

House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from a very special event at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Today, the main campus of the CDC was renamed the Edward R. Roybal CDC Campus, in honor of my father who served as a Member of this Chamber for 30 years. In addition, he was presented with the Champion of Prevention Award, CDC's most prestigious award, reserved for individuals who have made significant contributions to public health.

Quoting CDC Director, Dr. Jeffrey P. Koplan, "All his life, no matter where or at what level he sat, Edward R. Roybal has made the public's health his personal and professional priority. His leadership has prevented the illness and health of many Americans."

Many of my colleagues who served with my father during his tenure from 1963 to 1993 will recall his zeal and commitment to health promotion and disease prevention and the very special place CDC has in his heart. I hope that this and future Congresses will remember and emulate his belief in protecting the Nation's health and safety through prevention and applied research and programs. Our whole family is very proud of my father, but none more than my mother who has stood next to him through all his accomplishments and who through her support made many of those accomplishments possible.

#### TRIBUTE TO FRED ZOLLNER, NBA PIONEER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great Hoosier from Fort Wayne, the late Fred Zollner, who was just selected for the Basketball Hall of Fame. Too often we forget our history.

Fred Zollner moved the Zollner Pistons Company from Duluth, Minnesota, in 1931 to the east side of Fort Wayne. During the 1930s the piston plant doubled in size, aided by hefty government military contracts because of war preparations.

Sports Illustrated described Zollner this way:

"He is short and stocky, a dapper man sporting peak lapels, a silk shirt, a constant tan, and an unruly coiffure that suggests he is about to mount a podium and conduct Beethoven's Ninth. He is the sort who would not harm a fly. Rather than swat one, he would catch a cold holding the door open until the fly got ready to leave."

In 1938, Mr. Zollner had formed a company softball team for a local industrial league. In 1945, the Pistons instigated the National Softball League, which they hoped would open the way to major league softball. They won

multiple national championships. Players were celebrities. By the late 1950's as I was growing up, softball was no longer as significant, but I remember my dad talking about Leo Luken and Bernie Kampschmidt as if they were Nellie Fox and Ernie Banks, my baseball heroes.

After having success in softball, in 1939 Zollner fielded a team in a Chicago industrial league tournament and never looked back. The Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons, now known as the Detroit Pistons, were not Fort Wayne's first pro basketball team. The Fort Wayne Knights of Columbus, the Caseys, and the Fort Wayne Hoosiers were. And the Fort Wayne General Electrics played in the NBL, the National Basketball League, in 1937. The Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons left Fort Wayne at the end of 1957 but continue today as the Detroit Pistons.

There were many eventful years in Fort Wayne. For most of the Fort Wayne era, the Pistons played at the North Side High School gym. The enthusiastic fans and confined quarters gave the Pistons a significant homecourt advantage. Minneapolis Lakers' star Slater Martin was quoted on the courtside seating at North Side: "I never really saw the fans get physical with the players. But I did have them pull the hair on my legs."

Fred Zollner was a key in keeping the National Basketball League solvent. Carl Bennett, whose personal history with the Pistons is so intertwined with Zollner as to be inseparable, said that Zollner never wanted anyone to know how he kept the league—and pro basketball—alive.

He was constantly upgrading his team which eventually led to repeat national titles. The Zollner Pistons were multiple times national champions. Two of their famous players were "Mr. Basketball," Bobby McDermott, who had long set shots from past half-court; and Paul "Curly" Armstrong from Fort Wayne. These are some of the late 1940s cards that I have in my collection.

They were also responsible for the invention of the 24-second clock, because George Mikan, who was not only a giant at 6'10" but a talented athlete as well, had this huge height advantage. They tried a different way to win. In Minneapolis, as the crowd hollered, they stalled. It remains, and always will, as the lowest scoring game in NBA history, 19-18. But the Zollner Pistons won and the league said this will never happen again.

Fred Zollner, along with Carl Bennett, met then with the people from the BAA in Fort Wayne and merged the leagues which then became the NBA from the leagues in Fort Wayne.

Fred Zollner's vision for Fort Wayne was for the Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons to be to the NBA what Green Bay was to professional football. But, alas, that was not to be. Fort Wayne was just too small.

He saw the writing on the wall in the mid 1950s, but the final event was when

they made the national championship, the NBA playoffs, but the Fort Wayne Coliseum had booked the national bowling tournament so the Pistons were booted out of the auditorium and had to play their games in Indianapolis. The next year they moved to Detroit.

To quote a couple of the long-term people associated with this, Carl Bennett, who crusaded to get Fred Zollner into the Basketball Hall of Fame, said: "If somebody would have asked me when I was a kid what I wanted to do with my career, I would have told them exactly what I did for Fred Zollner's organization. It was fun and extremely rewarding."

There are two books out. Indiana had three of the original members of the NBA. "Pioneers of the Hardwood" refers to that. The other is the Zollner Piston Story by Roger Nelson.

George Yardley, a Hall of Famer, said about Fort Wayne:

"My wife and I didn't know what to expect when we got to Fort Wayne. We had never seen snow before. Major league sports to Fort Wayne was the Pistons. They were great basketball fans. But more importantly, they were great people. They wanted you to know that Fort Wayne was a great place to live, and they did everything they could to illustrate that to you. To this day I believe that Fort Wayne has some of the coldest weather and warmest people in the country."

In Fort Wayne we no longer have the Pistons basketball team, but we do have nearly 1,000 Zollner Pistons jobs that are part of the backbone of our community. We have the pride of having been there in the early days of the NBA, the first meetings occurring in Fort Wayne, and now having one of our community leaders being honored by his selection into the Basketball Hall of Fame. And we still have some of the coldest weather and the warmest people in America.

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Holiday magazine said: "Zollner is a soft-voiced, curly-headed manufacturer, a friendly man with a taste for expensive, striped suits, and the engaging knack of making them look as if he'd worn them to bed."

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way to major league softball. They won multiple national championships. Players were celebrities. By the late 50s, as I was growing up, softball was no longer as significant but I remember my father talking about Leo Luken and Bernie Kampschmidt as if they were Nellie Fox and Ernie Banks, my baseball heroes.

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There were many eventful years in Fort Wayne.

For most of the Fort Wayne era, the Pistons played at the North Side High School gym. The enthusiastic fans and confined quarters gave the Pistons a significant homecourt advantage. Minneapolis Laker's star Slater Martin was quoted on the court-side seating at North Side: "I never really saw the fans get physical with the players. I had them pull the hair on my legs through."

Fred Zollner was key in keeping the NBL (National Basketball League) solvent. He gave direct financial aid to other teams, he purchased players for cash to help keep teams afloat, and did other things to keep the league going. Carl Bennett who's personal history with the Pistons is so intertwined with Zollner as to be inseparable said that Zollner never wanted anyone to know how he helped the league—and pro basketball—alive.

Zollner treated his players well, being known throughout the league as a generous owner. He was the first owner to purchase a plane for the team. He did this even though he did not like to fly. It gave the Pistons such an advantage—players weren't as tired from traveling—that the league re-configured its schedule to the disadvantage of Fort Wayne.

Zollner was constantly upgrading his team—which eventually led to repeat national titles. The nation knew he was serious when he signed "Mr. Basketball"—Bobby McDermott of the New York Celtics, then the most famous player in all of basketball famous for the towering two-hand set-shots typically from half-court—or beyond. Paul "Curly" Armstrong was another favorite.

The Zollner Pistons were also responsible for the 24-second shot clock. When George Mikan, who was not only a giant of his day at 6'10" but a talented athlete as well, changed the nature of basketball with his huge height advantage, the Pistons decided to try a different way to win. In Minneapolis, as the crowd hollered, they stalled. It remains—and always will—as the lowest scoring game in NBA basketball history. 19–18. But the Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons won. But the league said never again.

Fred Zollner, coordinated by his able basketball specialist Carl Bennett, was key in creating the NBA as we know it today. The NBL and the BAA (Basketball Association of America) were competing for players in a market in which few were able to make money. The BAA had franchises in big cities with big arenas (Madison Square Garden for example) but few fans and not the best players. The NBL

was a mixed bag but had four very strong teams—the Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons, the Rochester Royals (later moved to Cincinnati as Hoosier Oscar Robertson days), George Mikan's Minneapolis Lakers (now the Los Angeles Lakers—ever wonder where the lake was in LA?), and the Indianapolis Krautskys (named after local grocery store owner Frank Krautsky). These teams actually dominated the NBA for most of its first years.

Maurice Podoloff, the Commissioner of the BAA, came to Fort Wayne to Carl Bennett's home. After preliminary discussions, they were joined the next day by Fred Zollner and then the Indianapolis Krautsky's owners in Fort Wayne. The agreement to pull the four teams from the NBL and join with the BAA was the start of the NBA. Additional changes occurred over the next few years but the core remains until today.

The Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons brought many thrills to northeast Indiana, including one of the early NBA All-Star games which features such stars as George Mikan (whose 1948 basketball card is the most valuable of all time), Bob Cousy and Dolph Schayes. The then brand new Allen County War Memorial Coliseum was a showpiece arena, packed to the ceiling with over 10,000 fans. Over 8,000 came to see the Zollner Pistons defeat the Boston Celtics, during Bill Russell's first visit there.

Fred Zollner's vision for Fort Wayne was for the Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons to be to the NBA what Green Bay was to professional football. But, alas, it was not to be. New York, Chicago, Boston and other cities had millions of people to draw from whereas Fort Wayne had less than 200,000. But Fred Zollner not only brought big-time basketball to a smaller size city, but he was instrumental in the founding of the NBA and much of its development.

Zollner saw the writing on the wall in the mid-fifties. He knew that the big-city teams weren't thrilled to come to Fort Wayne. What may have finally pushed him over the edge, according to long-time sports broadcaster and Fort Wayne civic leader Hilliard Gates, was a situation that developed in 1955. Fred Zollner wanted badly to win an NBA championship. The Zollner Pistons made it to the finals. But the Fort Wayne Coliseum had booked the national bowling tournament so the Pistons were booted out of Fort Wayne for the NBA finals. Now bowling was big in Indiana—bowling still is very popular in Indiana—but it probably wasn't the wisest move. The Fort Wayne Pistons lost four games to three, so the record should show that they did win all the games played in Indianapolis.

Dick Rosenthal, who played as a Piston and later was the University of Notre Dame's athletic director, said about Fred Zollner: "He was a man of vision. Fred nurtured professional basketball from a very iffy proposition to a major business venture. He embodied the soul of the organization and the league. Professional basketball had come a long way. The game owes a great deal to the pioneer spirit of an owner like Fred Zollner."

Carl Bennett, who crusaded to get Fred Zollner into the Hall of Fame, and who for most of the years of the Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons did most everything from coaching to managing to player personnel decisions, said: "If somebody would have asked me when I was a kid what I wanted to do with my career, I would have told them exactly what I did for

Fred Zollner's organization. It was fun and extremely rewarding."

For basketball buffs, there are two books that most of this special order was based upon. Rodger Nelson has written the Zollner Piston Story, covering both the basketball and softball teams. Todd Gould has written a book titled *Pioneers of the Hardwood*, about not only the Pistons but other early pro Indiana basketball teams as well. Indiana, in the second year of the merged leagues, had 3—three—of the NBA teams.

Let me close with several quotes from the *Pioneers of the Hardwood*, from former Fort Wayne Zollner Piston basketball stars.

Frank Brian: "Whenever I hear the song 'Back Home Again in Indiana' I get real nostalgic, because Indiana was like a second home to me. The fans were so congenial and really loved their basketball. Basketball was its own special culture there. When anybody ever asks me about the fans in Indiana, there's only one word I can say—unbelievable. Yes, sir, unbelievable. It was great."

Hall-of-Famer George Yardley, the first Piston and the first NBA player in history to score 2000 points in a season, said, "If it's winter-time, and it's Indiana, it must mean basketball. The fans there were really wonderful. I loved it, truly loved it. It was the greatest experience in the world."

Yardley, a California boy and Stanford grad, also said about Fort Wayne: "My wife and I didn't know what to expect when we got to Fort Wayne. We had never seen snow before. Major league sports to Fort Wayne was the Pistons. They were great basketball fans. But more importantly, they were great people. They wanted you to know that Fort Wayne was a great place to live, and they did everything they could to illustrate that to you. To this day I believe that Fort Wayne has some of the coldest weather and warmest people in the country."

In Fort Wayne we no longer have the Pistons basketball team. We still have nearly 1000 Zollner Pistons jobs that are part of the backbone of our community. We have the pride of having been there in the early days of the NBA and now having one of our community leaders being honored by his selection into the Basketball Hall of Fame. And we still have some of the coldest weather and warmest people in the country.

#### TRIBUTE TO U.S. WOMEN'S NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the United States women's national soccer team. Our soccer team won the women's World Cup. This tournament was held this past weekend in Pasadena, California.

We are all very proud of our women's soccer team. The 1999 women's soccer team has boldly gone where no United States soccer team has gone before. And along the way, Mr. Speaker, they have taught us all that anything is possible if you dare to dream; that by raising the bar of expectations, there can be no limits; that if you are allowed to