

The local news channel New York One once dubbed him "New Yorker of the Week". Well, I think that could be an understatement.

Martin Gold was a Bronx Man for Life.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF
WILBERT BLACK

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebration of the life of Wilbert Black. It seems like Mr. Black has always been a part of my life—not true. I started frequenting his place of business 20 years ago. Back then his chair is where Darryl's chair is now.

At that time you could not make an appointment—it was first come, first served. My sister Barbara would come home from Connecticut and we would race to be first at the salon, sometime as early as 5:00 or 6:00 in the morning.

He was known as "The Curl King," in all of his regalia—tuxedos, three-piece suits, Gator shoes and his hair always in place. He kept an immaculate salon with tasty treats like coffee, cookies, wine, cheese and champagne.

Mr. Black not only was my hairstylist, he was my friend. He was never too busy for me. He always made himself available, offering constructive criticism and encouraging words. He was my political ally. He had a wall in his shop dedicated to me and my accomplishments. Everyone knew how much he respected and adored me and how much I loved him.

He loved the city of East Cleveland. From Euclid Avenue to Hayden Road to Noble Road, he was involved in every political campaign for candidates and issues. He worked the polls and did whatever it took to ensure that the people of East Cleveland exercised their right to vote.

Once President Bill Clinton came to Cleveland and Mr. Black agreed to drive a van as part of the President's caravan. He enjoyed it so much and talked about it constantly. My only regret was that the photo taken by the official photographer never reached Mr. Black though I tried my damndest to get it.

Sometimes getting my hair done was an all day experience! People used to say, ". . . what do you do all day, or what does Mr. Black do to your hair that takes all day?" Well let me take you through the day. You arrived and you were greeted with a huge smile and a big hug. He would ask about my family and then we would discuss current events in the city, the country and around the world. Then he would seat me in the main chair. There he would check my hair for any new growth and its condition. Then he would ask, ". . . when was your last service," ". . . what are we going to do today," or ". . . do you want to do something different?" Then it was on to the sink for a vigorous washing and conditioning. Then he would have me sit under the dryer for about 20 minutes. Then it was back to the main chair for styling.

I was so looking forward to my visit to Mr. Black's salon on November 8th the day after the election. I was scheduled for a trim, wash and condition. But more importantly I was

looking forward to our discussions of the elections. Mr. Black wanted the Democrats to be in the majority in the House and Senate as much as I did. He wanted Strickland to beat Blackwell, wanted gaming in Ohio, wanted the minimum wage increased, wanted our children to have a better education, wanted business, particularly in black communities to thrive, and wanted the best for his city, the city of East Cleveland.

I can just hear him saying, "Miss Jones, Miss Jones, what about these Democrats . . . Miss Jones, Miss Jones I am so glad Rumsfeld is gone . . . Miss Jones, President Bush is in trouble now!" His television was always on CNN, and I can remember vividly having spirited political conversations in his salon with him and Mrs. Black, and Darryl.

The Black Family was a strong one. Often when I arrived at the salon they would show me their pictures from their numerous trips across the country. I especially remember the ones from the fights in Atlantic City and Las Vegas. We did attend one fight together in Atlantic City. That photo now hangs on my wall of fame in the salon.

I always wanted to travel with him, but I was afraid that my wardrobe could not compete with Mr. Black's impeccable sense of style. When the expression "sharp as a tack" was coined, they must have been talking about Mr. Black. He was always immaculately dressed—suit, shirts, shoes, tie, cuff links, all meticulously selected. Each hair on his head would be in place. He was often known to do hair in his tuxedo! He took great pride in his appearance and I always admired that.

I had the privilege of nominating Mr. Black for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Unsung Heroes award. I remember him being so proud receiving his award. We had a wonderful time that day. He is truly an unsung hero. With more than 30 years in business, he is an institution, an icon, a beacon on the corner of Noble Road.

He was a wonderful husband. He and Odessa were a model of success in marriage, friendship, business and parenting. Nothing was more fun that to hear them go back and forth with each other. They were a couple who loved each, their profession and their children and grandchildren. His sons Darryl and Petey could not have had a better role model. He set the example for his sons and shared his knowledge with them.

We at Bethany Baptist Church were happy when the Black family joined our church, but no more happy than his sister Charlotte Blue one of our longtime members.

When Mr. Black found out he had cancer he got ready to fight. He handled his illness with such dignity. He kept going and going. I recall I tried to cancel my last appointment but he would not let me. He insisted that he would do my hair. He took his time and I refused to rush him. I wanted more than anything to just say "Rest, Mr. Black," but he would not hear it. He was going to finish no matter what.

Mr. Black, I am sure you are in heaven with the rest of your family, probably doing hair in your salon. I can imagine the immaculate decorations, the flowers, the seating, the stations, the cheerful greeting, and the broad smile. Rest well, my friend, my ally, my hero extraordinaire.

TRIBUTE TO THE SERVICE AND
CONTRIBUTIONS OF LYNN L.
SKERPON

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the contributions of my friend and an excellent, committed public servant for Prince George's County and the State of Maryland, Lynn Skerpon of Upper Marlboro.

For six years, Lynn served as the very effective, efficient and competent Register of Wills in Prince George's County. She was appointed to this position on August 1, 2000, and then was elected to a four-year term in November 2002.

As the Washington Post noted in an editorial this past September: "The register of wills is not, as some have suggested, a mere court clerk but a significant job that in a given year administers some 4,000 estates, collects millions in taxes and fees and sorts through increasingly complicated legal issues." In fact, one of Lynn's proudest moments was assisting families of the September 11th victims and working with the federal government and other agencies in expediting aid to the those families.

Lynn is an accomplished, successful lawyer, who also has great experience in the legislative arena. She graduated from Princeton University in 1975, and then acquired her law degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Law three years later.

Early in her career, Lynn practiced as a sole practitioner and in firms, focusing on estates and trusts. She was an assistant legislative officer in the Office of the Governor from 1982 to 1984, and a hearing examiner with the Maryland Tax Court from 1984 to 1986. She also served as sessions counsel to Prince George's County Senators in 1997-98, and in the legislative office of the County Executive in 1999-2000.

In addition to her professional service and achievements, Lynn also is active in her church, schools and civic and community associations, including the Board of Trustees of Capital Hospice, the Board of Trustees of Prince George's Community College, and United Way of Prince George's County.

As Lynn moves to a new phase of her already successful career, I wish her and her family nothing but the best and know that she will continue to serve the community that she has called home for more than 20 years.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN LANE
EVANS

SPEECH OF

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2006

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor my friend and colleague, Congressman LANE EVANS, for his service in the House of Representatives and his dedication to the people of the 17th district of Illinois and veterans around the nation.

Congressman EVANS has served honorably in this chamber for eleven terms, and leaves