

## **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 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward, and the Honorable Timmy Knudsen Alderman of the 43<sup>rd</sup> 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**, Branko's and 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; 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 more than four 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 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 fourteenth 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.