

*The Board of Supervisors of
Contra Costa County, California*

In the matter of:

Resolution No. 2021/268

Honoring Betty Reid Soskin for her remarkable life's contributions to history, to the United States and to her community

WHEREAS, Betty Reid Soskin (nee Charbonnet) grew up in a Cajun/Creole African-American family that settled in the East Bay after the historic floods that devastated the City of New Orleans in 1927; her parents joined her maternal grandfather, George Allen, who had resettled in Oakland at the end of World War I; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Soskin attended local schools, graduating from Castlemont High School during the World's Fair at Treasure Island; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Soskin worked in a segregated Union Hall, Boilermaker's A-36, during World War II as a file clerk; in 1945 she and her young husband, Mel Reid, founded a small Berkeley music store -- Reid's Records; and after getting divorced from Mel Reid in 1972, she married William Soskin, a psychology professor at the [University of California, Berkeley](#); and

WHEREAS, Ms. Soskin has held positions as staff to a Berkeley City Council member and as staff for former Assemblymember Dion Aroner and former Senator Loni Hancock where she became active in the early planning stages and development of a national park to memorialize the role of women on the [Home Front during World War II](#); and

WHEREAS, Ms. Soskin's efforts came to fruition when [Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front National Historical Park](#) was established in 2000, to provide a site where future generations could remember the contributions women made to the war effort; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, Ms. Soskin became a park ranger for the Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front National Historical Park in Richmond, California, assigned to civic engagement and community outreach; and she is the oldest [National Park Ranger](#) in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, she was named a "Woman of the Year" by the California State Legislature; in 2005 she was named one of the nation's ten outstanding women, "Builders of communities and dreams" by the National Women's History Project in ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, on December 3, 2015, Ms. Soskin was selected by the National Park Service to participate in the National tree-lighting ceremony at the White House and to introduce President Barack Obama in the nationwide telecast on the annual PBS special; and

WHEREAS, on June 10, 2016, Ms. Soskin received the Silver Medallion Award at the World War II Museum in New Orleans in a special ceremony; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the West Contra Costa Unified School District renamed Juan Crespi Middle School in Richmond to Betty Reid Soskin Middle School.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors hereby honors and celebrates the remarkable Betty Reid Soskin for her community advocacy, including her critical role in helping create the [Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front National Historical Park](#) in Richmond, California, and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors honors Betty Reid Soskin for her passionate dedication to educating the public about the World War II home front, including the roles of women working in the shipyards and declares September 2021 as Betty Reid Soskin Month in Contra Costa County.

DIANE BURGIS

Chair, District III Supervisor

JOHN GIOIA

District I Supervisor

CANDACE ANDERSEN

District II Supervisor

KAREN MITCHOFF

District IV Supervisor

FEDERAL D. GLOVER

District V Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: September 7, 2021

Monica Nino, County Administrator

By: _____, Deputy