



EL PASO COUNTY STATE OF TEXAS

RESOLUTION



WHEREAS, Victor A LaFave was born on December 2, 1920, to Victor A LaFave and Brooksie Mae Heard in Little Rock, Arkansas. Victor grew up in Rantoul, Illinois, as an only child. He graduated High School in 1938, and in 1941 chose to attend the Merchant Marine Academy, which at the time was referred to as the Maritime Academy. He was housed on the Chrysler Estate which had been donated to the Maritime Academy for purpose of housing students; and,

WHEREAS, prior to graduating, as part of the curriculum of the Maritime Academy at the time, Victor trained for three months and was then assigned to his first ship, a WW I freighter. He served six (6) months aboard the freighter, which had a crew of 35 cadets and 10 armed guards. He traveled the Atlantic for several months and then in November of 1942, he sailed to Casa Blanca to support the Allied invasion; and,

WHEREAS Victor returned to the Academy and graduated nine (9) months later October 30, 1943, as a First Chief Mate. His graduating class was made up of 50 cadets and the date of their graduation coincided with the official inauguration of the Merchant Marine Academy; and,

WHEREAS, after graduating, was at sea from November 1943 to the year of 1950, serving aboard merchant vessels. During this period, he was in a Convoy (Convoy PQ 17), which was attacked by the Germans and the ship Victor was serving on was sunk near Iceland. He and his mates spent 15 days at sea in a lifeboat until they reached land in Norway. They were given provisions by the locals but were forced to leave on the same lifeboat as the German army was invading the village, they were in. They spent another 15 days at sea until they were picked up by a freighter; and,

WHEREAS, after 1945, Victor served in the Naval Reserve, the Airforce Reserve, and the Coast Guard Reserve. He was awarded many medals for the different battle zones in which he served. In 1947, Victor established his home in El Paso, Texas, and enrolled at the El Paso College of Mines to study engineering. He left the College briefly in 1948 to rejoin the Merchant Marines as a Relief Mate, returning to El Paso in 1949, and the College of Mines to earn his degree in Mining Engineering; and,

WHEREAS, he began work in the oil fields, but found his life's vocation at the El Paso Natural Gas Company where he worked for over 30 years as an engineer and in marketing and public relations. His other achievements include being a 32-degree Scottish Rite Mason as well as a Notable American Shriner. He was married to Mildred Causey and after her passage, Victor spent his life with his partner Betty Rapier, until her passing in 2020. He has one daughter, Sally Nadler; and,

WHEREAS, in 2018, Victor was invited to attend an Honor Flight to Washington DC, where he was accompanied by his daughter and was given the honor to place the wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He was also presented with a commemorative coin from the Defense Attaché from Korea and a commemorative book from another Korean dignitary at the Honor Flight dinner; and,

WHEREAS, Victor has many other interests which include being a volunteer recruiter for all El Paso high schools for the Merchant Marine Academy. He also was an avid Competitive Bass fisherman which took him all over Texas, New Mexico, and Mexico. He also been a migratory Beekeeper for the past 30 years with 3 hives in his backyard. Along with enjoying farm to table food from his own garden, he loves a Manhattan cocktail. Victor's motto is one we should all take to heart, "Every Monday morning make the first person you see smile."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the El Paso County Judge and Commissioners Court celebrates retired celebrates retired WWII and Korean War Veteran Victor A LaFave on his 103 birthday this month and honors him for proudly serving our Country and community!

SIGNED, this 11th day of December 2023

Commissioner Carlos Leon, Pct. 1

Commissioner David C. Stout, Pct. 2

Commissioner Iliana Holguin, Pct. 3

Commissioner Sergio Coronado, Pct. 4

County Judge Ricardo A. Samaniego