

A SALUTE TO STAN TUPPER:
ROTARY'S 2003 RECIPIENT OF
THE LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD

Stanley R. Tupper has been my mentor and hero for forty years. Stan Tupper is a lawyer and politician, a compassionate and principled man, a famous yet humble individual, a person with a family focus and community commitment, and a community-builder, national leader, and international ambassador. Stan is the Boothbay Region's only person, ever, of national stature. He has inspired me and many others for decades. Stan stands out as particularly worthy of Rotary's coveted Lifetime Service Award. And his story needs telling because most of us know only fragments of his incredible service and indelible legacy and because some of us know nothing of Stan Tupper.

Eighty-two years ago last Saturday, Stan was born on January 25, 1921, son of Elizabeth and Asa D. Tupper. Stan is married to Jill Kaplan Tupper, and they have a daughter, Lara Abigail Tupper. He also has a son, Stanley R. "Lee" Tupper, Jr., who lives in Hilton Head, SC, from his first marriage to Esther M. McKown, and he has three grandchildren, Stan III (who is here tonight), Diana Friant, and Stacey Tupper. He has one great-granddaughter, Elizabeth Tupper.

Stan attended Boothbay Harbor schools and graduated from Boothbay Harbor High School in 1939. He attended Hebron Academy and Middlebury College. He graduated from the U.S. Border Patrol Training School in El Paso, TX. He attained his LL.B (Bachelor of Laws) degree from LaSalle Extension University and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Ricker College.

At 21 he became a U.S. Border Patrol Inspector, serving on both the Mexican and Canadian borders. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II, in September of 1944, and became a petty officer third class. Upon an honorable discharge two years later, in March of 1946, he returned to the U.S. Border Patrol.

He resigned from the Immigration Service to study law in his father's Boothbay Harbor law offices and was admitted to the practice of law in Maine in 1949. The following year he was admitted to practice before the Federal District Court, and in 1952 he was admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court.

In 1948 Stan was elected to Boothbay Harbor's last three-person Board of Selectmen and then served the next term as chairman of the town's first five-person board. While Selectman he was instrumental in the formation of Boothbay Harbor's first police force, in the adoption of the secret ballot for town officials, in the competitive bidding for town equipment and services, and in the adoption of the Town Manager form of government.

As a young attorney he assisted in the organization of the Boothbay Region Lobstermen's Cooperative (and he has helped "The Co-op" for the past five decades). In 1952 he was elected to serve in the Maine House of Representatives for the towns of Boothbay Harbor, Boothbay, Southport, Bristol, South Bristol, and Monhegan. He was also named chairman of the House Committee on Sea and Shore Fisheries. The next year, in 1953, Stan was appointed Maine Commissioner of Sea & Shore Fisheries (now DMR). As Commissioner, from 1953 to 1957, he instituted a vigorous marketing program for Maine lobsters and fishery products; he utilized TV, radio, and newspapers – he even imported a beauty queen from New York City. Stan elevated the importance of the West Harbor Laboratory by resurrecting the Aquarium, by appointing a director to organize DMR, by filming the lobster industry in "Out of the Sea", and by bringing fresh out of college to the DMR John Hurst, who would dedicate over 50 years of service to the Lab, where he still works full-time.

Returning to the private practice of law, Stan represented a number of fishing organizations and individual fishermen. In a high-profile case in Federal Court in Portland, he advocated for the president of the Maine Lobstermen's Association in an antitrust suit brought against the association and its president in the late 1950s. Stan was prominently featured in a book published in 1997, The Great Lobster War, for his role during the 1950s. Also during the 1950s Stan served as legislative counsel in Maine for the Boston and Maine Railroad.

After a stint, in 1959 and 1960, as an Assistant Attorney General for Maine (when it was not yet Maine's largest law firm), Stan Tupper won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, the first and only person to be elected to major office from the Boothbay Region. He served in the 87th, 88th, and 89th Congresses, from January 3, 1961 to January 3, 1967, and he has never lost an election, although he came close, narrowly defeating Kenneth Curtis by 203 votes (despite this, Curtis, too, has remained a close, lifelong friend). Stan served Maine's Second District from 1961 to 1963 and then Maine's First District from 1963 to 1967, surviving the reduction in Maine's Congressional districts from three to two. Stan and 20 other moderate and liberal Republicans formed the "Wednesday Group," named by Stan after his grandmother's membership in Boothbay Harbor's Monday Club; this Wednesday Group coalesced into a powerful voice for the Republican minority in the House, and it is still going strong forty years later. Stan is proud of being one of only two Republican sponsors for Medicare (and I note that our Republican President Bush declared two nights ago in his State of the Union Speech that "Medicare is the binding commitment of a caring society"). Stan was instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965 – Majority Whip Tip O'Neill and many others have observed that the civil rights acts would not have been enacted without the support of the more moderate "Rockefeller Republicans" such as Stan Tupper. Stan also cast a deciding vote for a mild-mannered, conciliatory, yet conservative Republican, Gerald Ford, who barely edged out the incumbent, mean-spirited and conservative Charles Halleck, as Republican Leader of the U.S. House; this leadership post later catapulted Ford to become Vice

President and then President after Nixon's resignation. Stan Tupper fostered bipartisanship and civility in Washington, as he has always done in Maine.

While in Congress, Stan enlisted as a Major in the Air Force Reserves, in Senator Barry Goldwater's squadron. Stan liked the affable Goldwater, a two-star general in the Air Force Reserves, but Stan did not share his conservatism and had qualms about Goldwater's frequent remarks that we should "nuke" Vietnam.

It was through Stan's efforts as ranking member of the U.S. Coast Guard and Navigation Subcommittee that funds were obtained for the Coast Guard station at West Boothbay Harbor. Stan personally drove Jim Reed, then Secretary of the Treasury, which then controlled the Coast Guard, all along the coast of Maine. He and Jim Reed met President Kennedy aboard the Eagle and won the green light for the Coast Guard Station in Boothbay Harbor. JFK (who had appreciated Stan's prior support for his Kennedy-Saltonstall fisheries legislation) included it in his budget, Stan introduced it to the Appropriations Committee, and, voila, Boothbay Harbor had its Coast Guard Station, complete with helicopter pad and helicopter, although the helicopter was removed the day Stan left Congress. We still have the empty helicopter pad at Boothbay Harbor's bustling Coast Guard Station.

In 1967 President Johnson appointed Stan Tupper United States Commissioner General with the rank of Ambassador to represent the United States at the Canadian World Exhibition during Canada's Centennial Celebration. I have fond memories, as do many others, of spending time in Montreal with the celebrity, Stanley Tupper, when he was the U.S. Commissioner-General during "Expo 67." Up to this point, during his years as a Congressman and as an Ambassador, Stan spent more money out of his own pocket for the government than he received in salary from the government; this net loss quickly changed the next year (and since that time, though his government pension remains very modest by today's standards).

After a year in Canada, in 1968 Stan was named president of the states' Urban Action Center, a non-profit organization established by Nelson Rockefeller to assist governors on urban problems. While speaking with Mayor John Lindsay to an audience and gazing into the blaring the television lights, Mayor Lindsay asked Stan what qualifications he had to serve, and Stan retorted, "I am qualified due to my vast experience on the Boothbay Harbor Board of Selectmen," which produced roars of laughter. Stan and his Urban Action Center proceeded to dish out two million dollars of seed money for governments that year.

From 1969 to 1972 Stan resumed the practice of law, but in a very different firm and place. He accepted the prestigious and lucrative position as a partner in the Washington D.C. law firm (now Rogers and Wells – when William Rogers became Secretary of State under President Nixon). Stan represented a mere five clients, but all first-class and white-hat clients: Newsweek, Associated Press, the College Retirement Equities Fund, the Deltona Corporation, and the Pinkerton Foundation. His legal work focused on administrative law matters and legislative counseling.

In the fall of 1972, Stan abandoned the Washington scene. He and Jill moved back to his home town of Boothbay Harbor, where he resumed the small-town practice of law. When their daughter, Lara, started college, Jill studied law at the University of Maine School of Law and was admitted to the Maine Bar in 1994 and quickly emerged as an excellent attorney. They practice under the name of Tupper & Tupper.

While in college, I performed some independent polling throughout Midcoast Maine for Stan Tupper in 1973-1974, when he had a better chance than anyone to become the next governor of Maine. Tupper led all polls. He was still well-known as a 3-term Congressman who had never lost an election, an ambassador to Canada, and a moderate and independent-minded Republican. Stan decided not to run and chose family and community over the Blaine House. Instead, Jim Erwin ran for the third and last time as the Republican torchbearer, George Mitchell ran for the first time as the Democratic nominee, and both lost to the upstart, James Longley, an Independent.

In 1975, after declining a position as Assistant Secretary of Defense, President Ford appointed him United States Commissioner to the International Commission for Northeast Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF), a 19-nation panel, and a position he accepted. Stan within a year successfully terminated his position as Commissioner by convincing President Ford that the U.S. should abandon this international commission which conflicted with the new U.S. 200-mile fisheries zone. Stan noted that tiny Cuba had a larger fishing fleet than the U.S.

By the late 1970s, well before it became politically correct, Stan had become a vocal and visible anti-nuclear activist, fighting the continued operation of Maine Yankee. He led a 1983 legal challenge to Maine Yankee's evacuation plan, which showed gridlock along the entire peninsula. He helped organize the three state referenda to close Maine Yankee. His efforts finally prevailed.

Stan co-authored a book, One Continent – Two Voices, on the future of Canada/U.S. relations, published in 1967 by Clarke, Irwin, & Co. of Toronto, Canada. Stan also lectured at a number of colleges and universities and served on a number of boards, committees, and commissions, including the Maine Maritime Academy Board of Trustees and the U.S. Civil Rights Advisory Commission, and he chaired a blue-ribbon commission to examine ethics in state government in the late 1980s.

He donated his Stanley R. Tupper political papers collection to the Raymond H. Fogler Library at the University of Maine in Orono. The Tupper papers are in the Special Collections, along with the papers of William Cohen, William Hathaway, and Hannibal Hamlin.

In 1997 Stan wrote Recollections, an excellent series of short essays about significant people he has encountered. Only Stan can weave together essays on Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie and local environmentalist and prophet, Otis Dow, whom I remember from the vantage-point of a kid as the person who would push his wheelbarrow around town in

the 1960s. Stan concluded his Recollections, with a poignant point: “Certain people leave an imprint on our memory, and lives can be shaped to a certain extent, for good or bad, by those we meet along the way.”

Ever youthful and energetic, Stan has continued to accomplish so much behind-the-scenes for so many of our region’s inhabitants – such as helping a fisherman through the federal red tape, doing pro bono work for needy, single moms, assisting a surviving spouse through the trauma of loss and change, or helping a young person acquire a first home. This commonplace and common-sense work of community-building on a daily basis, along with love of family and friends, generally much younger than himself, has been Stan’s choice and the road less traveled, at least by successful national politicians. Family came first, community second, and politics now a distant third.

Yet Stan loves politics and soaks up and debates the issues. He stays in touch with many of his political friends, here in Maine and around the country. Many politicians continue to solicit his opinion, counsel, and support; for example, Stan Tupper, along with David Emery, served as Honorary Co-Chairman for the 2000 McCain for President Committee in Maine. Here is a special letter, which Stan has not yet seen, from one of his close political friends for over forty years, handwritten earlier this month. (Note the emphasis on friendship): “January, 8th, Dear Stan: Congratulations on receiving the Boothbay Harbor Rotary Club Lifetime Achievement Award. You really deserve this recognition for your superb service in the U.S. House of Representatives and in your community. I am proud of your record and I am most grateful for our friendship. With admiration and best wishes, Jerry Ford.”

As President Gerald R. Ford eloquently wrote, I, too, conclude: Stan, I am proud of your record, and I am most grateful for our friendship. I am grateful for our frequent time together resolving legal and people problems and often joining each other for lunch to share legal lore, community concerns, political positions, and personal feelings.

You are our Region’s best. You have surely shaped our lives for the good, and you leave us a legacy of ideals and actions imprinted upon us and future generations. Congratulations for a lifetime of service and for the service of a lifetime. Fortunately for you and for us, both your lifetime and your service continue to elevate you and all of us. Thank you.

Chip Griffin
January 30, 2003