

MISS MICHIGAN SHANNON GRACE CLARK

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Shannon Grace Clark, who was crowned as Miss Michigan USA 1999 on Sunday, May 24, 1998.

I am very proud to have her represent the State of Michigan, for Shannon is a shining example of service above self. Through her dedication to family, church and local community, she has made a tremendous impact on helping those who are less fortunate in society, enabling them opportunities of self-sufficiency.

Her role has enabled her many opportunities, however, Shannon has shared them with homeless women and children throughout the State of Michigan. She has tirelessly dedicated herself to directly assisting those in need and to heightening public awareness to the importance of helping people facing unfortunate circumstances.

Shannon's platform "People Helping People," comes to her naturally because she comes from a family dedicated to the importance of family, church and local community. Her parents, the Reverend and Dr. Pam Clark run the Pontiac Rescue Mission, a homeless and rehabilitation center in Pontiac, Michigan, which helps reclaim and rehabilitate the downtrodden of society.

Through the program, Reverend and Doctor Clark designed and implemented, many individuals have reclaimed their lives, strength, pride, character, their children and themselves. They have developed into productive members of society, and loving families, free from the chains of addiction and destructive lifestyles.

To build upon the accomplishments of her parents, she has formed a committee to raise additional financial support for the women and children program at the Pontiac Rescue Mission. Her efforts indeed are a fine model of leadership and selfless dedication that will help those in need as well as serving as an example for those to follow.

I want to express my congratulations to Shannon Grace Clark and wish her luck in the Miss USA pageant in February. Most importantly, I would like to thank her for her commitment to those who are less fortunate in society. •

TRIBUTE TO WALTER SONDHEIM, JR.

• Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, this past July Walter Sondheim, Jr., one of Maryland's most distinguished citizens, celebrated his 90th birthday with family and friends in Baltimore. It is an accomplishment for anyone to reach this chronological milestone, but in this instance, Walter's nine decades have marked an extraordinary record of unparalleled public service to Baltimore and the State of Maryland.

As a successful business executive, Walter Sondheim has served in "volun-

teer" public service positions on important state and local boards and commissions and as an advisor to Mayors and Governors for the last half century. His grace, good humor, extraordinary intelligence, and dedication have been powerful and good influences for progress and unity in Maryland.

Achieving 90 years of age for most "normal" individuals, with rare exception, implies retirement or reduced activity. But among the several articles I am inserting in today's CONGRESSIONAL RECORD is an announcement in the July 30 edition of the Washington Post that Walter was unanimously elected to become the new President of the Maryland Board of Education. This public demonstration of confidence is a continuing vindication of his effectiveness in undertaking difficult tasks.

I am also including an article from the July 25 Baltimore Sun which describes Walter's exceptional and inspiring life of service. I know I express the deep appreciation of his fellow Marylanders for his many decades of commitment and their best wishes in his latest and most significant assignment. I ask that these articles be inserted at this point in the RECORD, and I yield the floor.

The article follows:

[From the Baltimore Sun, July 25, 1998]

NOT THE RETIRING TYPE
(By M. Dion Thompson)

Walter Sondheim is on the phone, trying to get out of being interviewed. He can't understand why the city's newspaper is coming around, yet again, to get the tale of his life. Who cares, he says.

Yes, he is turning 90, and that is worth remarking on. But all this fuss, the parties, the inquiring journalist. Is it really necessary? Still, after only the slightest bit of nudging, he relents, which is to be expected because, after all, Walter Sondheim is a nice guy.

On the scheduled day, he takes a seat behind the desk of his 15th floor office at Baltimore's Legg Mason Tower and makes one last halfhearted try.

"Why waste the time? It really is embarrassing, because I think my friends who know me well figure, 'There he goes again,'" he says, then gets down to business. "Now, what do you want? . . . What's on your mind? I feel sorry for you."

He is painfully modest, sometimes excruciatingly so. For 50 years he has been the consummate citizen, advisor to mayors and governors, a steady presence in his city's decades-long resurgence. He led the school board during desegregation. He was chairman of Charles Center-Inner Harbor Management, the organization that oversaw the renewal of downtown.

If he were a different kind of man, he could walk you down Charles Street, tug at your sleeve and say, "See, I made that happen. And over there, Me. again." He could stand at the Inner Harbor and go on about how he, Jim Rouse and others turned this town around. He is not that kind of man, not one to revel in yesterday's glory to seek accolades for past successes. There is too much to be done today.

Every workday he's up early, dressed in a suit and tie and out the door as he has been for nearly 70 years. These days is senior advisor to the Greater Baltimore Committee. He used to be president.

He could be anywhere. He has the money. He career with Hochschild, Kohn & Co. ended

with his retirement at senior vice president and treasurer. Soon after, investor Warren Buffet brought the department store company.

Money doesn't bring him to this downtown office with its view of the towering NationsBank building, the one old-timers remembers as Maryland National. It isn't a yearning for fame that has him fielding calls, hustling to meetings, offering his considered judgment on public policy.

Then why is he here, when he could be in Aruba, Martha's Vineyard, the Cape?

"Well, you know, you touch on a real issue there, I'd get restless if I weren't doing anything," he says. "I think about it every now and then because I have no reason not to retire. I'm not doing anything that obviously someone else couldn't do. But waking up in the morning and not having a job just doesn't appeal to me."

Bring up the Golden Years, and Sondheim likely turns a deaf ear. There's this crazy idea about retirement, as if people can easily walk away from what has sustained them. Retire, and do what? Sometimes there is a consuming hobby or passion waiting. Sometimes, the work is its own passion.

Sally Michel, a longtime friend, notes how work can fuel a person's life. Think of the great pianist Artur Schnabel, practically blind and giving recitals at 89; or jazz trumpeter Adolphus "Doc" Cheatham swinging at 91; or George Burns at 100 with his cigars and wisecracks. Now, think of Walter Sondheim.

"You see that when people have a purpose, a real serious purpose to their lives, that they stay alive a lot longer. Retirement is not a good thing," says Michel.

Yet Sondheim knows longevity has its downside. He says he can remember looking down the table in many board rooms and seeing three or four emeritus members sitting there, "every one of them sure that he could do the job better than I could, and they were probably right."

Now, he's Mr. Emeritus. The position doesn't sit well with him. "You can't vote, and an emeritus means you're not a participant anymore," he says.

He wonders if he has stayed too long. Maybe he's in the way. If his wife were alive, she would tell him.

But Janet dies six years ago come September. They were married 58 years. He still wears his wedding ring.

"We never had a fight in 58 years. My daughter said it was because we were both too lazy," he says and smiles a bit, then talks about his loss. "To me it has been one continuous period. I don't mean a continuous period of mourning, but I think about her often. . . . Missing her is institutionalized in me."

Without her, he turned to his closets friends, asking them to send him an anonymous letter if they thought he was slipping.

"I thought it was incredible, an incredible thing to do, to make that suggestion," says Michel, who received one of the letters. "I was just very moved by it."

Abell Foundation President Robert C. Embry, Jr., whose friendship with Sondheim goes back nearly 30 years, also received one.

"I know that he worries and has expressed this publicly. 'Has he overstayed his welcome? Is he losing his acuity? Are people humoring him?'" says Embry. "But the opposite is true."

Sondheim is on 24 boards and foundations. That sounds impressive, overwhelming, but some meet once a year, some once a month, he says. When officials from elsewhere call the GBC about Baltimore and its redevelopment, they get Walter. He still talks to the mayor, the governor. He was chairman of the ad hoc committee that picked the Hippodrome for an expanded center of performing arts.