



Office of the Chicago City  
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R2011-1313

Office of the City Clerk

City Council Document Tracking Sheet

**Meeting Date:** 11/2/2011  
**Sponsor(s):** Laurino, Margaret (39)  
**Type:** Resolution  
**Title:** Recognition to George Rico  
**Committee(s) Assignment:**

**WHEREAS**, George Rico emigrated from Mexico to Chicago a month before his fifth birthday in August of 1925; and

**WHEREAS**, His education was interrupted by World War II, where he served in the 69th Infantry Division of the U.S. Army and saw action in the critical Battle of the Bulge, the last of the German offensives, where he assisted soldiers by either transporting the injured or caring for the needs of the men on the front line in driving around on his jeep; and

**WHEREAS**, The 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry began to push the Nazi soldiers back towards Germany through the forest. Successfully, the soldiers were able to push back the enemy troops, where George and his infantry met the Russians at the Elbe River in April, 1945. They did not know if George's infantry were enemy soldiers or not, therefore they continued to shoot at them from across the river, thereafter the infantry made a makeshift American flag out of materials from a local hospital to show the Russians that they were not enemy soldiers, which in turn the Russian and American soldiers celebrated afterwards; and

**WHEREAS**, After the war, George became a music teacher in the Chicago Public Schools, serving at Englewood High School, Fenger High School, Chicago Vocational High School and Lane Tech High School, where he was choral director there for over three decades, and was one of CPS' oldest teachers when he retired in 2004; and

**WHEREAS**, George never forgot his Mexican heritage by assisting immigrants from Mexico in organizing and producing the Chicago Fiesta Guild, where singers and dancers were trained in Mexican folkloric traditions from throughout the various states of Mexico, the group, also was the first ethnic troupe invited to the Museum of Science and Industry's "Christmas Around the World" inaugural exhibit; and

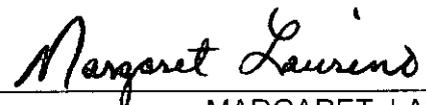
**WHEREAS**, In addition to the Chicago Fiesta Guild, George participated and directed the annual Las Posadas journey, which depicts Mary and Joseph seeking a room for the baby Jesus to be born, in the Old Town neighborhood, along with the now defunct Azteca Restaurant, thereafter the neighborhood would gather to sing, and walk, and celebrate in the Mexican tradition; and

**WHEREAS**, George shared his deep love of music and God at local churches around Chicagoland. From 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church and Warren Ave. Congregational on the West Side, to Morgan Park Methodist on the South Side, to Saron Lutheran and Ravenswood Presbyterian on the North Side, where George enhanced the worship lives of many congregants with well-known hymns, beautiful choir pieces and grand oratorio productions, and

**WHEREAS**, As a soldier, educator and musician, George Rico has devoted his life to enriching our community; now, therefore,

**Be It Resolved**, That we, the Mayor and members of the Chicago City Council, gathered here this second day of November, 2011, do hereby recognize and show our appreciation of George Rico for his service during the Second World War and his time at the Chicago Public School and within the Mexican-American community; and

**Be It Further Resolved**, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to George Rico.



MARGARET LAURINO  
Alderman, 39<sup>th</sup> Ward

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