



HR0685

LRB100 15489 ALS 30512 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives would like to recognize the Monastero family and Monastero's Ristorante on their 55 years of service to the Chicago community; and

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WHEREAS, The history of Monastero's Ristorante begins in the town of Caccamo, located in the province of Palermo, Italy, with Sebastiano and Maria Monastero; the family moved to Philadelphia with their daughter, Gina, in 1930; shortly after, their two sons, Joseph and Salvatore "Salvy" were born; the depression hit, and the family moved back to Caccamo in 1933; and

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WHEREAS, The dream of America was alive for the Monastero's two sons, and Salvy returned to Kankakee in 1951; he was followed by Joe in 1952 and Gina in 1953; the siblings sent for their parents in 1956, and the family worked towards their dream of opening a restaurant; and

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WHEREAS, Joe, Gina, and Salvy Monastero opened their first restaurant, La Canopy, on November 26, 1962; Salvy greeted the customers, purchased produce at the South Water Market and cut the meat; Joe bartended, played the accordion for the guests, sang with Salvy, and ran the business; Gina kept the family

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1 home in order and made all of the manicotti, cannelloni,
2 lasagna, and cannoli at home and sent them to the restaurant
3 with her brothers; this was the essence of a true
4 Sicilian-style family restaurant; and

5 WHEREAS, The doors to the current Monastero's Ristorante
6 opened on February 6, 1967; the menu of authentic homemade
7 Sicilian cuisine and the setting that highlighted Sicilian
8 traditions and culture made the restaurant a Chicago landmark;
9 everything, including the mayonnaise for the salad dressings,
10 was homemade; and

11 WHEREAS, As the restaurant continued to grow, the family
12 added an open-air garden room and held their first wine
13 festival, which featured a traditional harvest banquet,
14 entertainment, and women crushing grapes with their feet in
15 wine barrels to compete for the title of Wine Festival Queen;
16 the family also founded the Bel Canto Opera Evenings Contest
17 featured four evenings of fine dining and opera singers, where
18 over \$50,000 in prizes were awarded annually; and

19 WHEREAS, Monastero's Ristorante began hosting banquets in
20 the lower level of the restaurant; the popularity of the
21 banquets and the urging of their customers led the family to
22 build a larger banquet room, which they named the Boticelli
23 Room; a few years later, the Taste of Chicago approached the

1 Monasteros, and the family sold their Sicilian Aracine at a
2 booth at the festival for two years; they opened Gina's Banquet
3 Room in June of 1992; and

4 WHEREAS, Three generations of Monasteros have welcomed
5 customers into their extended home and family; the secret to
6 success for the Monastero family as been their tradition of
7 enthusiastic family involvement that has continued through the
8 closing of the restaurant on November 18, 2017 under the
9 guidance of Joe Sr. and his wife, Martha, their daughter Maria
10 Giorgia Orszula, and their son Joe Jr., and Salvy's daughter,
11 Maria Elisabeth Bueno; Joe Jr. and Martha have run the business
12 office, Executive Chef Maria Giorgia has overseen the kitchen,
13 created new recipes, and managed the advertising and social
14 media pages, and Maria Elisabeth has been the Director of
15 Catering for the private dining rooms; therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
17 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
18 recognize the success of the Monastero family and Monastero's
19 Ristorante, which was based upon the finest of ingredients and
20 a warm family atmosphere that allowed their customers to feel
21 at home while dining; we wish them success in their future
22 endeavors; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to the Monastero family as an expression of or esteem
2 and respect.