

Legislation Text

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Designating the week of Monday, October 7 through Monday, October 14, 2013 as “Christopher Columbus/Italian American Heritage Week” in the City of Philadelphia. This is done in celebration of the festivities commemorating Columbus’ historic voyage to the New World and honoring Bobby Rydell as Grand Marshall of the 2013 Philadelphia Columbus Day Parade.

WHEREAS, Five hundred and twenty-one years ago, a courageous Italian visionary set out on what would become one of the most momentous journeys in the annals of history. Christopher Columbus and the maps he charted to the “New World” were guiding lights to every ship that came to America; and

WHEREAS, The annual Philadelphia Columbus Day Parade began in South Philadelphia in 1957, and has since become one of the City’s premier ethnic celebrations. On October 13, 2013, the 1492 Society will host the annual parade. In addition to the active participation of the Delaware Valley’s Italian American community, the Philadelphia Columbus Day Parade tradition includes the world famous Philadelphia Mummers string bands, outstanding high school and elementary school marching bands, and many other marching groups representing the various ethnic traditions of our great City. The Parade seeks to foster a spirit of multiculturalism and respect for people of all ethnic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, Grand Marshall, Bobby Rydell, was born Robert Louis Ridarelli on April 26, 1942, in South Philadelphia and has always maintained a close connection with his hometown of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1960s Mr. Rydell was considered a teen idol and as a teenage drummer, played alongside another famous South Philadelphian, Frankie Avalon. His performances in “Bye Bye Birdie <[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bye_Bye_Birdie_\(film\)>](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bye_Bye_Birdie_(film))>” and “Grease” (in which the high school was named Rydell High after Bobby Rydell) and his recordings <[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sound_recording_and_reproduction>](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sound_recording_and_reproduction)> of hits such as "Wild One <[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wild_One_\(Bobby_Rydell_song\)>](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wild_One_(Bobby_Rydell_song))>", "Volare <[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volare_\(song\)>](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volare_(song))>" and “Wildwood Days” made him an internationally famous performer. Rydell continued to perform in nightclubs <[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nightclub>](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nightclub)>, supper clubs and Las Vegas <[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Vegas_Strip>](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Vegas_Strip)> venues throughout the 1970s and 1980s. He has performed as a solo act, and has toured as part of 'The Golden Boys' successful stage production since 1985 (with Frankie Avalon and Fabian). In July 2012, Rydell underwent a double organ transplant to replace his liver and kidneys at Thomas Jefferson University <[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Jefferson_University>](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Jefferson_University)> Hospital and just six short months later, in January 2013, made a triumphant return to the stage in Las Vegas for a three night engagement to a sold out audience. He also continues to perform internationally as well; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the annual Parade, Columbus Day festivities include an Italian Festival showcasing the culture and cuisine of the people of Italy. The Italian Festival takes place at Marconi Plaza the day of the Parade and includes food, dance and music from the many diverse regions of Italy; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby designate the week of October 7 through October 14, 2013 as “Christopher Columbus/Italian American Heritage Week” and

honor Bobby Rydell as Grand Marshall of the 2013 Columbus Day Parade.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That Engrossed copies of this resolution be presented to the Grand Marshall of the Parade, Bobby Rydell, and to the 1492 Society as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.