

street—all in an outpouring of love and enthusiasm for a man whose love for children was boundless.

What made him so special? Students of all ages who remembered him last week answered that question far better than I ever could. Their words:

He was always smiling. His smile alone would make you feel better.

Another said,

He always had a story to tell to motivate you—and if he didn't, he'd make one up.

Said another,

He liked to tell jokes and play tricks to make you laugh.

And yet another,

He always showed he cared—whether it was just a word of welcome, or something much more serious—like tending to injuries in body and spirit.

Realizing that learning does not just end at the school door, Coach Inman started a tradition of outdoor education, initially in the glorious mountains over East Tennessee. There were camping trips with students, all where the students could practice problem-solving or study the stars or really just be together and have a good time.

When some of his students suggested that, "Well, we should have one more outing after graduation," then began the famous Inman "Out West" trip, an excursion into the truly great outdoors of Mount Rushmore and the Grand Canyon and the Redwood Forest.

Each summer these trips would be the focal point for scores of children. In fact, several of the Frist family children, including my own son Harrison, shared Coach Inman's "Out West" adventure—a time that I know they will never forget.

What did they learn from him? Well, in the words of one little girl:

I learned how special it is to stand at the top of the Grand Canyon and realize that—like the water—if we try hard enough, and stay at it long enough, we too can create our own wonders. . . .

I learned that—every now and then—you should stop to look at an old tree because it has learned how to reach up to the clouds and still keep its roots in the earth. . . .

I learned that beauty is everywhere . . . how nice it feels to fall asleep to the sound of a stream . . . how bright the moon can look from the top of a mountain.

I learned that there is a way to teach people without lecturing, and that sharing with someone who you are and where you've been is one of the best gifts that you can give. . . .

I learned that love isn't about conditions . . . that there are good people in the world.

And she continued:

If it hadn't been for Coach Inman, his words wouldn't be the ones I still hear when I'm afraid or nervous telling me that I can do anything and that there are people who will support me—even if I fall.

If I could build a mountain, or paint a sky to tell him how much a part of my life he is, then the mountain would stretch out past the clouds and the sky would be the color of smiles and laughter and it would tell him that I love him.

Mr. President, children weren't the only ones who appreciated Robert Inman. He was six times honored by the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University as an outstanding educator. Singer Amy Grant—herself a former Inman student—donated the funds necessary to refurbish the Ensworth Elementary gym on the condition it be named for Coach Inman.

Commenting on this gift at his funeral, his friend and fellow teacher, Nathan Sawyer, noted that the Egyptian pharaohs believed that if their names were written somewhere they would live forever. Thus, he said, every time a stranger sees that name over the gym and asks who it was that was so honored, the Robert Inman story will begin again.

True enough. But I think he needn't worry. For as the poet Albert Pike said:

What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.

At a time when there is so much concern about the state of American education, so much concern about the quality of teachers, the lack of good and virtuous example, it is reassuring to know that there was a teacher of the caliber and the character of Robert Inman.

To his loving wife, Helen—who shared his life and his passion for children—and to their three wonderful sons, Michael, Matthew, and John—our love and support. Although Coach Inman is no longer with us, his memory will live on in the inscription over the gym, on the football fields, on the basketball courts, at the wrestling matches, at the track meets, but most of all in the minds and in the spirits and the hearts of all the children he touched; children who, indeed, are better people because there was a teacher who cared, a teacher named Robert Lawrence Inman.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in adjournment until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 18, 1999.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:52 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 18, 1999, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 17, 1999:

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

T.J. GLAUTHIER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF ENERGY.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

PHYLLIS K. FONG, OF MARYLAND, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.