



City of Chicago



R2013-1164

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	12/11/2013
Sponsor(s):	Burke (14)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Gratitude extended to Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr. for military service and declaration of December 11, 2013 as "Henry J. 'Hank' Rutkowski, Sr., Day" in Chicago
Committee(s) Assignment:	

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr., a decorated military veteran, led the members of the Chicago City Council in the *Pledge of Allegiance* on Wednesday, December 11, 2013; and

WHEREAS, A resident of the Archer Heights community, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr., served his country with honor and distinction as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski Sr., enlisted in the military at the age of seventeen and received his training near Memphis, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, While serving as a gunner on his very first mission over Europe, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski Sr., was shot down on December 6, 1944, alongside his fellow crew members aboard the *Blanco Diablo* which had just bombed oil refineries in Mursberg, Germany; and

WHEREAS, As the B-17 turned toward its base in England, anti-aircraft bullets ripped a hole in a gas tank located inside one of the aircraft's wings, causing a serious fuel leak; and

WHEREAS, The *Blanco Diablo* cut a fiery streak in the sky as it desperately continued to reach toward home, but was forced to fall out of formation as the aircraft lost both speed and altitude; and

WHEREAS, With its engines failing one-by-one, the captain ordered the crew to lighten the load and everything possible was tossed out of the Flying Fortress, even guns and ammunition; and

WHEREAS, Despite their efforts, the captain ordered the crew to abandon the airplane over Mepple, Holland; and

WHEREAS, While eight members of the crew landed safely in a field below, a ninth crewman was tragically killed after his parachute failed to open; and

WHEREAS, The surviving crew members were all eventually captured and sent to Germany as prisoners of war; and

WHEREAS, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr., and his comrades were eventually freed from a prison in Barth, Germany by an advancing Russian tank unit; and

WHEREAS, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr., was flown to France before boarding a troop ship back to America; and

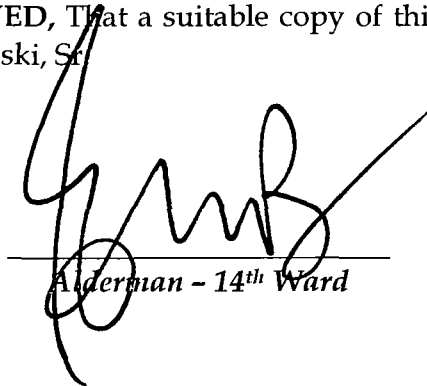
WHEREAS, After returning from the war, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr., worked for forty years as a line mechanic on high-speed packaging equipment at Schulze & Birch in Chicago from which he retired in 1993; and

WHEREAS, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr., is truly an example of what journalist Tom Brokaw called "Our Greatest Generation;" and

WHEREAS, Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr., is exceedingly worthy of our highest admiration and esteem; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council, assembled this eleventh day of December, 2013, do hereby express our sincere appreciation to Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski for his military service and do hereby declare that December 11, 2013, be officially recognized as *Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr., Day* throughout the City of Chicago; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Henry J. "Hank" Rutkowski, Sr.



Alderman - 14th Ward

