

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF
ALBERT "AL" POMBO

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Albert "Al" Pombo who passed away on November 19, 2010. Al Pombo was an extraordinary man and a favorite of racing fans throughout California, but also a personal hero of mine. I ask that portions of an article published by The Fresno Bee be entered into the RECORD.

Al kissed bumpers and babies in a hard-charging auto racing career in the Central Valley that often angered competitors while captivating fans, young and old, died Friday at Veterans Hospital in Fresno. He was 85.

"He was just talented, very good—he was the best," another former Valley racer, Dan Green, said Saturday of Mr. Pombo, who launched his career at Merced Speedway in the jalopy class in 1948, went on to compete in dirt cars, hardtops, sprint cars and super modifieds and won more than 500 main events, seven NASCAR supermodified titles and numerous championships at short tracks throughout California before he retired in 1971.

He actually came out of retirement for one final race, driving Al Brazil's circle No. 3 sprint car at Clovis Speedway in 1976. "They broke the mold when they made him," Kings Speedway promoter Dave Swindell once said of Mr. Pombo, the state's top hardtop racer in the 1960s. Kenny Takeuchi, a former announcer at Kearney Bowl and other tracks across the state, once said: "He was dedicated to the sport. Whether it's God-given or not, he had real driving talent and competition never fazed him. He was also good on dirt or pavement, and that's rare to find today." Mr. Pombo was particularly dedicated to the Valley. "He had the ability to go back East," Green said, "but he never did really care about going on to Indy and the big time. He was a local guy and very few people beat him."

Mr. Pombo fancied the tight, quarter-mile oval at the old Kearney Bowl, where his duels with Marshall Sargent riveted the Valley racing audience in the 1950s and '60s and helped pump racing blood back into the hearts of those still mourning the 1955 Indianapolis 500 loss of Fresno icon Billy Vukovich Sr.

It was at Kearney Bowl—once Fresno Airport Speedway, and then Italian Park Speedway—where Vukovich forged his career from 1936-47 behind the wheel of the little red "Old Ironsides" before crowds approaching 20,000 that routinely arrived for Sunday night midgets. It was primarily there and at Clovis Speedway that Mr. Pombo developed a Valley fan following arguably only exceeded by Vukovich in the region's history of auto racing.

Mr. Pombo's popularity hardly faded deep into his retirement as it was common to see him in recent years smooching babies and being swarmed by kids and adults at autograph sessions at Valley tracks. He couldn't be torn away from his passion, even though he used a wheelchair in his final months. He made his last appearance, signing his hats, T-shirts and pictures per usual, Oct. 22-23 at the Trophy Cup at Tulare's Thunderbowl

Raceway. Mr. Pombo was taken there by longtime friend Paul Reiter, his designated driver for years. And, to the end, Reiter witnessed many who bowed to the icon. "People from way back would tell their kids to shake this man's hands, the legend of all time," said Reiter, a former soda vendor at Kearney Bowl. "People would tell him, 'You're the greatest driver . . . you gave us so many nights of thrills . . . I met my wife at the track and watched your whole career.'"

Most memorable were the duels with Sargent that found metal to metal and occasional fist to fist. So intense was their rivalry, bleacher brawling was common among fans fighting in defense of one or the other racers. And so prominent in Valley racing annals, a tribute is still paid in the form of the annual Pombo-Sargent Classic at Kings Speedway. "We were always the best friends in the world," once said Pombo, also namesake of the Al Pombo Classic that continues at Madera Speedway. "But when the green flag dropped, we'd come out fighting. Sometimes, we'd mix it up a bit, but we'd always end up in the bar partying."

Daughter of Al Pombo's son, Tony, she said her grandfather hadn't walked since falling and breaking his hip in late June. Since, he had remained at Fresno's Veterans Hospital. And it was there that Reiter would pick him up, drive him to tracks in Tulare, Chowchilla, Madera and Hanford, and return him the same night, as late as 2 a.m. "He loved kids, he loved people, he loved everybody," Reiter said. "You couldn't ask for a better guy. He was my hero."

Al was born in the Azores on June 3, 1925. He is preceded in death by his wife Pat, and children Diana, David, and Albert Jr. Al is survived by his children, Alisa and Larry McDonald, Patty Micheli, Debbie Pombo, Tony and Susan Pombo, Pat Ruch, and fifteen grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the life of this remarkable man, and one of my personal heroes, as we offer our condolences to his family and celebrate his memory and service to our community and California.

HONORING DR. NORMAN WALL

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Mr. GRAYSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations on Dr. Norman Wall being honored for his many contributions to the foundation of the Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer, Israel and his continued involvement in medical advancements both in the United States and in Israel.

He used his role as a medical officer in the U.S. Army during World War II to help establish what is now Israel's largest hospital and research center. Dr. Wall has not stopped giving back to the community both here and abroad. Since his move to Orlando in 1995, he has made a great impact on the Florida Hospital community.

I greatly appreciate his service in the U.S. Army and his many contributions in the field of medicine. Dr. Wall has a true grasp of the

concept of tikkun olam and I am inspired by his commitment to making the world a better place.

HONORING SUMMER KENNEDY

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Summer Kennedy, my cousin, for her stewardship in the opening of the Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools Complex in Los Angeles, California on September 13, 2010. Named after U.S. Senator Robert F. Kennedy, Summer's father and my uncle, the schools are devoted to social justice. Summer's work on behalf of the young people of Los Angeles is simply remarkable.

On September 13, the six pilot schools that make up the Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools Complex began instructing students in grades kindergarten through 12th on its campus located in the Pico-Union/Korea Town neighborhood of Los Angeles. The schools are located on the site of the former Ambassador Hotel and because of the historic nature of the site, there were legal challenges to converting the site to a school. Community members and organizations, including RFK-12, came together to advocate for a local school. In 2005, the Los Angeles Unified School District School Board and Superintendent Roy Romer appointed the Robert F. Kennedy Commission to provide recommendations on how to memorialize Senator Kennedy's life. The commission was chaired by former California Supreme Court Justice Cruz Reynoso, and included a number of civic leaders.

The Commission's major recommendation called for a social justice theme to permeate the curriculum, extending from kindergarten through high school that would reflect Senator Kennedy's commitment throughout his public life.

The schools activities include: the creation of a foundation guided by an Advisory Committee that will help to fund social-justice related activities and act as a resource for the schools on establishing relationships with community service groups outside the school locally and in the larger world, a speakers program, a fellows program that will bring emerging and established leaders to the school, and the creation of a public park recalling the inspirational speeches by the Senator and others.

The pilot schools are innovative small schools that have charter-like autonomy over their budget, curriculum and assessment, governance, schedule and staffing, but are part of the public school system.

Summer has been instrumental in the improvement of public education in Los Angeles. I wish her all the best as she continues her important work on behalf of young people. She will continue to carry my own admiration, and that of all who have had the privilege to work with her.

A TRIBUTE TO MARY SCARPA FOR
HER PUBLIC SERVICE TO
ADELANTO, CALIFORNIA

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Mr. LEWIS of California. Madam Speaker, I would like to join today with my friend and colleague Congressman BUCK McKEON in paying tribute to Mary Scarpa, the former mayor of Adelanto, California, who helped that small desert city grow and prosper over two decades of public service.

Mary Scarpa arrived in California's Mojave Desert in 1968 with her husband John, joining their lifelong friends from the U.S. Air Force, Patricia and Herbert Chamberlaine. They moved to Adelanto, a then tiny city in the shadow of George Air Force Base, where Herbert Chamberlaine was stationed.

Within two years, Mary Scarpa and Patricia Chamberlaine began their community involvement by helping organize the incorporation of the city of Adelanto. They founded the Adelanto Independent newspaper to watch over civic affairs. Mary Scarpa joined the city's planning commission in 1971, and was elected to the City Council in 1981. She served on the council for the next 16 years, including four years as Mayor. For many of those years, she was joined on the civic body by her friend Pat Chamberlaine.

The city of Adelanto had just 2,100 residents when Mary Scarpa was elected to the council. It had few amenities and almost no business base other than the Air Force Base. Today, the city has industrial parks, housing tracts and its own minor league baseball stadium—and a population approaching 30,000. Mary Scarpa is credited for much of the progress.

At 83, Mary Scarpa is still involved in community activities through her work with the Community Food Closet charitable pantry and through organizations like the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Read Across America program in the local schools. She has attended nearly every game of the minor league High Desert Mavericks at the baseball stadium she helped bring to the city.

Madam Speaker, the city of Adelanto and the Adelanto Chamber of Commerce are honoring Mary Scarpa as one of the founders and civic leaders of the city. Please join Congressman McKEON and me in congratulating Mary on her long years of public service, and wishing her well in her future endeavors.

HONORING THE CAREER OF
MARGIE FITES SEIGLE

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Margie Fites Seigle and to celebrate her retirement after 17 years as the visionary President & CEO of the California Family Health Council (CFHC), headquartered in Los Angeles, California.

Margie Fites Seigle has long been a peerless advocate for the low-income and under-

served. A champion for women's and civil rights, Margie's career in social justice began after she accepted a job with Planned Parenthood, an organization dedicated to advocating for and ensuring access to important reproductive and sexual health care services. For the next 17 years, Margie served as Executive Director of two Planned Parenthood affiliates: Allentown, Pennsylvania and Orange/San Bernardino Counties, California, where she lead an expansion of services and geographic outreach.

But perhaps Margie's most pivotal role has been as the President & CEO of the California Family Health Council. CFHC works with over 70 delegate agencies that provide family planning services in more than 300 clinics throughout the state of California. More than one million Californians receive care in one of these clinics. CFHC also conducts contraceptive research; develops culturally and linguistically appropriate educational materials; facilitates conferences, seminars, and training workshops for clinical staff and community health workers; and champions reproductive health and justice issues through coalition building and policy advocacy.

Aside from her leadership roles, Margie has actively promoted increased access to health care services for California's women and men through strategic alliance building. Margie has served on the boards of the Coalition of Orange County Community Clinics; the Family Planning Councils of America; the Family Planning Providers Council; the Guttmacher Institute; and the National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association.

Margie has worked hard to promote and preserve California's Medicaid waiver for family planning services, FamilyPACT, which provides health care to low-income women and men at no cost. Though the waiver provides cost-savings to the state of California, it is consistently under threat. The FamilyPACT program remains alive today as a direct result of the efforts of Margie and other coalition partners who fight to maintain it.

Madam Speaker, I want to recognize Margie Fites Seigle for all of the important work she has done to expand access to vital reproductive and sexual health care for millions of Americans, and for her many years of unwavering dedication to the low-income and underserved.

HONORING MAXWELL KENNEDY

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Maxwell Kennedy, my cousin, for his stewardship in the opening of the Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools Complex in Los Angeles, California on September 13, 2010. Named after U.S. Senator Robert F. Kennedy, Maxwell's father and my uncle, the schools are devoted to social justice. Maxwell's work on behalf of the young people of Los Angeles is simply remarkable.

On September 13, the six pilot schools that make up the Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools Complex began instructing students in grades kindergarten through 12th on its campus located in the Pico-Union/Korea Town

neighborhood of Los Angeles. The schools are located on the site of the former Ambassador Hotel and because of the historic nature of the site, there were legal challenges to converting the site to a school. Community members and organizations, including RFK-12, came together to advocate for a local school. In 2005, the Los Angeles Unified School District School Board and Superintendent Roy Romer appointed the Robert F. Kennedy Commission to provide recommendations on how to memorialize Senator Kennedy's life. The commission was chaired by former California Supreme Court Justice Cruz Reynoso, and included a number of civic leaders.

The Commission's major recommendation called for a social justice theme to permeate the curriculum, extending from kindergarten through high school that would reflect Senator Kennedy's commitment throughout his public life.

The schools activities include: the creation of a foundation guided by an Advisory Committee that will help to fund social-justice related activities and act as a resource for the schools on establishing relationships with community service groups outside the school locally and in the larger world, a speakers program, a fellows program that will bring emerging and established leaders to the school, and the creation of a public park recalling the inspirational speeches by the Senator and others.

The pilot schools are innovative small schools that have charter-like autonomy over their budget, curriculum and assessment, governance, schedule and staffing, but are part of the public school system.

Maxwell has been instrumental in the improvement of public education in Los Angeles. I wish him all the best as he continues his important work on behalf of young people. He will continue to carry my own admiration, and that of all who have had the privilege to work with him.

REPRESENTATIVE CAROLYN
CHEEKS KILPATRICK

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus it is with great pleasure and pride that I rise today to extend my best wishes to Congresswoman CAROLYN KILPATRICK as she prepares to retire from the United States Congress after 14 years of service to the people of the 13th congressional district of Michigan and our nation.

Congresswoman Kilpatrick was an exemplary chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, who I served with as First Vice Chair during the 110th Congress. I have also had the pleasure of serving with Congresswoman KILPATRICK as a member of the House Appropriations Committee, where she has been a forceful advocate for her constituents and the state of Michigan. A brilliant and focused lawmaker, Congresswoman KILPATRICK is known for her inspirational leadership, her outstanding passion for public service, and her steadfast commitment to education and equality.

While serving on Capitol Hill, Congresswoman KILPATRICK has worked to level the