SAPINSLEY, MILTON

Milton Sapinsley dies; business, charity leader

PALM BEACH, Fla. — Milton C. Sapinsley, 94, former president and chairman of the board of Carol Cable Company in Pawtucket, and a longtime leader in Rhode Island civic and charitable organizations, died today.

He was the husband of the late Miriam (Gardner) Grant Sapinsley. His first wife was the late Elsa (Schwed) Sapinsley.



Mr. Sapinsley came to Rhode Island in 1920, when he and his brother, the late Alvin Sapinsley, purchased the Crescent Braid Co. In 1926 they converted the company to the manufacture of radio and automotive wire. Subsequently, the company was renamed Carol Cable Co., which became one of the largest employers in Rhode Island.

Mr. Sapinsley was a founder and the first president of the United Way in Rhode Island. He headed a committee that brought together the agencies of the R.I. Community Chest into the modern United Way of Southeastern New England, said Norm Caya, UW executive vice president.

"He was a real sparkplug in the notion of a broad-based charitable organization," said his son, John M. Sapinsley of Providence.

Mr. Sapinsley served terms as president of the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce, Miriam Hospital board of trustees, the Jewish Community Center, Ledgemont County Club and the Providence Community Fund. He also served on the boards of Lying-In Hospital, now Women & Infants; Temple Beth-El, the Jewish Home for the Aged, and the General Jewish Committee.

"He was a marvelous person — you not only admired him, you loved him," said James F. McCoy, a Pawtucket lawyer who followed Mr. Sapinsley as president of the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce.

McCoy recalled that Mr. Sapinsley's persistence resulted in the formation of the Pawtucket Planning Commission. He said Mr. Sapinsley convinced a reluctant City Council that more thorough planning was needed to ensure the city's progress and growth.

At Sapinsley's urging, the Chamber's planning committee became, en masse, the city Planning Commission, McCoy said.

Born in Louisville, Ky., Mr. Sapinsley lived in Providence until moving to Florida when he retired in 1970. He continued to spend summers in Rhode Island.

He served as first lieutenant in the 90th Infantry Division in France during World War I.

Besides his son, John, who is the husband of former Senate minority leader and Republican activist Lila Sapinsley, Mr. Sapinsley leaves a daughter, Jane S. Nelson of Providence; 7 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

The funeral will be Friday at noon at Temple Beth-El, Orchard and Butler Avenues. Interment will be private.

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SAPINSLEY, Milton C.

August 1, 1990. Beloved husband of the late Elsa (Schwed) Sapinsley and the late Miriam Grant Sapinsley. Residence Palm Beach, Florida. Formerly of Providence. Dear father of Jane S. Nelson and Professor John M. Sapinsley, Providence. Devoted grandfather of 7 grandchilden and 12 great grandchildren. Funeral services 12 noon, Friday at TEMPLE BETH-EL, Orchard at Butler Avenues. Relatives and friends are invited. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to The Milton C. Sapinsley Fund of The Miriam Hospital Capital Campaign. Memorial observance to be private. Arrangements by MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL.