

Thursday, June 7, 2018

Dear Mr. Saville and fellow Council members,

I am writing to request that the city of Aurora honor the memory of my father, John W. Hix, a proud, lifelong member of this community. John passed away on March 29, 2012. Through his life of hard work and service, he exemplified the character of a good citizen and good neighbor. Through his quiet generosity and tireless devotion, he touched and improved the lives of countless others.

Of course, in honoring my father's life, you will honor also the life of his beloved wife, my mother, Eileen Hix. Together, they raised ten children, many of whom are still active in Aurora and the wider Fox Valley. They were married for 66 years, and were partners in everything they did. John would not be who he was without her.

My father was born in Aurora on October 10, 1924. At an early age, he learned to play guitar and helped support his family by playing the local saloons and taverns. He attended first St. Theresa grade school, followed by Waldo and East Aurora High School. He was drafted into the army out of high school, as were many young men of that era. He fought at Normandy Beach and throughout northern France. He was a part of the Battle of the Bulge, then fought on to Berlin.

When he returned home in 1946, he first worked as a tool designer, using skills from his army training. He continued to teach music out of the garage, evenings and weekends. Soon, he took the leap of faith to make music his full-time occupation, founding Hix Music. Through this business (now Hix Bros. Music), he taught thousands of students over decades of lessons. He was continuously active in the community, including taking students to nursing homes in the Fox Valley to share their talents and bring joy.

His generosity was born of gratitude; he wanted to support this community because the community was supporting him. Through this store and this service, the people of Aurora had helped him realize his dream of owning a full line music store that would support 10 children.

After my father passed away, my mother asked me if I could recall dropping envelopes off to the St. Nicholas rectory. I told her I did, but I didn't know what the envelopes contained – I hadn't given it a thought back then. She then told me how our pastor would call my dad and ask him to help a new family join the parish by contributing the cost of tuition for the new students. Whenever he got that call for funds, she said, he never turned down a request.

John was an honest businessman who went out of his way to help people who were less fortunate. This spirit and legacy lives on, as Hix Bros. Music continues to make community service and caring a part of their business, contributing to food banks, participating in parades, and playing music for residents of care facilities.

I believe that in honoring my father you will honor what is good and right in Aurora: the community that formed and supported his life. And in this you will honor some of what is best in all of us: dedication, generosity, gratitude, and service.

I thank you for your time and consideration. If I can be of any other help to you, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Eric Hix