



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION H OR ON ING BIG TOM WAY

WHEREAS, The 6000 block of South Melvina Avenue in the Clear Ridge Neighborhood of the 13th Ward is honored as Big Tom Way; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of this special occasion by Alderman Marty Quinn; and

WHEREAS, Thomas F. Markham Jr. was born on the Fourth of July in 1957; fireworks ignited the beginning of a spectacular and influential life. Tom grew up on the Southwest Side of Chicago where he turned to sports not only as a hobby but also as a lifestyle. His family later moved to the town of Cicero. He graduated from Grimes School and received a sports scholarship to attend De LaSalle High School to play football. This gave him a chance to succeed in ways he would not have been able to otherwise. He played wide receiver and tight end; Northern Michigan University recognized his ability and offered him a full scholarship to become a NMU Wildcat alongside his life-long friend, Brian Hickey; and

WHEREAS, Markham's love for sports did not end there. As an adult, he played 16-inch softball and was an avid bowler. However, his biggest sports accomplishment was that of Coach. In the year 2000, Markham began his coaching career at St. Symphorosa Catholic School in the Clearing Neighborhood. He coached basketball, baseball, and football for both of his sons with success. He and his team of coaches led the St. Syms Vikings 3rd Grade Boys' Basketball Team to their first championship in 2000 and then led the St. Syms football team to win the CGSC Junior Varsity Championship in 2003. He ended his Syms coaching career in 2006 but the values and lessons he taught on the court and the field still resonate with his players today. One player remembers him as the "most influential coach he's ever had," encouraging them to never settle, strive to be the best, show swagger, and be proud of the work they put in. In his honor, St. Symphorosa offers the "Tom Markham Scholarship" to an 8th grader who excels in sports; and

WHEREAS, Along with St. Syms, Markham also coached for many Clear Ridge Baseball Teams. In 2002, his son Tommy's 9-year-old "All Star" team won sectionals in an upset - the opposing team even had a victory pizza waiting for them but ended up losing. In 2003, the 10-year-old team went to State and won; in 2004, the 11-year-old team placed 3rd; and in 2005, the 12 year olds placed 5th. Markham made a name for the Clear Ridge "All Star" team, taking home titles that made the Southside of Chicago proud; and

WHEREAS, Besides being a great coach, Tom was also the best husband and father. He met his wife, Nancy, at End Zone bar on Western, and six months later, they were engaged. Thomas F. Markham Jr. and Nancy Ann McGlearn were married on July 8, 1988 at St. Gabriel Catholic Church in Canaryville. They had three children: Brian George, Thomas Francis III and Quinn Kathleen. He was always involved with his son's sports and went to every father-daughter dance from Kindergarten to Senior Year with his daughter Quinn. He was the life of the party and the first one to dance with the girls. He was outgoing, larger than life (not just because he was 6'6"), and could make anyone feel good. His number one job was being a dad, not just to his own children but to all of the kids in the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Tom was truly a force to be reckoned with. Even when he was diagnosed with cancer, he never wanted anyone to see him as weak or sick, even until very end. He wanted to always be known as strong, resilient, and living up to the nickname "Big Tom." And that is exactly how we all remember him; and

WHEREAS, The Markham Family continues to live at 6015 South Melvina Avenue. They continue to keep Big Tom's legacy alive in the Clear Ridge Community; and

WHEREAS, The 6000 block of South Melvina Avenue in the Clear Ridge Neighborhood of the 13th Ward is honored as Big Tom Way because he was a wonderful husband, father, friend and coach. His legacy embodies sportsmanship and family values. He encouraged his children and teams to always try their very best. He remains an inspiring example of the parent, coach and friend we should all strive to be; now, therefore

Be It Resolved, That we, the Mayor and members of the Chicago City Council assembled here this twenty-third day of March, 2022 do hereby recognize the 6000 block of South Melvina Avenue in the Clear Ridge Neighborhood of the 13th Ward as Big Tom Way; and

Be it Further Resolved, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the family of Thomas F. Markham Jr.

Marty Qujnr(y / Alderman, 13th Ward