

Mark Michel Barkan

Mark Michel Barkan, American patriot, died on June 3, 2010 at age 92. Born in Russia near Lake Ladoga during the Russian Revolution in 1918, his family fled the Bolsheviks, settling in France. He grew up in Paris, and immigrated to the United States in 1939. He arrived on Labor Day, just as Germany started World War II. Labor Day has been celebrated by Mark's family and his friends ever since. In 1942, he married Maxine Lubell of Toledo, Ohio. Their daughter Katherine was born in Paris, France where they lived while Mark was employed by Trans World Airlines (TWA); daughter Frances was born in Toledo. Mark entered the United States Army in 1942 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in 1943 and later was promoted to Captain. Assigned to Military Intelligence, he served four years in India, China, and Berlin. As a linguist, he was the Chief Interpreter on the American staff of the Allied government in Berlin. His military decorations included the Army Commendation Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with two battle stars, the European-African- Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, American Campaign Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal and the World War II Victory Medal. He became a naturalized American citizen in 1943 while in the Army. He voted for the first time by absentee ballot while in Kunming, China. Maxine and Mark came to Houston, Texas in 1956 with their daughters Katherine and Frances where he worked for the Sealy Mattress Company as a salesman, then Vice-president of Marketing. When he retired, he opened his own consulting business to train employees in a variety of businesses and agencies. His daughter Frances predeceased him in 1987. Mark and Maxine moved to Austin in 1984 to be near their daughter and son-in-law, Katherine and Michael von Wupperfeld. For many years, Mark was a story teller at Children's Hospital and later at the Dell Children's Medical Center. He also was a mentor and story teller at Zavala Elementary School in the Austin Independent School District for nearly 18 years. The school held a "Mr. Barkan Day" in his honor that included the whole school body and students he had mentored. In 1999, he was honored by the American Institute for Public Service and KVUE-TV with the Five Who Care award. Later, he volunteered his services as story teller and puppeteer at the Dell Center Jewish Academy, working with fourth grade students. Mark treasured his American citizenship; he spoke to fraternal and service groups, numerous schools, and many others, pointing to his own life in this land of opportunity. He read voraciously, especially American and Texas history, and traveled extensively in Texas and the Southwest. He loved this land and its children. In addition to his wife, Maxine, Mark is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Katherine and Michael von Wupperfeld; sisters- in-law, Dolores Mitchell and husband Marvin Mitchell, of Watertown, MA, Peggy Lubell, El Paso, Texas; brother in-law, Donald Lubell and wife Sandra of Thousand Oaks, CA; son-in-law, Carl Applebaum and wife Mara of Seattle, WA; and numerous nieces and nephews. The family wishes to thank Drs. R. Scott Ream and William A. Robinson for the compassionate care they gave to Mark over the years. If desired, memorial contributions may be made to Wildflower Church, P.O. Box 40395, Austin, TX. 78704, or the Mark and Maxine Barkan Scholarship Fund at Zavala Elementary School (AISD), in care of the Austin Community Foundation, P.O. Box 5159, Austin, TX 78763. Memorial services will be held Sunday, June 13, 2010, at 2:30 p.m. at the Lt. Gen. Thomas Bishop All Faiths Chapel at Camp Mabry, 2200 W. 35th St. The family will gather for a private burial service June 14, 2010 at the military cemetery in Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas.