



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION FOR THE BOARD MEETING OF FEBRUARY 2, 2017

RESOLUTION sponsored by the Board of Commissioners recognizing the 95th birthday of Vita Lena Scarlata

WHEREAS, Vita Lena Scarlata was born on July 28, 1921 in Chicago, Illinois. She was the youngest of three girls. Jennie was the oldest, followed by Ann, then Vita. Vita's parents were born in Sicily and came to the United States when they were children. The girls spoke Sicilian at home and learned English in school. Her mother and two sisters all lived until they were in their 90's. Vita just celebrated her 95th birthday! Her smile lights up a room and she gets a kick out of people being shocked that she is 95. She has always looked young and is always up for anything; and

WHEREAS, Vita had a rough life growing up, but I don't think she ever knew it. When she talks about her past, she always talks about happy memories. She will sometimes talk about how hard it was losing her father when she was only one. He tragically passed away at 35 from pneumonia, and her mother was left to raise the three girls by herself. Her mother would scrub people's front stairs, do their laundry, and mend clothes for money. Although they went through rough times, love was never scarce. They didn't have a shower or bathtub in their apartment so they would all walk to the bath house. Vita says it was fun and the woman who owned it was very kind to them. She also said that when it was cold her mother and sisters would huddle around the wood burning stove and share stories; and

WHEREAS, one of Vita's favorite stories to tell is about the Italian celebration every year where they would have a fireworks show across the street from their apartment. One of the windows in the front of the house would break so she always told the girls to move away from the window. Every year the City would have to replace the window. Vita and her sisters would look forward to the fest every year because Al Capone would pay them to take orders and serve food at the tables; and

WHEREAS, Vita also likes to tell about going to the country for the day. Her uncle, who sometimes would feel like a father figure, would pick up the girls in his pick-up truck and drive them out into the country and have a picnic. She also loved to swim in the lake. One time Vita and her friends ditched school to swim in the lake! She still loves to sit and walk by the water...she could stay there all day. There was also the time her jokester cousin took an alarm clock into the movie theater and set it off during a movie. Young Vita and her friends were all kicked out and they were so mad at her cousin, who himself found it hysterical. One time a boy was teasing her on the playground. She had enough of it so she threw some rocks at him and he ran away and never teased her again; and

WHEREAS, Vita met her future husband, Albert "Al" Joseph Scarlata, growing up down the street from each other on Cambridge Avenue in Chicago. She likes to say that she and her sisters thought he was stuck up, but turns out he was the sweetest man that she ever met. Vita's maiden name is Scimeca. On January 4th, 1942, Vita became Vita Scarlata. Albert was drafted by the military and Vita became a military wife. In 1943, they moved to Idaho. Vita likes to tell the story of how the landlord told her one day that they should move because they were living in a fire trap. They took the landlord's advice and some older woman took them in across the street. Vita and Albert were so grateful and the ladies became family to them while they were there; and

WHEREAS, Vita and Al began growing their family in Idaho with the birth of their oldest daughter Anita in

December of 1944. In 1945, Vita was relieved that her husband was honorably discharged from the Navy for flat feet. They continued with the birth of their second daughter in Chicago, Josephine. When Anita was young she befriended a girl named JoAnn. Vita and JoAnn's mother, also named Josephine, became instant friends as well. Josephine and her husband Ted introduced Vita and Al to polka and pierogies and they were introduced to Vita and Al's homemade meatballs and spaghetti sauce. JoAnn's mother passed on but JoAnn is still like a daughter to Vita. JoAnn and her husband Gordon are always there for Vita and her daughter Josephine and her husband John; and

WHEREAS, Vita's nickname is Mrs. Coach, because Al Scarlata was a CYO Golden Glove Feather Weight Championship Boxer and would teach their daughters boxing for fun. He was also a boxing coach for Portage Park, Clarendon Park, and Brooks Park in Chicago, and was a PE and health teacher at Pennoyer School; and

WHEREAS, Vita worked at General Electric on the assembly line making picture tubes for televisions. She said she enjoyed her job and the company treated her well; and

WHEREAS, Vita's enjoyed the (CLUB) friends getting together for poker night, square dancing, and the big event, the Halloween Party; and

WHEREAS, Vita and her family endured great sorrow and sadness upon the death of her daughter Anita, at age 35, to breast cancer; and

WHEREAS, Vita is a proud grandma. She enjoys coaching and bowling with her grandchildren at the Brunswick bowling alley in Niles and having sleep overs at their home; and

WHEREAS, Vita loves her family and traditions. Vita enjoyed crocheting baptism blankets for her grandchildren and crocheting for the shawl ministry of St. Tarcissus Church; and

WHEREAS, Vita was the baker of the (DELICIOUS) famous cheesecake, lamb cake, Italian "S" cookies, and homemade raviolis; and

WHEREAS, Vita celebrated her 85th birthday at Great America on a hot July day going on the water rides; and

WHEREAS, Vita is a member of the Norwood Park Senior Center in Chicago, Illinois. Vita enjoys going to exercise class, especially laughter yoga class led by her daughter Josephine, where she enjoys laughing. She previously was part of a senior writing generation. She once wrote a story of how she used to work for Al Capone selling food at his Italian fest he would run; and

WHEREAS, Vita enjoys playing games with her grandkids and anyone who wants some good competition. Scrabble and Poker are two of her favorite games. Everyday Vita asks her daughter Josephine, "Where are we going today?"; and

WHEREAS, Vita continues to inspire all, at 95 and a half to enjoy, live, laugh, and love the life you have.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, on behalf of ourselves and staff, do hereby recognize the 95th birthday of Vita Lena Scarlata; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be spread upon the permanent Record of Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, and that a copy of same, suitably engrossed, be presented to Vita Lena Scarlata.

Dated: February 2, 2017

Approved: MARIYANA T. SPYROPOULOS, President; BARBARA J. MCGOWAN, Vice President; FRANK AVILA, Chairman, Committee on Finance; TIMOTHY BRADFORD; MARTIN J. DURKAN; JOSINA MORITA; DEBRA SHORE; KARI K. STEELE; DAVID J. WALSH; Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Approved as to Form and Legality: Ronald M. Hill, General Counsel, RMH