

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

STATE OF MISSOURI
JEFFERSON CITY
(573) 751-3222

MEL CARNAHAN
GOVERNOR

ROOM 216
STATE CAPITOL
65101

MEL CARNAHAN, GOVERNOR

MEL CARNAHAN was elected Missouri's 51st governor on November 3, 1992. He was re-elected on November 5, 1996 and sworn into office for a second term on January 13, 1997.

Born in Birch Tree in 1934, Carnahan grew up in Shannon and Carter counties. His devotion to public service came naturally, following the lead of his father, the late A.S.J. Carnahan. The elder Carnahan served as superintendent of public schools for many years before being elected to the U.S. Congress in the mid-1940s. In 1960, after serving in Congress for 14 years, President Kennedy named him the first U.S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone, a small African nation.

Mel Carnahan graduated from George Washington University with a Bachelor's Degree in business administration. Following graduation, he joined the U.S. Air Force, serving as an agent for the Office of Special Investigation during the Korean War. Upon returning home to Missouri, he entered law school at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He graduated in 1959 with the highest scholastic honors -- Law Review and Order of the Coif.

Carnahan entered public life at age 26 when he won election as a municipal judge in his hometown of Rolla. Two years later, he was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives. He was elected Majority Floor Leader in his second term. Twice during his tenure in the House, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* awarded Carnahan the newspaper's Meritorious Service Award, and his colleagues recognized him twice for outstanding public service.

Carnahan left the House after his second two-year term and returned to his law practice in Rolla. He turned his attention toward raising a family and becoming active in civic affairs.

In 1980, Carnahan was elected state treasurer. He won by more votes than any non-incumbent candidate before him. During his term as treasurer, he saved Missouri taxpayers

millions of dollars by adopting modern money management procedures -- a change that earned him recognition and praise by editorial boards and opinion leaders.

In 1988, four years after leaving the treasurer's office, Carnahan returned to public service by winning election as Missouri's 42nd lieutenant governor. Carnahan won by almost 100,000 votes.

In November of 1992, Carnahan won the governor's office in a landslide. He tallied 1,375,425 votes, the most of any candidate on the ballot. In November of 1996, he was re-elected in another landslide, winning by more than 350,000 votes.

Governor Carnahan's accomplishments to move Missouri forward include developing the state's first-ever comprehensive economic development plan to guide Missouri's job development and economic growth; reforming Missouri's welfare system to focus on work; conducting a thorough review of state government operations -- the first such review in twenty years -- to improve government efficiency and service to citizens; and enacting one of the nation's toughest anti-crime laws to keep dangerous offenders in prison and off Missouri streets. As the state's chief executive, Governor Carnahan leads a vigorous review each year of state government spending. In his first three years of budget reviews, he cut \$216.2 million in unnecessary spending and redirected those funds to high priority areas such as education, job creation, and law enforcement.

Governor Carnahan's leadership also resulted in the state's sweeping education reform initiative, Missouri's Outstanding Schools Act of 1993. The Outstanding Schools Act answered the constitutional challenge to Missouri's school funding formula and instituted major reforms in Missouri's schools. Among other things, the Act includes a program to reduce class size by increasing the number of teachers in grades Kindergarten through three. It also establishes career programs for non-college bound students, with apprenticeships and other programs aimed at making sure non-college bound students leave school ready to work and capable of holding high-skill jobs. Also through the Act, full-funding is provided for Missouri's nationally acclaimed Parents as Teachers Program.

When it comes to interests and hobbies, Carnahan enjoys being home with his family, taking long walks with Beaumont (the family's Newfoundland), or working around the farm on a tractor or a horse. Carnahan and his wife, Jean, have raised four children -- Randy, Russ, Robin and Tom -- in their Rolla home. They have two grandchildren, Andrew and Austin.

When asked about his inspiration to enter public service, Carnahan replies that he was most inspired by the words of Adlai Stevenson II. "As a youth, I remember Stevenson saying public service was a 'high calling' and urging young people to get involved," recalls Carnahan. "I am still enough of an idealist to believe he was right."