



Text File

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WHEREAS, we celebrate **“HAPPY BIRTHDAY ED GRAF”** commemorating eighty (80) wonderful and rich years of life and God’s Blessings for many, many more!

WHEREAS, Ed Graf, a long-time North Sider began his professional career as an attorney and CPA. He received a Bachelor’s degree from the University of Pittsburgh and Juris Doctor from Duquesne University School of Law. **Ed** rose to the position of Vice Chairman and Chief Financial Officer with the very well known, worldwide Pittsburgh-based advertising agency, Ketchum Communications, retiring in 1997. While at Ketchum, Ed served on the Board of Directors of the Financial Executives Institute, including a term as its Chair.

WHEREAS, Ed and Mary Ann Graf (his late wife of 52 years very much missed since her passing in 2014), were pioneers in the City’s Deutschtown neighborhood for over 30 years, investing considerable time, energy and funding into making their community a better place. They started with a mission that turned into a phenomenal vision remaking the community and bringing new life to it once again.

WHEREAS, in 1984, Mary Ann cheerfully, if sarcastically, delivered news to **Ed** upon his return from an overseas business trip, “Well, we bought a church!” St. Mary’s Church and Priory, purchased at auction. The long-time empty church had become a harbor for crime and decay. Friends and family thought they were crazy!

In ‘86, they transformed the abandoned St. Mary’s Priory into the Priory Hotel, creating an anchor in the neighborhood, drawing visitors from around the world and sparking a renaissance in the area where once-blighted historic homes and storefronts have now been restored to their original grandeur.

WHEREAS, in 1955, **Ed and Mary Ann** along with oldest son, John and his wife Suzanne doubled down on their investments in the North Side and rehabbed the adjacent church into Pittsburgh’s Grand Hall at the Priory, a first class event venue. In 2011, they debuted the \$2.5 million dollar expansion of the Priory Hotel, creating a facility with 42 overall guestrooms with expanded amenities, including the cozy Monk’s Bar, the smallest pub in Pittsburgh.

WHEREAS, in 1999, **Ed and Mary Ann** moved to Deutschtown, rehabilitating the historic home of the Marianist brothers, the Society of Mary, a Roman Catholic Marian Society, a congregation of brothers and Priests who taught at the local German school in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s. They have also renovated several residential properties on Lockhart Street. In 2005, they opened Priory Fine Pastries on Deuschtown’s East Ohio Street, a destination retail and commercial bakery, and shortly after acquired the former Community Bank building on East Ohio Street, which until recently was host to a Rita’s Italian Ice franchise.

WHEREAS, Ed continues a history of activity in a variety of North Side community and fraternal

organizations; he was a member of the East Allegheny Community Council from 2006 to the present, serving as treasurer for part of his tenure. Similarly, he served on the North Side Leadership Conference Board of Directors in the early aughts. He is an active member of the Teutonia Mannerchor since 1987, serving as Treasurer twice, including from 2016 to the present.

WHEREAS, Ed and Mary Ann have three sons, John, who now runs the operations of the Priory Hospitality Group, Steve, a professor of English here in Pittsburgh, and Tim, a communications professional with Deloitte in Alexandria, Virginia. He's been Blessed to have eight grandchildren.

WHEREAS, Ed and Mary Ann are distinguished as true leaders investing their time, their money and their energy to develop their mission to create a better community, bringing to life their vision which forever changed the landscape of Deutchtown in the North Side and, made a significant impact in Pittsburgh, and which receives visitors of national and international renown.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby honor **Ed Graf** celebrating his 80th birthday wishing him many, many more along with applauding all the contributions of **Ed and Mary Ann** in the development of the Priory Hotel, Grand Hall and the community, and **Ed's** years of distinguished service and outstanding contributions to the North Side and the City of Pittsburgh having a reach, locally, nationally and internationally.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in celebration and continuation of his birthday, rich contributions and wonderful life, the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare the week of September 18th through the 25th, 2018 to be **"HAPPY BIRTHDAY ED GRAF WEEK"** in the City of Pittsburgh.