

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Branko's Restaurant, a Lincoln Park staple, is celebrating its reopening after the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of this occasion by the Honorable Brian Hopkins, Alderman of the 2nd Ward, and the Honorable Timmy Knudsen of the 43rd Ward; and

WHEREAS, First opened over 45 years ago in 1976, Branko's has always been known for fast, friendly, and – fortunately enough for the surrounding DePaul University student community – frugal eats, including subs, salads, sandwiches, and homemade soup from Old World recipes; and

WHEREAS, Owners Branko Jordanovski and his wife, Jelica Jordanovska, built their restaurant with their daughters Andja, Ilinka, Gordana, and Branka by their side after immigrating from former Yugoslavia; and

WHEREAS, Branko Jordanovski and Jelica Jordanovska grew up in small picturesque highland villages within Mavrovo National Park, in what is now North Macedonia, where they both learned to live off the land and provide for their community by raising livestock, crocheting clothes, baking bread, and growing fruits, vegetables, and herbs– traits they later brought to the restaurant world; and

WHEREAS, They immigrated from a country where they had two bakeries, a farm, and family in search of a better life in Chicago, “with maybe four boxes,” according to their daughter, Gordana Jordanovska; and

WHEREAS, The family became an integral part of the community: Jelica would refill fries, and the students would send her Mother's Day cards and bring their parents to meet the couple who was keeping them nourished with both food and love; and

WHEREAS, Everyone who walked into Branko's was fed, regardless of their ability to pay, “There was always enough food for everyone. That's how we were raised;” and

WHEREAS, Branko & Jelica were patrons of the arts and sports, they hosted Yugoslavian dancers, as well as soccer teams, and family holidays where they would prepare traditional foods such as Pasulj, Goulash, and Sarma; and

WHEREAS, Jelicia and Branko overcame many incredible challenges, spoke over 4 languages, and always greeted each customer with a smile; and

WHEREAS, The combination of declining health and the pandemic forced the restaurant to close its doors temporarily; and

WHEREAS, Jelicia Jordanovska, who died last year at age 84, and Branko, who died in in April of 2023, inspired their children to honor the family legacy by keeping the local eatery open; and

WHEREAS, Their daughter Gordana, an interior architect based out of San Francisco,

returned to Chicago to reopen her parents' restaurant for the first time since the pandemic; and

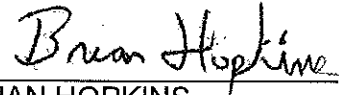
WHEREAS, Branko and Jelica's lifelong determination, daily hard work, and love opened the sandwich shop doors over 45 years ago and through the grit and determination they passed on to their daughters, Branko's was able to reopen on November 5, 2022; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here the sixth day of September, 2023, do hereby congratulate Branko's Restaurant on its reopening and extend our best wishes for their continued success; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the family.



TIMMY KNUDSEN
Alderman, 43rd Ward



BRIAN HOPKINS
Alderman, 2nd Ward