



City of Chicago



R2020-96

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	2/19/2020
Sponsor(s):	King (4)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Congratulations extended to Rueben Lee Norris on 85th birthday
Committee(s) Assignment:	

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, We, the members of the Chicago City Council, wish to extend our congratulations and warmest birthday wishes to **Rueben Lee Norris** in honor of his 85th Birthday; and,

WHEREAS, On behalf of the entire 4th Ward and the greater City of Chicago, Alderman Sophia King would like to extend her personal tribute to **Mr. Norris** on this momentous occasion as recognition for being an outstanding citizen of the City of Chicago; and,

WHEREAS, **Mr. Norris** is well known for his lifetime involvement in his community, particularly through his employment at both the Chicago Park District and Chicago Public Schools; and,

WHEREAS, **Mr. Norris** was born in Evansville, Indiana where he attended Lincoln High School and played four sports, receiving academic and athletic honors upon graduation; and,

WHEREAS, He choose to attend Knoxville College where he was awarded an athletic scholarship for football. In addition to his athletics, he pledged Omega Psi Phi Fraternity his junior year; and,

WHEREAS, Upon graduation, Rueben was drafted into the military, serving his term before being honorably discharged. In 1960 he moved to Chicago, where he began a life of community service; and,

WHEREAS, In 1962 he began teaching at-risk youth under a federal government program titled 'Manpower' in efforts to assist them in acquiring their G.E.D.; and,

WHEREAS, Rueben was hired that same year by the Chicago Park District, first as a weekend recreation leader and later a physical instructor; and,

WHEREAS, After six years at the Park District, he was promoted to Playground Supervisor of Horan Playground, only to be promoted to Park Supervisor of Douglas and Avalon Park four months later; and,

WHEREAS, His outstanding service to the Park District was noticed, and he would later become the Physical Activity Supervisor of Areas 1 & 2 and in 1973, he became an Area Supervisor, overseeing 36 parks; and,

WHEREAS, Upon his retirement from the Park District, he began teaching at King College Prep, where he served an additional 20 years as an educator; and,

WHEREAS, **Mr. Norris'** spirituality was a guiding light throughout his life, where he worked for the Diocese of Chicago and volunteers at his home church, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, in addition to serving as a facility manager and security guard at St. Edmunds Episcopal Church; and,

WHEREAS, **Rueben** is well known throughout the sports world for his 43-year tenure as a basketball official, where he traveled the country officiating major games and championships at high school, NCAA and NBA levels. For his work, he is known throughout Illinois and particularly Chicago as the "God Father of basketball officials;" and,

WHEREAS, From 1972-1992 **Reuben** and Jim Albriton coached/managed 'The Chicago Boston Shoot Out Team' which played an intricate part in the exposure of many NBA players and coaches such as Doc Rivers, Mark Aguire, Juan Howard, Alfred Hughes, Kevin Upshaw, Hersey Hawkins, Nazi Mohammed, Eddie Hughes, Marlon Maxey, Donnie Boyce, Nate Driggers, Terry Cummings, Bo Ellis, Rickey Green, Sonny Parker and many others; and,

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WHEREAS, Some of **Rueben's** firsts include: first African American to enter the All-American Soap Box Derby, first African American from Chicago Public Schools League to officiate in the IHSA Tournament, first African American to officiate in the Illinois State Finals and the first husband, wife and son family to officiate in IHSA Basketball; and,

WHEREAS, Rueben has been inducted into several hall of fames, including: the Chicago Basketball Coaches Association, the Chicago Public League Basketball Coaches Association, Illinois Basketball Coaches Association, and the Central Officials Association. He has also received prestigious awards such as the A-E-O Meyer-Harte Award and the IHSA 40-year Recipient Plaque; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this nineteenth day of February, 2020, do hereby congratulate **Rueben Norris** on this occasion of his birthday; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution are presented to **Rueben Norris** in honor of his 85th Birthday as a token of our esteem and good wishes.



SOPHIA KING
Alderman, 4th Ward