



Tributes to Del

by: Pam Spaulding
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There has been an outpouring of public statements about the far-reaching impact of activist Del Martin's life on the LGBT community. Gavin Newsom, who attended yesterday's LGBT caucus, and learned of Martin's death minutes before, released this statement:

"For over half a century, Del Martin, along with her loving spouse, Phyllis Lyon, served as an activist for women's rights and the LGBT community. The marriage of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon on June 16, 2008, marked an historic milestone on our country's road to true freedom and equality. Del laid the groundwork for all those who want a life of dignity, and we are forever in her debt. The greatest way we can honor the life work of Del Martin, is to continue to fight and never give up, until we have achieved equality for all.

"Our deepest sympathies go out to Del's family, her spouse, Phyllis, her daughter, Kendra, and all those who mourn the loss of this great and pioneering woman. As a mark of respect for Del Martin, I have ordered the flags at City Hall and the LGBT Pride Flag on Market and Castro Streets to be flown at half-staff from now until sunset, on Thursday, August 28, 2008."

Barack Obama:

"Michelle and I were deeply saddened to hear that Del Martin had passed. Del committed her life to fighting discrimination and promoting equality. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her spouse Phyllis Lyon, and all those who were touched by her life."

Tammy Baldwin:

"Del Martin holds a place of honor in the pantheon of American civil rights leaders. She was a hero and a role model to me and countless other LGBT women and men who seek nothing more and nothing less than full equality. I offer my deep sympathies to her beloved wife, Phyllis, and pledge to carry on the work that they began."

Rea Carey, Executive Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force:

"Del and Phyllis were inspiration in action, living openly and proudly as a loving couple long before many others felt safe to stand with them. Their love for each other gave them strength and sustained them; that same love, courage and grace have left an indelible mark on our movement, and in each of our hearts.

"Del and Phyllis have personally been an inspiration to me since I came out when I was 16 years old. In my office, a picture of the two of them looks over me as I work to carry on their work and their vision for living our lives in truth. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force will honor Del's life by using our uncompromising voice and fighting for justice and equality - a voice made louder and stronger by her 87 years of life. Thank you, Del, for showing so many of us the way."