

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 215
GEBKEN-BENZ MORTUARY**

WHEREAS, J.H. Gebken Livery and Boarding Stables was established in 1886 by John H. Gebken, who was born in the District of Hildesheim, Kingdom of Hanover, Germany; and

WHEREAS, one of 10 children, he immigrated to America when he was 20 years old and came to St. Louis thereafter. At the beginning of the Civil War he joined the Union Army. He participated in the takeover of Camp Jackson, but soon had to retire from active war due to illness; and

WHEREAS, in 1886, soon after his retirement from military service, he founded a livery business at 2230 Gravois Ave in St. Louis. In 1892 he purchased a lot at 2842 Meramec Street, the present site of Gebken-Benz Mortuary. He was active in the business until his death in 1911 as a result of a streetcar accident; and

WHEREAS, William G. Benz Sr. married Mary Gebken, daughter of John H. Gebken in 1906. He joined the company, which was then known as J.H. Gebken Livery and Undertaking Co. In 1941 the name of the business was changed to Gebken-Benz Mortuary, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, William and Mary had five sons and three daughters. Four of the sons, William, Walter, Vincent, and Joseph, joined their father in the business to become the third generation; and

WHEREAS, fourth generation, Lawrence, son of Joseph and Marian Benz, is currently the president of the company. Together with his wife Kay, they continue to serve families with the same professional, dignified, personal service established by the Benz family over the years; and

WHEREAS, the tradition of personalized care continued into the fifth generation with Kevin and Keith Benz, sons of Lawrence and Kay, both joining the firm to make Gebken-Benz the oldest active family owned and operated funeral home in St. Louis, Missouri.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize 131 years of services provided by Gebken-Benz Mortuary and we direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented to our distinguished honorees, the Benz Family, at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced this 9th Day of January, 2018 by:

The Honorable Dan Guenther, Alderman 9th Ward

Adopted this 9th Day of January, 2018 as attested by:

Donna Elliot
Assistant Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen