



City of Pittsburgh

510 City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Text File

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Committee: City Council

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WHEREAS, Mr. Gabriel Fontana grew up in the southern Italian province of Calabria in the aftermath of the Second World War; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Fontana worked in a German shoe factory where he learned the art of cobbling before immigrating to the United States of America at age twenty-eight; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Fontana joined his sister and brother-in-law just north of Pittsburgh in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania. His brother-in-law, who was also in the shoe trade, worked with **Mr. Fontana** before he would take over the family's **Forbes Avenue** shoe repair shop in Downtown Pittsburgh in 1974; and,

WHEREAS, for the next half-century, **Mr. Fontana's** quality work and dedication have made him, and his iconic Forbes Avenue store, a staple of the Downtown Pittsburgh community; and,

WHEREAS, thousands of Pittsburghers, Downtown workers, and many more have counted on his high-quality craftsmanship. **Mr. Fontana** has used old-work skill and 1940's-era machinery to keep generations of residents on their feet; and,

WHEREAS, after forty-eight years in business, countless shoes repaired, and countless tributes from his loyal patrons, **Mr. Fontana** has chosen to retire at the age of eighty-one as one of Pittsburgh's and the region's last cobblers and shoe repairmen.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does thank Mr. Gabriel Fontana for his half-century of service to the people and commuters of Downtown Pittsburgh.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council does hereby wish him well in his richly-earned retirement and declares Wednesday, January 4, 2023 to be **Gabriel Fontana Day** here in our City of Pittsburgh.