

Friends Surprise Jessie Thomas With Lavish Birthday Party



Hosts Senny and Buddy Ross, left, with birthday honoree Jessie Thomas, and Jessie's 'other' brother, singer Danny Owens, and Danny Jr. who is the Ross's God Son.



Rocky Johnson, left, and Buddy Ross give Jessie (and the cameraman) a close-up of Jessie's birthday cake picturing a boxer in the ring and felicitations reading "Jessie A Real Champ". This threesome are all former fighters.



Lou Edwards, left, and Alberta Jackson (both flew up from Los Angeles for the party) are embraced by Jessie--seated are Bernice Heath, Leola Armstrong, and Alice Key.

The most surprised party in town Monday night was popular Jessie Thomas, chef 'd charge of the famed Hacienda Hotel Buffet, when his great friend of many years Buddy Ross and Buddy's wife, Senny, invited a group of Jessie's friends to the beautiful O'Neida Avenue home of Rocky Johnson to celebrate Jessie's birthday.

Buddy Ross, a San Francisco realtor, and Jessie Thomas have been friends since their pre-teen days--friends in the truest meaning of the word, and it was obvious that giving the party for Jessie gave the Ross's even more pleasure than it did the honoree, if that is at all possible. The Ross's came down from their Milbrae, California home for the occasion.

The lavishness of the setting, the really sensational buffet dinner, and varied libations were only contributory to an evening that will be memorable to the guest as a very special affair. The real pleasure was in the great warmth of feeling among the guests for the host and hostess, the guest of honor, and for each other.

This is perfectly understandable to those privileged to know the Ross family and Jessie, for love of their fellow man is the guiding factor in the lives of these very rare and wonderful people.

Shriver Denies Charges Against OEO Agencies

COMMENTING ON THE recent series of riots that have racked a number of cities, Sargent Shriver, Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, said: "From my experience the only genuine, the only permanent answer to preventing riots is to attack the causes which produce riots."

"First of all, when we overcrowd people into specialized areas or specific areas of a city, we're in trouble. When we don't have jobs for those people or job training for them, we're in trouble. When they've got poor housing, when they've got overcrowded schools, when, for example, they're on double shift, when there's nobody from the so-called 'establishment' talking to them, listening to them, actually doing things with them--not for them, but WITH them--then we're in trouble. I don't know of a case so far where a riot occurred where these conditions which produce riots didn't exist before the riot."

Mr. Shriver added: "Everybody has got to make an exceptional and additional effort to meet the legitimate demands for jobs, for schooling, for health, for justice, for housing, for education, that the poor people of the United States are demanding and, in some cases, they are resorting to violence to show how desperately they want these opportunities, opportunities which truthfully all the rest of us Americans have enjoyed for a long time. The entire community has to respond in every case and not just respond to a riot. It has to respond to the conditions which exist right now, which in some cases tragically result in riots."

ANSWERING CHARGES that OEO funded Community Action Agencies had been allegedly involved in events attending disorders, Mr. Shriver said: "The Office of Economic Opportunity categorically denies it has funded any agency or organization connected with violence anywhere in the country. Any allegation that OEO has funded such an organization is irresponsible and without foundation. It is unconscionable to make such a false allegation when not an iota of independent evidence is offered to support the assertion." He added: "OEO programs are aimed at creating alternatives to violence and disorder, such as jobs, job training, education, and programs for health, justice and housing."

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