

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Raymond Fouquet was born into a working class family in suburban Paris on December 26, 1920. When he died 93 years later in Los Angeles, he left behind a generations-long legacy of healthy activity, camaraderie, and enthusiasm in the bicycling sport he fostered here. Because of Raymond, every Sunday morning for the past forty years, cyclists – sometimes in the hundreds – have gathered at Westwood Boulevard and La Grange Avenue for the 27 mile “Nichols Canyon ride,” following the path Raymond Fouquet laid out; and

WHEREAS, in 1956, Raymond Fouquet arrived in Los Angeles with his wife and two young daughters. Although he was a trained welder, he waited tables. Fortunately for him, he worked at some of the best restaurants: Chasen’s, La Scala (started by another Frenchman), and Matteo’s. In 1968, Raymond opened La Grange Restaurant, a fine French restaurant, at 2005 Westwood Boulevard, near the corner of La Grange Avenue and near his Westwood Hills home; and

WHEREAS, after getting the eatery on its feet, Raymond invited his coworkers to join him for a Sunday morning bike ride. Raymond had raced years before, and, in the Continental tradition, the Sunday ride was no casual pedal down to the corner. Raymond set a course from the restaurant, east to Hollywood, up Nichols Canyon Road, out Mulholland Drive, and down Sepulveda Boulevard. Soon, patrons were joining in the ride, so Raymond had La Grange jerseys made. In 1969, the group became Velo Club La Grange; and

WHEREAS, Over the next 50 years, Raymond Fouquet made an immeasurable contribution to Southern California cycling. Raymond sponsored numerous junior racers, and he hosted the French national cycling team for a training camp here in Los Angeles. His club members included a Tour de France stage winner, an Olympic gold medalist, and numerous U.S. National and California state champions; and

WHEREAS, Raymond’s Velo Club La Grange not only enjoyed competitive greatness, but it also fostered public policy work, with state and local government efforts leading to major improvements in safety for all users of California roads. La Grange members currently head the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition and are appointed to the City of Los Angeles Bicycle Advisory Committee. The club has partnered with the Association of Blind Athletes and Meals on Wheels. Its own charity is the Scott Bleifer Memorial fund. Its “Flight School” youth program trains school aged children to be successful racers and active adults; and

WHEREAS, Today La Grange has nearly 600 members across California and the country. The students, surfers, contractors, loan officers, teachers, engineers, service members, lawyers, scientists, colorists, and doctors of La Grange look to Raymond Fouquet as a patron saint. Each year, in his honor and memory, they put on one of the biggest races in the California cycling calendar: the Raymond Fouquet Brentwood Grand Prix; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the great contributions of Raymond Fouquet – for his life as a family man, an entrepreneurial restaurateur, and founder of Velo Club LaGrange – it is appropriate that the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and LaGrange Avenue be named as “Raymond Fouquet Square”; and

I THEREFORE MOVE, that the intersection at Westwood Boulevard and LaGrange Avenue be named “Raymond Fouquet Square” and that the Department of Transportation be directed to erect permanent ceremonial sign(s) to this effect at this location.

PRESENTED BY: 
PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, 5th District

SECONDED BY: 


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