

1990s and early 2000s. The Chamber continues to promote economic vitality in the Denver region by encouraging personal networking opportunities and entrepreneurial training.

Joe has been a particularly strong voice in bringing needed vision to the Denver metro area's enormous transportation needs. Just as civic leaders in the past brought stagecoach lines and railroads to connect the people of the West, Joe has brought his considerable talents to the task of improving our highways and transportation systems in the Rocky Mountain region. Joe has not been a prisoner of old ways of thinking about transportation, but has embraced 21st century visions of better ways to move people and goods in our communities.

His desire to serve Colorado and its people has not only manifested itself in his professional life. Joe serves on the board of the Denver Foundation, an organization dedicated to charity and civic improvement. Joe also serves on the boards of the Denver Zoological Foundation and the Denver Public Schools Foundation. And if his plate was not full enough, he also volunteers for the Hospice of St. John Foundation.

Among the qualities I admire most in Joe Blake, however, is his ability to get things done in ways that bring people together instead of dividing on ideological or partisan lines. Although Joe has a long history of involvement with the Republican Party, he has never allowed partisanship to inhibit good public works. In large part, I believe Joe's success with people is a direct reflection of his reputation for decency, genuineness and personal warmth. In short, he is a uniter and not a divider and that is why I enjoy working with him and learning from him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Mr. Joe Blake for the positive impact he has had on the West and in Colorado, through his leadership at the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce and in so many other ways. Joe Blake is a pioneer in the best tradition of our history.

CONGRATULATING HON. JOSEPH J. CORCORAN ON THE OCCASION OF BEING HONORED AS RECIPIENT OF THE 53RD ANNUAL AMERICANISM AWARD BY B'NAI B'RITH AMOS LODGE NO. 136, SCRANTON, PA

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to the Honorable Joseph J. Corcoran, former Lackawanna County Pennsylvania Commissioner, who is being presented with the 53rd annual Americanism Award by B'nai B'rith, Amos Lodge No. 36.

Mr. Corcoran's 28 years of public service to the people in Lackawanna County have produced an array of positive improvements to the quality of life in that region. Mr. Corcoran has been a leader in economic development, transportation planning, historic and architectural preservation, tourism and culture, care

for the elderly and abused, library growth, family entertainment and environmental protection.

Although I am relatively new to representing Lackawanna County, I have worked closely with Joe Corcoran on some of his projects but have seen the results of many of his projects firsthand.

Joe always saw the big picture and his body of work reflected the values and work ethic of his constituency. He remained steadfast in his focus on long-range planning and leveraging local dollars with private, state and federal funding.

A native of Scranton, Joe earned an associate degree in business administration from Lackawanna College and a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Scranton.

In 1975, at the age of 24, he was elected as the youngest ever Scranton controller, serving two terms. In 1984, he became Lackawanna County majority commissioner, serving five terms, until 2004.

In reviewing his accomplishments, he implemented the first-ever annual audit by national "Big 8" accounting firms which upgraded Lackawanna County's municipal bond rating. He created the County Railroad Authority, Multi-Purpose Stadium Authority, Solid Waste Management Authority, Performing Arts Center Authority and Heritage Valley Authority.

He funded the start-up of the Steamtown National Historic Site; constructed a dedicated children's library in downtown Scranton and new libraries in the Abingtons, Carbondale and Mid-Valley; directed the opening of the Lackawanna Coal Mine Tour, Lackawanna Valley Railway, Lackawanna County Recycling Center, Lackawanna County Visitor center and Lackawanna Trolley Museum. He also revived the 1905 Laurel Line Tunnel Electric Trolley Excursion and the Lackawanna Stadium on Ice.

He championed the restoration of Court House Square, the Koch-Conley Building, the PG&W Building on Jefferson Avenue and the Adams Avenue County Administration Building. He managed the rescue of the Montage Mountain Ski Resort and development and operation of the Montage Performing Arts Center. He oversaw the development and financing for both the \$35 million Lackawanna County Prison and the \$8 million, 68-bed, Alzheimer's Wing at the Lackawanna County Health Care Center.

He chaired the Wilkes-Barre Scranton International Airport Board of Control and helped develop the master plan and financing program for the current \$65 million capital expansion underway at the airport. He implemented the region's first Tax Incremental Financing to fund construction of Glenmaura Corporate Center and to facilitate the Fleet Pennsylvania Services relocation on Montage Mountain.

Mr. Corcoran recognized the future transportation needs of our region when he helped keep intact the rail connections between Lackawanna and Monroe counties for the eventual future resumption of rail passenger service between Scranton and Hoboken, NJ. But his most distinguished achievement is his key role in the funding and construction of the \$25 million Lackawanna County Stadium and the acquisition of the area's Triple A Baseball team, the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Red Barons.

Mr. Corcoran is the son of the late John J. and Lucille M. Dougher Corcoran. He resides

in his family neighborhood in Scranton with his wife, the former Jean Gallagher, and their son, Jack, a student at the University of Scranton.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Corcoran, one of the finest public officials I have ever had the pleasure of working with, on this proud occasion. The Lackawanna County community is far better off today because of the remarkable service record of Joseph J. Corcoran.

TRIBUTE TO MR. WALLACE
EDGECOMBE

HON. JOSÉ. E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Wallace I. Edgecombe for over 30 years of service to Hostos Community College in the Bronx. On Thursday, May 12, 2005, Hostos will honor Wally with a celebration that will also serve to raise funds for students who wish to study the Arts at Hostos.

In 1982, Wally oversaw the founding of Hostos' Culture and Arts Program, of which he became director. Twelve years later the Center for the Arts and Culture was constructed and under Wally's leadership the Center has become one of the premier multi-arts centers in the New York metropolitan area, presenting a virtual who's who of visual and performing artists of color. Now one of the pre-eminent Latino arts centers in the nation, the Hostos Center has presented and/or commissioned works by such internationally known musicians as Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, Orquesta Aragon, Ruben Blades and Dizzy Gillespie.

Born and raised in Havana, Cuba, Wally holds a Bachelors degree in History and Master's degree in Journalism from Columbia University. He has served as a panelist and site evaluator for the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Arts Partners Program, and the Rockefeller Foundation. Wally has also served on the boards of the Museums of Contemporary Hispanic Art, the Bronx Council on the Arts, the Bronx Arts Ensemble, and the South Bronx Community Action Theatre.

Mr. Speaker, what makes Wally so special is his commitment to ensuring that the students of Hostos and the entire Bronx community are able to experience the beauty and richness of the Arts. I am thankful to Wally for helping to brighten the lives of so many of my constituents and I hope he continues his commendable work in the heart of the South Bronx.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a great man and a dear friend of mine, Mr. Wallace I. Edgecombe.

HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY TO MR.
PAUL ARTHUR RZEPECKI

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I warily rise today to reluctantly acknowledge Mr. Paul Arthur Rzepecki on the unexpected occurrence of his 40th birthday.