

Civil Liberties

Citizens' Rights versus Security

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CHAMPIONS OF OUR RIGHTS

Since the 1960s, one author has suggested that the United States has entered into an era of personal democracy in which citizens are aware of the vast amount of rights they possess.¹ The promotion and articulation of these rights, known

as "civil liberties," is no longer an activity left solely to presidents, legislators, judges, and lawyers. Now, average Americans can lay claim to being champions of rights embedded in the nation's Bill of Rights. Two examples of such current-day champions are eighty-year-old Clyde Reed and thirteen-year-old Mary Beth Tinker.

Clyde Reed entered seminary school at the age of forty to become a full-time pastor. Prior to this career, Mr. Reed was an engineer. Married to his wife Ann for over 56 years, he has three children, five grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. As a pastor, he has founded several churches across the United States. In the town of Gilbert, Arizona, Reed began the Good News Community Church. Since the church is small and not well-funded, it has no permanent location. Each week it rents space and places signs throughout the community inviting and directing people to its services. The town's sign codes, however, make placing the signs each week burdensome. The codes place restrictions on the signs' size and limit the time of their placement to the period from 9:00 p.m. Saturday



Eighty-year old pastor, Clyde Reed, is a champion of free speech. His successful challenge of a local law demonstrates that individuals can stand up for their basic rights. (© AP Photo/Susan Walsh, File)