

HONORING WILLIAM H.
ROBERTSON

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 2, 2018

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a symbol of American integrity in our community, William H. Robertson. Mr. Robertson celebrated his 90th birthday on Saturday, March 10, 2018.

Bill Robertson was born to Henry and Mae Robertson on February 29, 1928, in Bronx, New York. He grew up in Edgewater Park in the Bronx, and attended P.S. 72 Elementary School and Evander Childs High School.

After graduation from high school in 1946, Bill followed in his father's footsteps and joined the electrician's union, the IBEW, Local 3. He was deeply involved in community service, including social and athletic events sponsored by the Edgewater Athletic Association. Bill was also an organizer of the annual Edgewater Labor Day festivities, a unifying event for the Bronx.

Answering a call to duty, Bill enlisted in the U.S. Army in September 1950. After completing his Basic Training at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, he returned home on leave, and married his long-time sweetheart, Helen. Bill was deployed to serve in the Korean conflict as a member of the 7th Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division. He served proudly in difficult combat engagements, and was wounded in July, 1951, though he returned to the battlefield for the duration of his enlistment. Bill was awarded the Purple Heart, the Korean Service Medal, and the United Nations Service Medal. He was given his Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Army on June 26, 1952. Bill's love of country never wavered, and to this day, he is an active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

In 1963, the Robertsons moved to Crestwood, Yonkers, where Bill found new ways to contribute. He was an active member of the Annunciation Parish and the Hillcrest Lakers Community Club. He taught, coached, and helped run a men's softball league, and was president of a bowling league in the Bronx.

In 2009 Bill and Helen moved north to Yorktown Heights, New York. He is now enjoying retirement with his wife of 67 years, and his wonderful family, including his 10 grandchildren.

Bill is an inspiration to us all and it is my honor to recognize him. Congratulations to him, and I want to wish him a very happy birthday.

HONORING BETSY BERNSTEIN

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Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge a pillar of the Westchester Jewish Council community who has been instrumental in WJC's success now for many years, Betsy Bernstein.

Betsy's involvement with WJC began when her husband, Julian, took some time out of his day to get involved in the community. Fol-

lowing Julian's tragic passing in 2005, Betsy joined the WJC Board. Betsy co-chairs and works annually with her sons Michael and David to coordinate the Julian Y. Bernstein Distinguished Service Awards, honoring member organizations and their dedicated leaders who have enriched our Westchester community.

Betsy is a founding committee member of the Council's Leadership Development Institute, and has served on numerous other Council committees over the years. Betsy and her husband, Keith Satter, are members of both the Jewish Community Center in Harrison and Congregation Beth El in Norwalk, CT. Betsy has served as a JCCH trustee and Keith currently serves as JCCH President.

Outside of her WJC commitments, Betsy founded the Bernstein Research Group which provides marketing research and consulting services to help companies identify ways to make products and services better fit users' needs. She earned her MBA from the distinguished Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and a BA from Goucher College in Towson, MD.

This year, WJC is honoring Betsy at their 42nd Anniversary Gala for all of her incredible work to make the WJC community stronger. They could not have picked a more deserving honoree. Congratulations to Betsy on receiving the wonderful recognition, and I thank her for all her hard work.

HONORING ANNE ANDERSON

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Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, as Ranking Member on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I have the pleasure of meeting many different Ambassadors from across the globe, and today I would like to recognize one who is being honored this week in Yonkers.

Anne Anderson, the 17th Ambassador of Ireland to the United States, was born in Clonmel, County Tipperary in July 1952. She graduated from University College Dublin with a Bachelor of Arts degree, and from King's Inns, where she earned a Diploma in Legal Studies. Anne joined the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs in 1972. She was Third Secretary and then First Secretary in the Department's Economic Division from 1972 to 1976. Later, Anne moved to Geneva where she was First Secretary of Ireland's Permanent Mission to the United Nations from 1976 to 1980, including a six-month assignment in Belgrade. She was also First Secretary of the Political Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs from 1980 to 1983.

In 1985, Anne was appointed Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, where she served till 2001. While there, she was named as chair of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights from 1999 to 2000, the fourth woman to earn the honor. She moved on to Brussels to act as Permanent Representative of Ireland to the European Union from 2001 to 2005, where she was named Diplomat of the Year by European Voice. Anne was then named Ireland's Ambassador to France from July 2005 to 2009, then moved from Paris to New York City when

she became Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations from September 2009 to 2013. Anne was appointed as the first female Ambassador of Ireland to the United States by the Irish Government.

Anne has had a remarkable career, and this year is being honored at the Annual Yonkers St. Patrick's Day Parade Dinner Dance. She is most deserving of this wonderful recognition and I want to congratulate her on receiving this honor.

HONORING LOUIS A. PICANI

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Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true community servant, a long-time pillar of labor organizations in my district, and a good friend, Louis A. Picani. This year, Lou is being honored with the MPAC Trailblazer award by MPAC at their Third Annual Gala and I too would like to honor him on the occasion.

Louis A. Picani has been a dedicated Union member since he joined Teamsters Local 456 over 30 years ago. Starting in 1992, he was appointed Shop Steward for the City of Yonkers Department of Public Work. Lou was elected as a Teamsters Local 456 Trustee and appointed as a Teamsters Local 456 Business Agent in 2005. Lou was also elected Grand Marshall for the annual City of Yonkers Columbus Day Parade, in recognition of honoring Italian-American Heritage.

In 2016, Lou was elected President and Principal Officer of Teamsters Local 456. He serves as Vice President of the Westchester Putnam Central Labor Body. For many years, Lou has been a member of Joint Council 16's New York Teamsters Political Action Committee. He is also a licensed drug and alcohol counselor. Lou has spent his entire career as a visionary, fighting for workers' rights, fair wages and benefits, workplace safety, and the right to organize.

Lou's history of Union involvement has been an inspiration and the breadth of the roles he has served is a testament to his personal commitment to helping others. MPAC could not have chosen more of a Trailblazer to honor than Lou, and I want to congratulate him on receiving this wonderful recognition.

HONORING MICHAEL KARNES

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Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize a key member of the Westchester Jewish Council community, Michael Karnes, who has been instrumental in WJC's growth for the last 26 years.

Michael joined the Board of WJC at the urging of a good friend in 1992. He has served as a board member, Secretary and most recently as Treasurer of the Council. Michael is a lifelong member of Temple Beth Abraham in Tarrytown, where he celebrated his Bar Mitzvah. Michael has gone on to become the

youngest president in the 118 year history of the congregation and has the distinction of being the only person to have had the privilege of serving as president three times.

Michael has also served on the Executive Board and Board of Governors of the JCC on the Hudson, now known as the Shames JCC on the Hudson. He continues to serve as a voluntary arbitrator in the New York City Civil Court Small Claims Division.

And perhaps most importantly, during his first term as President of Temple Beth Abraham, Michael met Jane Rubin, whom along with her two sons, Alan and Gary, he welcomed into his life. With the addition of Marissa to the family, Jane and Michael have become the proud grandparents of Ellie, Judah, and Sam. His passion for his family is truly his driving force.

This year, WJC is honoring Michael at the organization's 42nd Anniversary Gala for all his dedication and hard work to their community. He is a most deserving honoree, and I want to congratulate him on the occasion.

HONORING GARY TRACHTEN

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Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor an individual who has selflessly given to the Westchester Jewish Council community for many years, Gary Trachten.

Deeply inspired by his late parents "Moishe" and Shirley Trachten, Gary heard the call to community service. He has been on the Board

of WJC for nine years—four years as an officer on its Executive Committee, and for the past six years as the ever-enthusiastic Event Chair for the annual Westchester Jewish Music and Arts Festival.

A native of New Haven Connecticut, Gary graduated from Boston University and Emory University School of Law. Gary also serves on the Board of Hillels of Westchester, is a past president of the Pelham Jewish Center, and serves on the Advisory Board of Project T.E.N., International Israel & Diaspora "Jewish peace Corp," under the auspices of the Jewish Agency. Gary is also a founding partner of Kudman Trachten Aloe LLP, a mainly commercial law firm where he focuses on employment law.

Outside of work and community service, Gary's great passion is family. He and his wife, Evelyn, live in New Rochelle where they raise two children, Jseof and Sofie. As Congressman who represents New Rochelle, I am proud to call the Trachtens my constituents.

This year WJC is honoring Gary at their 42nd Anniversary Gala for all his fine work on behalf of the community. They have made an excellent choice of an honoree. Congratulations to Gary on this wonderful occasion.

HONORING KATHY AND PETE POTOCKI

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Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor pillars of Pelham community, Kathy and

Pete Potocki, who this year are celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the organization they founded, The Danny Fund, at the organization's annual 2018 Valentines Ball.

The Potocki's were home in Pelham on December 10, 1992 when their 4-1/2 year-old son, Danny, was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia. A blood and donation drive was organized with the help of the Pelham Civics and other organizations to help Danny in his fight, and over 100 people donated blood and platelets. Danny successfully fought the disease and today lives a full life with a daughter in 2nd Grade in Pelham. The Pelham community's response to help Danny was tremendous, and laid the groundwork for what was to come.

After Danny returned home and began kindergarten at Colonial School, it was learned that other Pelham children were ill and their families needed help. So Kathy and Pete, in association with the Knights of Columbus, started to organize The Danny Fund, a 100 percent volunteer organization that provides financial, emotional, and advocacy support for the families of children suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury. The Danny Fund adopts a family for the long haul and provides ongoing support as it is needed, for as long as it's needed.

The Danny Fund has done some amazing work, and this year the organization will be honoring Kathy and Pete at the Valentine's Ball for their incredible dedication and work. I too would like to honor and congratulate them on this well-deserved recognition, and thank them for all of their contributions to our community.