

RESOLUTION NUMBER 320

Joe Robinson

WHEREAS, Mr. Robinson's quiet history in service to our country began in Sunflower, Mississippi in 1941. He was the youngest of 18 in a sharecroppers family, and when they moved to Saint Louis, they remained dirt poor. It was after graduating from Sumner High School when Joe began his journey towards greener pastures by enlisting in the Navy; and

WHEREAS, in October of 1959, while trying to muster up funds for his family, Mr. Robinson made a pitch to a man named George Speer, who was the branch manager at the old Northwest Bank, and also a Naval Reservist. Speer saw a spark in this young and eager teen, and drove him to the nearest Navy recruiter; and

WHEREAS, Like most African Americans of this era, Joe heard terrible things about the Navy, including the notion that black sailors could only attain the most menial jobs. This daunting idea did not sway him from the Navy's appeal. He went on to serve over eight years of active duty on sea and shore duty, however he met a defeating challenge when the Navy denied him acceptance to flight school; and

WHEREAS, he kept his head up and kept his hand in service nonetheless after the rejection by leaving active duty and joining the Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department. Here he found a niche, and successfully moved up in the ranks. For 29 years Robinson cleaned up the streets of Saint Louis, retiring in 1997 as a lieutenant. All the while, he never broke his service with the Navy as he continued his affiliation with the Naval Reserve, earning an officer's commission as a lieutenant junior grade. More promotions would then follow as he was promoted to lieutenant commander in 1994; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the militancy and discipline he has demonstrated as a citizen of our country, he learned to fly. Joe Robinson owns a commercial pilots license, he has flown 12 logged hours in the Boeing 707 and in July 2012 Joe will celebrate 50 years of continuous flying; and

WHEREAS, Joe and his wife Carmalita, are the owners of a Piper Cherokee Aircraft that they hangar at the St Louis Downtown Airport in Cahokia, Illinois. In addition to these astounding accomplishments, Joe is a member of the CSO staff at the Thomas F. Eagleton Federal Court Building; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Robinson is an active member in many civic organizations including the Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated, Hugh J. White Chapter, Saint Louis. As many know, the Tuskegee Airmen consisted of pilots, navigators, bombardiers, maintenance and support staff, and instructors, all of whom contributed to the fight of segregation and prejudice to become one of the most highly respect fighter groups of World War II.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize Joe Robinson and we wish him continued success, achievement and accomplishment and we further 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 honoree at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 9th day of March, 2012 by:

Honorable Samuel L. Moore, Alderman 4th Ward

Adopted this 9th day of March, 2012 as attested by:

David W. Sweeney
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen