continued Park Forest's tradition of diversity by encouraging unity and equality in Chicago Southland, earning a 2009 Award from Diversity, Inc. John's expertise in housing is respected nationally, and he has served on panels for the Brookings Institute on confronting poverty in America.

John implemented the Park Forest Sustainability Plan to help ensure residents maintain high-quality life for future generations through green

projects that bring the community together. Under John's leadership, Park Forest was the recipient of the Distinguished Budget Award and Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for more than 20 years.

John Ostenburg's focus on service to others and the greater good is a trademark of his lifetime. His role model Thomas Merton once said, "We do not exist for ourselves." John's career is a reflection of this. Son, father, grandfather, author, and mayor are all roles in which he excelled. The people of Park Forest, the people of Illinois, and I take pride in calling him a friend. We thank him for his public service. John will never cease being a servant to people.

TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE PATERSON

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. president, Katherine Paterson is a Vermont author with more than 30 titles to her name and a list of awards that other writers could only dream of. She has a keenly special knack for introducing young readers to difficult topics about life and death, as she did with her well-known novel, "Bridge to Terabithia." She has just added a prestigious and fitting recognition to that long list, having been named the American Academy of Arts and Letters' 2019 E.B. White Award winner. The award pays tribute to her lifetime of achievement in children's literature.

What is notable about this latest award is the modesty by which Katherine Paterson comes to it. In an interview with Vermont Public Radio, VPR, the author who has twice won both the National Book Award and the Newbery Medal said her latest award held special meaning.

"Any award that has the name 'E.B. White' attached to it brings with it a great thrill of joy, since he's one of my real heroes," she told her VPR audience. "He probably was one of the best writers in America, and yet he respected children so much that he wrote some of his best work for them. And that makes me incredibly happy."

Clearly, some of E.B. White's influence has rubbed off, as Katherine Paterson's own novels show great respect for her readers, young and old alike. Her writing has been hailed for the compassion she expresses, taking on life's challenges—and tragedies—in a forthright and honest exploration for young readers. Her achievement is all the more impressive given that Katherine Paterson's first language was Chinese, having been born to Christian missionaries who immersed her in the culture before being forced to leave China in the late 1930s. Her studies of both Chinese and Japanese cultures, as well as her religious interests, are evident in her collection of writings.

We are fortunate that Katherine and her late husband John chose to settle in Vermont more than three decades ago. On both local and national levels,

she has been most generous with her time, visiting schools and inspiring young people to read, while advocating for organizations that promote literacy. It is no wonder that Katherine Paterson has been named a Living Legend by the Library of Congress.

Marcelle and I are proud and honored to call Katherine Paterson a friend and, more so, a Vermonter.

Congratulations to you, Katherine, on this latest and most meaningful recognition. It is so very much deserved.

RECOGNIZING VERMONT'S BEAU TIES LTD.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is not often that I say the words "Vermont" and "bow tie" in the same sentence, except, of course, when discussing the famed Beau Ties Ltd. of Vermont. Beau Ties, Vermont's sole bow tie manufacturer, got its start as a mom-and-pop operation more than 25 years ago and maintains that ethos. They are an amazing example of the many small businesses that are the heart and soul of Vermont.

Beau Ties was started in 1993 by bow tie aficionado Bill Kenerson and his wife Deborah Venman. They ran the company out of their home and sold their bow ties through the mail. Over the years, the company has grown to employ 30 Vermonters and now has its own manufacturing facility in Middlebury. They sell hundreds of different bow ties, and their selection is constantly changing to keep customers coming back.

Though they are no longer at the helm, Bill and Deborah's desire to keep the company in Vermont has been honored. In fact, the company has never left the facility that it moved into in 1999, and many of its employees have been with Beau Ties for over 20 years.

Among its clientele, Beau Ties Ltd. can count the late Orville Redenbacher and Bill Nye. The company has also cut cloth for the Obama White House and is the official tiemaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and the Vermont Statehouse. I have also sported Beau Ties before: I wore one of their bow ties to the investiture of Judge Geoffrey Crawford, now chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Vermont.

I am proud to recognize the achievements and devoted following that Beau Ties Ltd. has accumulated over its nearly three decades in business. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a "Seven Days" article titled, "Middlebury's Beau Ties Collars the Market on Dapper Neckwear." It tells the story of Beau Ties Ltd., from its humble beginnings to now and of its importance to Vermont's economy and its many satisfied customers, myself included.

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