



August 31, 2009

“The Gentleman from Mississippi”

On August 16th, Missouri lost a dedicated Missourian, former Governor Warren Eastman Hearnes. Last Wednesday, his casket was placed in the Capitol Rotunda to allow friends, family, and the public to pay tribute to “The Gentleman from Mississippi.” His casket was draped with a Missouri flag that he had saved for over 40 years to be used on that day.

I was born in 1972 and, since his last year in the office as governor was 1973, the most I knew of him growing up was the Hearnes Center in Columbia. However, after being elected to the General Assembly, I got the opportunity to know the former governor and first lady, Betty Hearnes. I worked closely with them on improving the lives of those with autism, and I was inspired by the dedication and focus they shared to better our state and the lives of all Missourians.



Sen. Crowell with Betty and former Gov. Warren Hearnes at the Capitol in 2005.

Warren Hearnes grew up in Southeast Missouri, and spent most of his life in his hometown of Charleston. He served his community, state, and country – as a West Point graduate and Army Lieutenant, local attorney, majority floor leader of the House of Representatives, Secretary of State, and our 46th Governor. Throughout his life and the many public offices he held, he remained dedicated to the values we all hold dear—community, faith, and family.

Former Governor Hearnes’ life was filled with accomplishments, a legacy that still touches so many in our state. He made a difference for children and working families facing the challenges of mental illness, was a champion for education, and strengthened communities throughout Missouri by focusing on business and economic growth. He also championed



Former Governor Hearnes’ casket was placed in the Capitol Rotunda to honor his service to Missouri.

legislation creating the state’s teacher retirement system, sheltered workshops for the developmentally disabled, and the state’s first civil rights act regarding public accommodations. In the words of Governor Jay Nixon, who spoke at the service in Charleston last Friday, “A knowledgeable lawyer, a talented politician, a wise statesman, a loving husband and father ...

Governor Hearnes invested his many talents to make this community and our entire state a better place — for Missouri’s children, for our working families, for those living with mental illness.”

Governor Hearnes will be missed by his family, friends, community, and all Missourians. This is a time for all of us whose lives were touched by his work and efforts to remember and honor “The Gentleman from Mississippi.”

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions, and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.senate.mo.gov/crowell>.

Gov. Jay Nixon Remarks at Charleston Service for Governor Warren Hearnes

Aug. 21, 2009

Reverend Brewer,
Members of the General Assembly, both past and present,
Local leaders,
Fellow Missourians,
And friends ...

It is an honor to be here today to pay tribute to former Governor Warren Eastman Hearnes.

Just two days ago, Governor Hearnes lay in state in the rotunda of the Capitol in Jefferson City. In the faces of the hundreds of Missourians who paid their respects to Governor Hearnes that day – educators and mental health workers, business leaders and old-timers from the House of Representatives -- we saw the many lives Governor Hearnes touched during his distinguished career in public service.

Today, we're gathered here to say good-bye to this great man – a man who was a West Point graduate and an Army Lieutenant; a local attorney and majority leader in the House of Representatives; Secretary of State and our 46th Governor.

But before West Point or Jefferson City, Warren Hearnes' story began right here – in Charleston. This is where Warren Hearnes grew up. Where he first discovered politics. And, most importantly, where Warren fell in love with Betty, his devoted wife of more than 60 years.

Together, Warren and Betty raised three daughters: Lynn, Leigh and Julie.

On behalf of the people of Missouri – the people your husband and father loved and served so well – Georganne and I extend our deepest condolences to each of you.

Most of us in this sanctuary grew up in a small town ... many of you right here in Charleston. My hometown was De Soto, just a few hours north of here off Interstate 55.

For most of us who come from rural Missouri, there's no place we'd rather live. We love our close-knit communities, our families, and our faith. We like knowing our neighbors, our kids' teachers, and the folks we sit next to at church.

We take pride in our work, and our way of life. And we want that to continue for generations to come.

Warren Hearnes certainly loved this community, and he dedicated his life to helping it grow and prosper.

From his staunch support of public education, which has helped generations of his fellow Charleston Bluejays learn the skills they need for successful careers;

To his tireless work as Governor to clean up the "Telker Row" slum along Highway 62 that marred the face of Charleston for too long;

To his and Betty's tireless work to bring Southeast Missouri Correctional Center, and hundreds of good jobs, to Mississippi County;

To his many years as director of Southeast Missouri Legal Services;

Governor Warren Hearnes was a steadfast champion of the community he loved. And, in return, this community always loved him ... as we see with the elementary school named in his honor; and the two wonderful photos, one of Governor Hearnes with President Johnson, and one with our own President Truman, that still proudly hang in the Mississippi County Courthouse.

But Warren Hearnes' legacy doesn't end here in Charleston, or Mississippi County. Through his years in elected office, Governor Hearnes touched lives in every corner of the Show-Me State.

After his discharge from the Army, Governor Hearnes continued his public service in the Missouri General Assembly as "the Gentleman from Mississippi" – the representative from this area. There, he rose through the ranks to become House Majority Leader – a position to which he was elected twice without an opponent.

During his legislative career, Gov. Hearnes was instrumental in establishing the University of Missouri medical school in Columbia; passing legislation that vastly improved the state's mental health system; and improving public education throughout Missouri. He sponsored the bill to establish the state's teacher retirement system – still considered one of the best in the country.

As a fellow graduate of the University of Missouri law school, I find it especially astonishing that Governor

Hearnes was able to accomplish so much in the Legislature by balancing his official duties with caring for a young family AND taking classes fulltime in law school.

While other law school students may have been sleeping, he was studying late into the night -- only to get up early to go to class before heading back for another full day in Jefferson City.

This was an early sign of the dedication and tenacity Gov. Hearnes would bring with him to the Executive Office.

Governor Hearnes assumed office as Missouri's chief executive during a turbulent era. During the stormy times of the 1960s, he guided Missouri with a steady hand. He made a real difference by signing the state's first civil rights bill – a public accommodations act sponsored by a young state representative named Mel Carnahan – and by strengthening our state's employment discrimination laws and our Human Rights Commission.

Although many years have passed since Governor Hearnes left office, his legacy of compassion, action and enlightened leadership endures.

The people of Missouri today are the inheritors of this legacy. His life -- both as a public servant and a private citizen -- was a testament to the simple fact that one individual can make a difference in the lives of thousands.

And what a difference Governor Hearnes made ... for Missouri's children, our working families, and all those who fight to overcome the challenges of mental illness.

Governor Hearnes believed that every Missouri child – no matter where they were from, or what their parents did for a living -- deserved a good education, and that without it, our democracy could not thrive. And he did what all great men and women do: He honored that belief with action.

Under Warren Hearnes' leadership, the University of Missouri system was greatly strengthened. And junior colleges in Joplin and St. Joseph joined the ranks of Missouri's excellent four-year public colleges and universities.

With Governor Hearnes leading the way, *education funding* – at every level – soared to unprecedented heights. Because of his leadership ... :

- Appropriations for higher education rose 204 percent;
- State aid to public elementary and secondary schools grew 167 percent;
- Funding for vocational education went up 933 percent;
- And funding for Missouri's junior colleges, now called community colleges, increased 812 percent.

From kindergartens, to new universities, to vocational schools and community colleges -- all benefited from his unflinching commitment to making Missouri a national leader in preparing our children for the jobs of

tomorrow.

Warren Hearnes valued public education.

Gov. Hearnes knew that progress required an educated, trained workforce and having good jobs to put those men and women to work right here in the Show-Me State.

In communities both large and small, rural and urban, thousands of Missourians are now working in good-paying jobs Governor Hearnes helped bring to Missouri ... at Scholastic and GE, Noranda and Proctor & Gamble, and other businesses in every corner of the state. He was a champion for business and economic growth, and our communities are stronger for it today.

But among his many accomplishments, Governor Hearnes may be remembered best as a beacon of hope for those who suffer from mental illness. At a time when the stigma of mental illness forced many to suffer in silence and live in shadow, he spoke out on their behalf.

Because of his courage, Missouri became a national leader in the diagnosis and treatment of depression, addiction and other mental illnesses.

And it was Governor Hearnes' outspoken leadership that established our network of regional centers, where families could not only find treatment for their loved ones close to home, but also remain engaged and involved in their care.

It was Governor Hearnes who championed the landmark legislation creating a statewide network of Sheltered Workshops for the developmentally disabled. Today, we remain committed to Governor Hearnes' vision that all Missourians deserve the opportunity to lead productive, purposeful lives -- lives filled with dignity, kindness and loving support.

Truly, Warren Hearnes valued the life of every Missourian.

Earlier this year, I met a man who clearly embodied the difference that sheltered workshops have made for Missouri families. In 1966, the year Missouri's first sheltered workshops were established, Glenn Cromley's parents enrolled him in the workshop at Sedalia.

Glenn is now 61 years old, but for the past 40 years, he's had the opportunity to work hard and contribute each day by assembling first aid kits for local distributors.

At my State of the State address in January, I asked Glenn to stand and be recognized in honor of all of those Missourians who get up each day and work to their full potential at our sheltered workshops.

That wouldn't have been possible without Governor Warren Hearnes.

In the Gospel of Matthew, we're told of the virtuous servant who invests his strength and his labor to multiply the master's bounty. In this way, we can see the work of Warren Eastman Hearnes.

A knowledgeable lawyer, a talented politician, a wise statesman, a loving husband and father ... Governor Hearnes invested his many talents to make this community and our entire state a better place – for Missouri's children, for our working families, for those living with mental illness.

I have to envision, that when Warren Hearnes walked into Heaven at the end of his long and fruitful life, he was greeted warmly by the Father of us all:

“Well done, thou good and faithful servant. ... Enter into the joy of thy Lord.”

May God bless his loyal servant, Warren Eastman Hearnes.

And may God bless our great state of Missouri.

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