

April 5, 2000

They were married for 56 years and had one son, the late Stephen M. Blackwell.

Mr. Speaker, Chuck Blackwell was my good friend and a great American. I know the Members of the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to his family.

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE MORRIS
ABRAM

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Morris B. Abram, an outstanding leader of the American Jewish community and an activist in the civil rights movement whose accomplishments helped shape our country and typified the ideal of public service. His death last month at the age of 81 was a loss to all of us who counted this great American as a friend and mentor on the ways to promote civil rights at home and human rights abroad.

He served as the president of Brandeis University and was asked by five presidents to take a lead role in a number of commissions and panels that promoted equal educational and housing opportunities for all Americans, and protection of our seniors against corruption in the nursing home industry and greater respect for human rights around the world.

Having served on the staff of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, he learned first-hand about the Holocaust and dedicated himself to the Jewish community, serving as national president of the American Jewish Committee from 1963 through 1968, Chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry from 1983 through 1988, and chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations from 1986 through 1989.

President Bush designated him as the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, and he remained in this city after completing his ambassadorial term to head up Human Rights Watch which highlights the successes and shortcomings of the United Nations. In his capacity as chairman of this group he testified before the International Relations Committee in July of last year on promoting equal treatment of Israel in the United Nations.

Earlier this year on a committee trip on UN issues in Geneva, I was privileged to have dinner with him and his wife, the former Bruna Molina, where I sought his counsel on how we can ensure the all UN members, including Israel, have the right to sit on all UN bodies including the UN Security Council, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering this Great American who battled injustice and discrimination wherever and whenever he found it.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO JIM "LABBY"
LABAGNARA

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to a remarkable person from my district, Jim "Labby" LaBagnara of Paterson, New Jersey, who was feted on March 30, 2000 because of his many years of service and leadership. It is only fitting that we gather here in his honor, for he epitomizes a strong spirit of caring and generosity.

Jim "Labby" LaBagnara was born, raised and still lives in Paterson. He attended Eastside High School and earned five varsity letters in baseball and soccer as a student.

In addition to playing for Eastside, he played baseball for the Emblems, American Legion Post 77, Public Service Electric & Gas, Fair Lawn A.C., Little Falls A.C., Glen Rock A.C. amongst other baseball teams in Northern New Jersey.

"Labby" had a try out with the St. Louis Browns Major League Baseball Team. In addition, he was also offered baseball scholarships to Duke University, the University of North Carolina and Manhattan College. He pursued a career in baseball and was under contract with two Minor League teams.

His life took an interesting turn when he was offered a job at Wright Aeronautical under the condition that he played baseball and soccer for them. While working at Wright, he learned to be a Machinist and to fly. He furthered his education and received an Aircraft and Engine Mechanic's License. He later became the Chief Pilot of Lincoln Park's Aero Flying Service, where he stayed until the bombing of Pearl Harbor, signaling the beginning of World War II. He then joined the Naval Air Force, and served with honor.

After the war he pursued the fields of flying and sports. He is the Founder and President of Precision Gears and Products, Aero Flying Service, Eastern Gear, Inc., which he sold to Baker-Hughes Company. After selling the company, he went on to work for Baker-Hughes for another 24 years. These years instilled in him the skills necessary for him to become a stellar role model in the community.

During this time he taught nearly 1,000 student pilots. He currently holds an Instructor's License as well as a Commercial Pilot's License for small and multiengine aircraft with instrument rating. He has flown land planes, seaplanes and helicopters.

"Labby" is married to Alma LaBagnara and together they have three children including, Elissa, Susan and Dr. James LaBagnara, Jr. He continually touches the lives of others. For example he has sponsored and coached baseball for 47 years. As a player his batting avg. was .340. As a coach, he is seen as both a father figure and mentor to his players.

His benevolence is unequalled in sports. He is always willing to give his time and financial support. He sponsored the Precision Gears Baseball Team, which played in the American Legion Baseball League. In 1961, he joined with the All Wags A.C., Inc. to manage the Pasquariello-Bradle Post 187 "All Wags"

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Team, which brought numerous State and regional championships to the Paterson based group for over 35 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Labby's family, friends, All Wags A.C., Inc., the City of Paterson, the State of New Jersey and me in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service to the community of Jim "Labby" LaBagnara.

LONGTIME SCOUT LEADERS
HONORED

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, on April 12th, 2000, the Chicagoland Forest District will be sponsoring the 10th Annual Good Scout Benefit at Palermo's Fine Italian Cuisine & Banquets in Oak Lawn, Illinois. Every year at this event, longtime contributors to scouting are honored with the Good Scout Award. Youth scouting is a vital effort in Southwest Chicagoland, providing tomorrow's leaders with important values through outdoor recreation and community service. This year's recipients are Bill Hawkinson and Bob Wilcox. It now gives me great honor to recognize these scout leaders from the 3rd Congressional District for their vital service to our community.

William "Bill" Hawkinson is a lifetime resident of South-side Chicago. Shortly after graduating from Purdue University, he moved to Oak Lawn in 1968. In 1975, Bill would become the Finance Chairman of District 06 for two years, helping to greatly expand the profile of local scouting. In his first year as Finance Chair, Bill was honored for his outstanding service with the Arrowhead award. Two years later, he would become District Chairman for a full year.

Today, Bill remains deeply committed to the community and local scouting. Besides running two successful automotive dealerships, he actively volunteers for medical, educational and religious organizations in Chicagoland. Mr. Hawkinson still lives in Oak Lawn with his wife, Rickie, both proud parents of Jeff (26), April (21), and Erica (15).

Robert "Bob" Wilcox has been actively involved in local scouting for 62 years. Bob's lengthy resume includes service as Committee Chairman for St. Rita Troop 600, Commissioner Staff in the Iroquois and Forest District, and Vice-Chairman in the Iroquois District. For 12 years, Bob served as Scoutmaster for Troop 600, administering over 60 scouts. Over the years, Bob Wilcox received numerous scouting awards. In 1973, he received the distinguished St. George Award by Cardinal John Cody at Holy Name Cathedral.

Bob's family clearly reflects his commitment to scouting. His son Robert is an Eagle Scout and Assistant Scoutmaster for Troop 33 of La Grange, Illinois. Bob's daughter Jeanny is an Assistant Leader in Girl Scout Troop 170. All four of Bob's grandchildren are also involved in scouting.

Fortunately, Bob's many talents have not been limited to scouting. In addition to his previously described proficiencies, Mr. Wilcox is a