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## Editorial

# Gentleman Jim

One story typifies why retiring U.S. Sen. Jim McClure enjoys such popularity in the state.

It's the 1960s. McClure of Payette, a Republican, is majority leader in the Idaho Senate. Bill Dee, Democrat of Grangeville, is minority leader in the Idaho Senate. Dee is on his way back to the Senate floor from a committee hearing. A Democrat colleague hands him a proposed piece of legislation, quickly explains it and asks Dee to use his influence in the Senate to defeat the bill.

Dee gets up in the Senate and begins whacking away at the legislation. When he's finished and the Republicans have the opportunity to state their case, McClure doesn't do it. Instead, there is a brief recess during which McClure, behind closed doors, outlines to Dee where he is wrong about the legislation. Dee has received bad information from a Democratic colleague but McClure, the Republican, doesn't unload on him in public.

"He could have gotten up on the floor of the Senate and made me look bad," recalls Dee. "He was right and I was wrong. But he didn't use the opportunity to bash me. He straightened me out, with a lot of class."

Thus it has come to pass that the dirty dog Democrat Dee has always voted for the hide-bound Republican McClure, both when he ran for the U.S. House and later for the U.S. Senate.

One hears good stories about McClure all over the state. That he's a nice guy, very reflective of the mainstream of Idaho thinking. A guy wearing a white collar with a blue-collar approach to his job.

McClure is not going to run for what would certainly be another term in the Senate. He is getting out while he's on the top of the pile which too many people in big ego positions are unwilling or unable to do. He is not going out a loser.

Not that he probably would anyway. Voters have a way of keeping guys with class around. Democrat or Republican. Just ask Bill Dee.