



Proclamation

WHEREAS, *Edna's Restaurant has been serving up some of the most popular soul food on the West Side of Chicago since 1966; and*

WHEREAS, *owner Edna Stewart is a native Chicagoan, born and raised on the South Side. In 1955 she moved to the West Side and has been there ever since, making immeasurable contributions to the community; and*

WHEREAS, *in 1966 Edna Stewart's father, Samuel Mitchell Sr. decided he wanted to go into the restaurant business, but he needed a cook; and*

WHEREAS, *although she had attended nursing school as a young woman, Edna Stewart and her then-husband went into business with her father and opened Edna's Restaurant; and*

WHEREAS, *the first location was inside a bowling alley and dance hall, meaning that Edna's Restaurant had customers immediately, but it was Edna Stewart's fried chicken and biscuits that really brought people in; and*

WHEREAS, *Edna Stewart learned to cook from her mother, a Tennessee-born sharecropper, and her menu reflects this with pure, simple soul food; and*

WHEREAS, *over more than four decades in business Edna's Restaurant has become a Chicago institution and a landmark of the civil rights era, surviving the riots of 1968; and*

WHEREAS, *when the civil rights leaders were working nearby, Edna's Restaurant became a haven of food and support, with Edna Stewart feeding leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Reverend Jesse Jackson; and*

WHEREAS, *in addition to her famous biscuits, Edna Stewart has also served up a second chance for more than 100 formerly incarcerated individuals over the years, offering jobs to those who show that they are truly willing to work to change their lives; and*

WHEREAS, *by creating critical job opportunities and offering great food that every family can afford, Edna Stewart has created a true neighborhood restaurant, a place that not only serves customers, but also gives back to the community that supports it; and*

WHEREAS, *during the month of February, Black History Month, it is fitting that we take the time to recognize the people who have tirelessly worked to serve the African-American community;*

THEREFORE, I, Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim February 19, 2010 as **EDNA STEWART DAY** in Illinois, in recognition of more than 40 years of serving some of the best soul food in the Land of Lincoln, and offering a second chance on the West Side of Chicago.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.



Done at the Capitol, in the City of Springfield,
this EIGHTEENTH *day of* FEBRUARY, *in*
the Year of Our Lord two thousand and
TEN, *and of the State of Illinois*
the one hundred and NINETY-SECOND

Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

Pat Quinn

GOVERNOR