



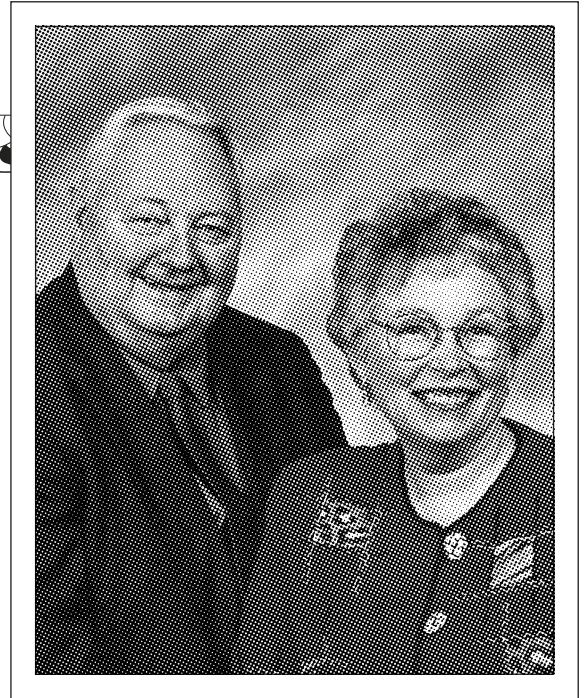
# 2007

## Senator

### George McManus, Jr.

and

### Clara (Kratochvil) McManus



George and Clara McManus grew up on farms miles apart, but St. Francis High School brought them together. George studied music at Holy Angels Academy of Music and loved performing in musicals. Clara was junior class vice-president while George was senior class president and salutatorian of their class of 1948.

They married in 1949 after Clara received a nursing degree at St. Lawrence in Lansing. George earned a Master of Science at Michigan State College in 1953. Together they built a family agricultural business, McManus Orchards. The farm house on Garfield became a special gathering place for family, friends, neighbors, and those in need. Their unrelenting generosity to others proved their character.

George, a fourth generation cherry farmer, was the Grand Traverse County Extension Director for 25 years. He was a Northwestern Michigan College Trustee for 20 years. He was a founding member of the Michigan Center for Rural Health and belonged to the Knights of Columbus and Rotary. During his 1991-2002 tenure as State Senator for northern Michigan, he served with quick wit, earthy wisdom and common sense. On farmland preservation legislation he orated, "The only way to preserve farmland is to keep the farmer in business."

Clara had a true passion to help others needing financial assistance for health care. She initiated the Clara McManus and Friends Fund within the Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation. She was active in 4-H, the Zonta Club and the St. Francis Altar Society.

George was the St. Francis School Board's first president, and his advice was deeply valued by Father Kohler. After the parish schools consolidated, he served on the Grand Traverse Area Catholic Board of Education. George and Clara's dedicated efforts helped make it possible for their own nine children, as well as countless other students to graduate from St. Francis High School. George delivered the commencement address for the St. Francis Class of 1980.

George was honored with the Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Service Award in 1983 and Clara was named Northwestern Michigan Distinguished Senior Citizen in 2005. However, it was the small acts, like taking time to judge the 4-H livestock or baking bread for the Christmas Bazaar, that confirmed the authenticity of their spirit.

Throughout 58 years of marriage, Clara has drawn peace and inner strength from serving others and George's strong faith in God has been put into action for his family and community.