



City of Pittsburgh

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Text File

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WHEREAS born on September 6th, 1917, Charles Duane Burley is known as the greatest uncrowned middleweight boxer of his time. Soon after moving to the Pittsburgh area, Charley joined the Kay Boys Club where he took up boxing; and

WHEREAS Charley, also known as "Champ", quickly established himself as a contender after winning city, state, and national junior titles. In 1936, Charley was invited to Chicago to attend the box-offs for the Berlin Olympics, but declined since he was against the racial and religious persecution taking place in Germany at the time. Instead, Charley planned on participating in the 'Workers Games' which were set to be held in Spain. Since these games were also cancelled due to political reasons, Charley returned home without having a chance to fight representing his country; and

WHEREAS upon entering the professional ranks, Charley began working with his manager, Phil Goldstein, and within a year, earned an impressive record of 12 wins with 8 knock-outs and only one loss. In 1938, Charley won the 'Colored' Welterweight Championship against veteran Loius 'Cocoa' Kid. However, Henry Armstrong won the real welterweight and the championship was never contested. Also in 1938, Charlie married his wife Julia Burley with whom he had a daughter and two sons; and

WHEREAS throughout the 1940s, Charley was ranked in the top 10 in both the welterweight and middleweight divisions, and yet did not have a title shot. At this time, he had won 83 fights and knocked out 50 opponents. Although he wanted a chance to fight Sugar Ray Robinson, he never got this chance. It was rumored that Sugar Ray was quoted saying "I'm too pretty to fight Charley Burley". Charley was avoided by fighters who were in no hurry to give him a chance at their titles; and

WHEREAS Charley was elected to the Ring Magazine Hall-of-Fame in 1983 and inducted to the World Boxing Hall-of-Fame in 1987. Although Charley died in 1992, he was inducted to the International Boxing Hall of Fame later that year; and

WHEREAS Charley was not only the uncrowned champion, but was also a loving family man who was dedicated to giving back to his community. Often volunteering his time at the YMCA in the Hill District, Charley trained boxers to be respectable fighters. He also served as a committee man for Pittsburgh's fifth ward.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Pittsburgh does hereby wish to honor Mr. Charley Burley by presenting his family with a key to the city of Pittsburgh for his exemplary career and compassion for youth and declaring today, August 5th, 2008 Charley Burley Day in the City of Pittsburgh.