



## Text File

**Introduced:** 4/19/2011

**Bill No:** 2011-1646, **Version:** 1

**Committee:** City Council

**Status:** Adopted

WHEREAS, in 1980, the former St. Mary's Church and Monastery in Deutschtown was rededicated by owners Edward and Mary Ann Graf visualizing a hotel and after gathering Victorian-style furniture and adding bathrooms The Priory Hotel opened 1986 as a small hotel for people staying at Allegheny General Hospital; and

WHEREAS, their son, John, an attorney, joined the business in 2002 envisioning the Church as a venue for grand scale weddings and parties, repairing the water damaged ceiling, peeling paint and cleaning the original woodwork in the chapel creating The Grand Hall at the Priory;

WHEREAS, an unfortunate fire at an adjacent apartment building became 17 new handicapped accessible hotel rooms, The Monk Bar and plans for an urban garden and bicycle parking

WHEREAS, through this hard work, John Graf, Vice President of Operations, will be honored by the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) as the Family Owned Business of the Year at the Western Pennsylvania SBA May 27th Awards Luncheon, Sheraton Station Square held in conjunction with the 48<sup>th</sup> annual celebration of National Small Business Week;

WHEREAS, Western Pennsylvania SBA District Director Carl Knoblock says the Graf family was bold visionaries who opened a city inn and perhaps helped turn around Pittsburgh's Historic Deutschtown neighborhood where you see civic pride; and

WHEREAS, a great marketer, John was also recognized as Grand Marketer of the Year by the American Marketing Association in December 2009, marketing through the internet and putting together the Winter White Wedding Package with twinkling, white lights on the tree, an ice skating-like dance floor, hotel space and cakes from their bakery on East Ohio Street, exceptional food and parking impressing guests and attracting them to return;

WHEREAS, John Graf's marketing also attracted community businesses to offer a complimentary wedding package to a veteran of the Iraq or Afghanistan War donating everything from the wedding dress to the band and the annual event will continue until the soldiers come home; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby honor John Graf for winning the U.S. SBA Award for Family Owned Business of the Year and his parents, Edward and Mary Ann Graf for their energy and vision taking a lifeless church and monastery and turning it into a nationally known gem, a comfortable, relaxing hotel and a beautiful hall exceptional for any event.