

Barry is known in his school for his leadership, initiative, and dedication to education. Among other achievements, Barry re-started and re-organized the Student Congress at Franklin Middle School. His first concern is always for the students and he is unfailing in his commitment to support school activities while constantly seeking to ensure that students are receiving the best possible education. Barry also created a positive action program at Franklin Middle School, just another of the many ways he serves his school and community.

Barry is the personification of an excellent middle school principal and the community can be certain that Barry is dedicated to his students. Franklin Middle School's success and development attests to Barry's outstanding leadership. The Granite State is fortunate to have such a talented educator and administrator devoted to the education of our children. I commend Barry for his exemplary career in education and congratulate him for his dedication.●

#### S. 1130—THE FEDERAL FINANCIAL IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1996

● Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to support the Federal Financial Improvement Act. I want to thank Senator BROWN, and our 11 cosponsors, for their individual efforts. I believe that the business of the people should be done as efficiently and effectively as possible. Finding a uniform standard of accounting for the executive branch agencies will be an important element of that efficiency and effectiveness. This bill will lead us to that uniform standard.

It is impossible to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the many Federal agencies when each may use a different accounting standard for making their records or books. For each to use a different standard is as if each speaks and writes in a different language that is foreign to the next. They cannot understand each other, and the story of their work cannot be written.

Therefore, the legislative branch cannot measure their efficiency and effectiveness. We cannot reconcile the consolidated Federal books. We cannot determine the presence of the relative financial failures or financial successes.

This is why this legislation is so important to the American people. The Federal Financial Management Improvement Act is crucial to efficiently and effectively doing the people's work, and it has my solid support.●

#### MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME

● Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, a former staff member of mine, Alice Johnson, now with the National Institute for Literacy sent me a copy of an article by Richard Wolkomir that appeared in the Smithsonian magazine.

It tells the story of Richard Wolkomir and another person teaching

Ken Adams how to read at the age of 64.

In some ways it is a sad story, looking at his background and looking at all the years that could have been enriched.

But it is a story that ought to inspire all of us to do better.

We ought to have a national effort on literacy.

Mr. President, I ask that this article from the Smithsonian be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Smithsonian, August, 1996]

#### MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME: THE REWARDS OF READING AT LAST

(By Richard Wolkomir)

I decide simply to blurt out, "Ken?" I ask. "Why didn't you learn to read?" Through the Marshfield community center's window, I see snowy fields and the Vermont village's clapboard houses. Beyond, mountains bulge. "I was a slow learner," Ken says. "In school they just passed me along, and my folks told me I wasn't worth anything and wouldn't amount to anything.

Ken Adams is 64, his hair white. He speaks Vermontese, turning "I" into "Oy," and "ice" into "oyce." His green Buckeye Feeds cap is blackened with engine grease from fixing his truck's transmission, and pitch from chain-sawing pine logs. It is 2 degrees below zero outside on this December afternoon; he wears a green flannel shirt over a purple flannel shirt. He is unshaven, weather reddened. He is not a tall man, but a lifetime of hoisting hay bales has thickened his shoulders.

Through bifocals, Ken frowns at a children's picture book, Pole Dog. He is studying a drawing: an old dog waits patiently by a telephone pole, where its owners abandoned it. He glares at the next pictures. Cars whizzing by. Cruel people tormenting the dog. "Looks like they're shootin' at him, to me!" he announces. "Nobody wants an old dog," he says.

Ken turns the page. "He is still by the pole," he says. "But there's that red car that went by with those kids, ain't it?" He turns the page again. The red car has stopped to take the old dog in, to take him home. "Somebody wants an old dog!" Ken says. "Look at that!"

This is my first meeting with Ken. It is also my first meeting with an adult who cannot read.

I decided to volunteer as a tutor after a librarian told me that every day, on the sidewalks of our prim little Vermont town. I walk by illiterate men and women. We are unaware of them because they can be clever at hiding their inability to read. At a post office counter, for instance, when given forms to fill out, they say, "Could you help me with this? I left my glasses home."

Ken Adams is not alone in his plight. A 1993 U.S. Department of Education report on illiteracy said 21-23 percent of U.S. adults—about 40 million—read minimally, enough to decipher an uncomplicated meeting announcement. Another 25-28 percent read and write only slightly better. For instance, they can fill out a simple form. That means about half of all U.S. adults read haltingly. Millions, like Ken Adams, hardly read at all.

I wanted to meet nonreaders because I could not imagine being unable to decipher a street sign, or words printed on supermarket jars, or stories in a book. In fact, my own earliest memory is about reading. In this memory, in our little Hudson River town, my father is home for the evening from the wartime lifeboat factory where he is a foreman. And he has opened a book.

"Do you want to hear from Peter Churchmouse?" my father asks. Of course! It is my favorite, from the little library down the street. My father reads me stories about children lost in forests. Cabbage-stealing hares. A fisherman who catches a talking perch. Buy my favorite is Peter Churchmouse, a small but plucky cheese addict who befriends the rectory cat. Peter is also a poet, given to reciting original verse to his feline friend during their escapades. I cannot hear it enough.

My father begins to read. I settle back. I am taking a first step toward becoming literate—I am being read to. And although I am only 2, I know that words can be woven into tales.

Now, helping Ken Adams learn to read, I am re-entering that child's land of chatty dogs and spats-wearing frogs. Children's books—simply worded, the sentences short—are perfect primers, even for 60-year-olds who turn the pages with labor-thickened fingers and who never had such books read to them when they were children.

"Do you remember what happened from last time?" asks Sherry Olson, of Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, who tutors Ken and hour and a half each week.

I have volunteered as Sherry's aide. My work requires too much travel for me to be a full-fledged tutor. But I am actually relieved, not having sole responsibility for teaching an adult to read. That is because—when I think about it—I don't know how I read myself. I scan a printed page; the letters magically reveal meaning. It is effortless. I don't know how I do it. As for teaching a man to read from scratch, how would I ever begin?

Sherry, a former third-grade teacher, gives me hints, like helping Ken to learn words by sight so that he doesn't have to sound out each letter. Also, we read stories so Ken can pick out words in context. Ken reads Dr. Seuss rhyming books and tales about young hippopotamuses helping on the family farm. At the moment, we are reading a picture book about Central American farmers who experience disaster when a volcano erupts.

"The people had to move out, and put handkerchiefs over their noses!" Ken says, staring at the pages. He starts to read: "They . . . prayed? . . . for the . . . fire? . . ." "Yes, that's right, fire," Sherry says. "They prayed for the fire to . . . go out?" "That word is 'stop,'" Sherry says.

I listen carefully. A few sessions ahead, it will be my turn to try teaching. "They prayed for the fire to stop," Ken says, placing a thick forefinger under each word. "They watched from the s . . ." "Remember we talked about those?" Sherry says. "When a word ends in a silent e, what does that silent e do to the vowel?" "It makes it say itself," Ken says. "So what's the vowel in s-i-d-e?" she asks. "It's i, and it would say its own name, i," Ken says, pronouncing it "oy." "So that would be 'side.'" "Good," Sherry says.

Ken reads the sentence: "They watched from the side of the hill!" He sounds quietly triumphant. "They-un," he says, in backcountry Vermontese. "That's done it."

After the session, I stand a few minutes with Ken in the frozen driveway. He has one foot on the running board of his ancient truck, which he somehow keeps going. He tells me he was born in 1931 into a family eking out an existence on a hardscrabble farm. His trouble in school with reading is puzzling, because Ken is intelligent.

For instance, he says he was late today because he had to fix his truck. And now he launches into a detailed analysis of the transmission mechanisms of various species of trucks. Also, during the tutoring session, we played a game that required strewing