By:  Anchía H.R. No. 419

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The Basque Country is located in the northeastern corner of the Iberian Peninsula, along the present-day border of France and Spain, and the presence of Basques in the United States can be traced back to the mid-19th century; around 1,400 combatants of Basque origin have been identified as serving in the U.S. armed forces during World War II, and their military, social, personal, and family histories help illuminate the process of Basque emigration and settlement in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Immigrants in World War II: Basques in Texas honors the 14 identified veterans of Basque heritage who were born in Texas or enlisted in the state, and it acknowledges the myriad contributions of these valiant service members:

●  U.S. Army Corporal Manuel Abascal, who served with the 45th Infantry Division in Europe and who passed away in 2000;

●  U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Manuel Amestoy, who served with the Headquarters and Service Company, V Amphibious Tractor Battalion, in the Pacific theater and who passed away in 1987;

●  U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Frank Buldain, who served with the 36th Infantry Division in Europe and who passed away in 1997;

●  U.S. Army Air Force Lieutenant Louis Buldain, who ultimately attained the rank of colonel during a three-decade military career and who passed away in 2000;

●  U.S. Army Corporal George Buldain, who enlisted in 1943 and who passed away in 1996;

●  U.S. Army Tech 4 Eugenio "Eugene" Echaniz, who enlisted in 1942 and who passed away in 2006;

●  U.S. Army Sergeant Raul Echaniz, who served with the Third Army under General George S. Patton and who passed away in 2011;

●  U.S. Army Private Antonio "Tony" Garibay, who enlisted in 1946 and who passed away in 2014;

●  U.S. Army Private Federico Bilbao, who enlisted in 1943 and served until 1946;

●  U.S. Army Air Force Sergeant Fernando Gil, who served with the 802nd Bombardment Squadron in Mountain Home, Idaho, and who passed away in 1967;

●  U.S. Army Corporal Valentin Elola, who enlisted in 1943 and who passed away in 1992;

●  U.S. Army Air Force Sergeant Alfonso Garde, who served with the 724th Squadron, 451st Bomb Group, in Europe and who passed away in 1992;

●  U.S. Army Corporal Calixto Ochotorena, who served with the Transportation Corps and who passed away in 2007; and

●  U.S. Army Private First Class Tony Uharriet, who enlisted in 1946 and who passed away in 1982; and

WHEREAS, Immigrants in World War II: Basques in Texas is a special event taking place on March 2, 2023, hosted by the Sancho de Beurko Association and the Voces Oral History Center at The University of Texas at Austin in conjunction with Texas State Representative Rafael Anchía; and

WHEREAS, This special presentation is a part of the association's international research project Fighting Basques: Memory of World War II, which is undertaken in collaboration with North American Basque Organizations; the project studies the role that Basques and Basque Americans played in the conflict; and

WHEREAS, Consisting of an academic panel, Immigrants in World War II: Basques in Texas will focus on these individuals to illustrate the contributions made by the migrant population of the U.S. during the war; furthermore, the gathering celebrates these Basque Texans, many of whom have received little public recognition, as rightful members of the Greatest Generation; and

WHEREAS, Immigrants in World War II: Basques in Texas provides a vital opportunity to pay tribute to a deserving group of military veterans while furthering the worthwhile goal of establishing a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of our nation's history; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas Legislature hereby commemorate the Immigrants in World War II: Basques in Texas event and honor the World War II veterans of Basque origin who so bravely served our country; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for the families of the Basque service members as well as the Sancho de Beurko Association and the Voces Oral History Center as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.