



VISIT WILD BILL'S

HOURS:

MON/TUES/THURS 8 AM-8 PM

Interested in performing at Wild Bill's?
Want to hold your meeting here?

Contact Jen Knights at
jen-knights@uiowa.edu / 335-3750
to get on the schedule.*

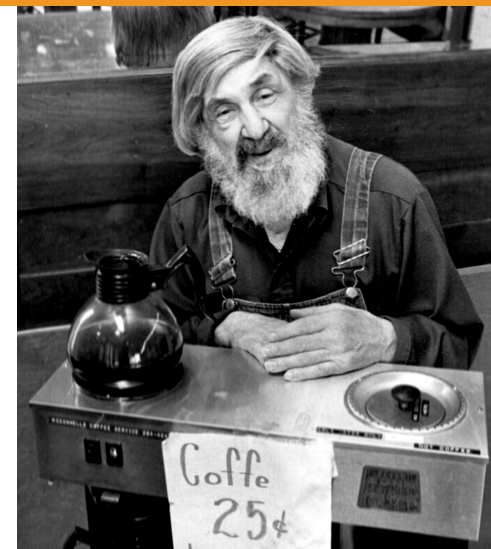


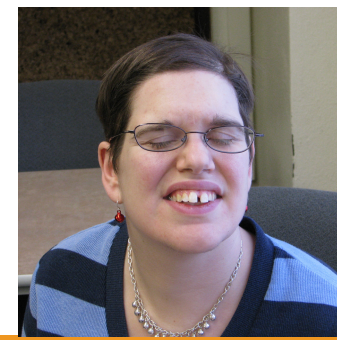
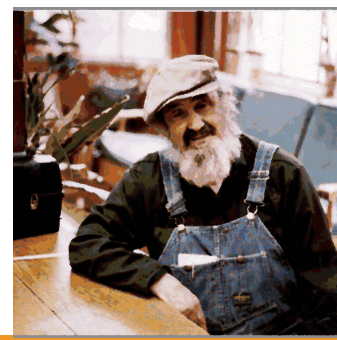
321 North Hall - 20 West Davenport St.
Iowa City, IA

Open only during the University of Iowa academic year



A nonprofit, service-learning project of the
University of Iowa
School of Social Work,
serving coffee and the
community since 1975





WHO WAS WILD BILL?

Bill Sackter was born to Russian immigrant parents in 1913 in Minneapolis. When Bill was 7 years old, his father died. Because of the resulting family poverty and his poor performance in school due to an apparent intellectual disability, Bill was placed in a state institution in Faribault, MN, where he lived for 44 years.

Bill and other residents were released to live in the community as part of the deinstitutionalization movement in the early 1970's, and Bill got a job as a dishwasher at a supper club, where he was befriended by a waitress, Bev, and eventually by her husband, Barry Morrow—who eventually became Bill's guardian.

In 1975, Barry accepted a job at The University of Iowa School of Social Work, and Bev and Bill joined him in Iowa City. Bill needed a job, too—and he was given a job in the School—making coffee for students, faculty, and staff—by then-director, Tom Walz.

Rather quickly, Bill's charismatic personality and enthusiastic harmonica playing earned him popularity among the school's students, staff, and faculty members. Students had a contest to name the coffee shop which resulted in the name "Wild Bill's"—even though Bill himself was actually mild-mannered, soft-spoken, and beloved by the children who attended preschool in North Hall at the time.

Bill's coffee shop still operates in its original location, staffed by individuals with disabilities. It's the social hub of North Hall and serves as a non-profit, service-learning project enabling students to gain experience and understanding by interacting with persons with disabilities.

BILL SACKTER'S LEGACY

By being a friend to all he knew, Bill changed many people's perceptions of individuals with disabilities. His energy and optimism inspired and touched the hearts of people around the world. In 1977, Bill was named Handicapped Iowan of the Year. In the years to follow, several films were made about his life:

- *Bill* -1981. TV movie written by Barry Morrow, starring Mickey Rooney (as Bill) , Dennis Quaid (Barry), Helen Hunt (Bev), nominated for three Emmys (and won one)
- Mickey Rooney won a Golden Globe in 1982 for his portrayal of Bill, and Bill went to Hollywood to accept the award on his behalf.
- *Bill on His Own*, the sequel -1983
- *A Friend Indeed* - 2008, a documentary by Lane Wyrick

When Tom Walz retired as director of the School of Social Work, he started a similar project called Uptown Bill's. The two coffee shops often collaborate and both seek to continue the empowering legacy of Bill Sackter.



Morrow and Sackter at the Golden Globe Awards in Hollywood, 1982



Sackter and IA Gov. Robert Ray, "Handicapped Iowan of the Year," 1977



Mickey Rooney and Bill Sackter



WILD BILL'S IS OPEN
TO THE PUBLIC AND
WELCOMES ALL VISITORS
FROM THE
CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY.