

“A Friend Indeed – The Bill Sackter Story”

**A new documentary brings to life the real Bill Sackter,
an internationally known hero for people with disabilities**

Last November, Emmy Award-Winning filmmaker Lane Wyrick presented his new feature-length documentary "A Friend Indeed - The Bill Sackter Story" at The Arc's National Convention in Albuquerque, NM. It was received with great enthusiasm for its honest and loving portrayal of a real person with disabilities and its poignant message showing how a little friendship and compassion can transform another person's life.

"A Friend Indeed" is a highly entertaining, inspirational, and deeply emotional feature-length documentary and has wowed audiences, receiving many standing ovations and being voted the "#1 Audience Favorite" at five film festivals already (the Kansas International Film Festival, Hardacre Film Festival, Omaha Film Festival, Cedar Rapids Indep. Film Festival, and the New Strand Film Festival). Through public screenings this uplifting documentary has already proven to be a powerful tool to create positive change in public perception by fostering a deeper appreciation, respect, and compassion for people with disabilities.

The "Public Screening" version of this wonderful 90-minute documentary is now available for Arc Chapters and other organizations to screen for their members, contributors and the entire community, and the "Home Use" DVD version is also available for everyone to enjoy worldwide.

Who is Bill Sackter?

In 1920, Bill Sackter's father died, and after failing a mandatory intelligence test, Bill was classified as subnormal. The State of Minnesota determined he would be a burden on society, so he was taken away from his family and placed in a mental institution...he was just 7 years old. Bill would never see his family again, and would spend the next 44 years in an overcrowded and dehumanizing institution.

When Bill was released from Faribault Institution, he was languishing on the streets of Minneapolis, when a chance encounter in 1972 with young college student Barry Morrow would lead to an unlikely friendship and eventually to Barry taking the bold and unprecedented step of becoming Bill's legal guardian to keep Bill from being sent back to the institution.

Bill came with Barry to Iowa City, where he became proprietor of Wild Bill's Coffee Shop. Through his good cheer, his joyous harmonica playing, and his upbeat personality Bill started to get noticed.

Barry had been videotaping, filming and photographing Bill from the moment they met, but Barry's proposal to create a documentary about the real Bill Sackter was instead turned into the highly acclaimed made-for-tv drama "Bill" (1981) starring Mickey Rooney as Bill and a young Dennis Quaid as Barry. Due to the incredible

popularity of the Mickey Rooney tv movie and what it did to change society's perception of people with disabilities, the real Bill Sackter was thrust into the national spotlight and toured around the country, visiting many Arc chapters, and he instantly became a symbol for a person with disabilities who made it.

Bill passed away in 1983, and Barry became a Hollywood screenwriter, most famously penning his Oscar Winning screenplay "Rain Man" starring Dustin Hoffmann. Barry's original documentary about the real Bill Sackter, however, was put on the shelf for many years until he met filmmaker Lane Wyrick in 2001 and suggested that something should be done with all this great footage.

Wyrick was inspired by the project, and spent the next 7 years learning the real story, assembling all the archival footage, shooting interviews with everyone closest to Bill, and interweaving a story that takes audiences on an emotional roller-coaster. Working closely with composer Peter Bloesch who created the amazingly lush and powerful full-orchestral music score, the documentary premiered in June 2008 and received a standing ovation from the audience of nearly 1200.

At every screening, "A Friend Indeed - The Bill Sackter Story" has been incredibly well-received by general audiences, but is even more powerful in screenings held by disability organizations, because it finally gives a true voice to the real person with disabilities. While the documentary is incredibly funny and ultimately inspiring, it is recommended that you bring a box of Kleenex as well!

Now Available On DVD and for Public Screenings

Now you can enjoy "A Friend Indeed" yourself with the newly released "Home Use" DVD that features the full award-winning documentary, plus over two hours of "extras", including additional footage of Bill and friends, extra interviews, deleted scenes, director's commentary, footage from the World Premiere, and more. It is an excellent DVD for your collection and to share with friends and family.

Your organization can also share this documentary with your entire community with the "Public Screening" version of the DVD, to create awareness about disability issues, provide a focal point for your organization's fundraising activities, and to have a unique and entertaining example that shows what we can all aspire to as a society through caring and compassion. By purchasing a Public Screening License for "A Friend Indeed - The Bill Sackter Story" you can have unlimited public screenings to help draw people to your location, generate revenue from ticket sales, use as a focal point for your special events, and create new found public interest, understanding, and care for disability issues, all in a very entertaining and inspirational presentation that everyone will enjoy.

Both the "Home Use" and "Public Screening" DVDs are available exclusively at the documentary's website www.BillSackter.com where you can also find a vast amount of information about Bill Sackter, and view the first 4 minutes of "A Friend Indeed" along with other video clips and photos.