



JOSE HUIZAR
COUNCILMEMBER, 14TH DISTRICT
* * * **PRESS RELEASE** * * *

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Councilmember Huizar Names Park in Honor of 'Mr. Boyle Heights' Ross Valencia

Legendary community activist and WWII Veteran advocated for Boyle Heights through numerous organizations

LOS ANGELES (Nov. 11, 2009) - Councilmember José Huizar hosted a ceremony on Veterans' Day to honor the late Ross Valencia by naming a community park in the heart of Boyle Heights in his honor.

Affectionately known as "Mr. Boyle Heights," Valencia was a beloved and tireless community activist. The WWII veteran was a member of many community, civic and veteran organizations, including the American G.I. Forum, the Metro Review Advisory Committee for the Gold Line Eastside Extension and the Boyle Heights Chamber of Commerce, which he founded.

"In a long list of advocates who have done so much for this community, Ross Valencia, 'Mr. Boyle Heights,' is one of the all-time greats," said Councilmember José Huizar after naming the LANI Pocket Park on First and Chicago streets in Valencia's honor. "Before Ross passed last year, I was able to tell him that we wanted to name a park in his honor. The community support for this campaign was overwhelming and it speaks to what a truly special and inspiring person Ross Valencia was. This park will honor his worthy legacy."

Also on hand for Wednesday morning's ceremony were Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, Master of Ceremonies Art Herrera and members of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, as well as friends and family of Ross Valencia, including his wife Carmen Valencia, their children and grandchildren.

After being honorably discharged from the Navy in 1946, Valencia worked as dental technician. He also served as Deputy Chief to former CD 14 Councilmember Art Snyder and also worked as an administrative assistant in the state assembly and senate. While working for the City of Los Angeles, Valencia co-founded the Los Angeles Chicano Employees Association. He was a member of the Boyle Heights Resident Homeowners Association, Community Police Advisory Board Hollenbeck Division, Adelante Eastside Redevelopment Project Area Committee, the American Legion, Commander of the Local Post, Optimist Club and President of the Council of Mexican-American Affairs, to name just a few.

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