

Attachment B – Ms. Wilkins' Formal Request to the City Manager

From: I AM LOVE 333

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:14 PM

To: Olmos, Tony

Subject: Troop Way

Troop Way: A Tribute to Musical Legends

Dear City Manager Miguel Marquez, City Council Members, and Mayor Victor Gordo,

I trust this message finds you well. I am Keisha Wilkins, CEO of Visionary Entertainment, writing to you with an urgent and heartfelt appeal on behalf of the community seeking a significant change within the heart of Old Town Pasadena.

I implore you to consider the renaming of Dayton to Troop Way, extending from Fair Oaks to Raymond, covering Central Park in Old Town Pasadena. This request transcends a mere change of street name; it symbolizes a profound homage to the unparalleled contributions of the R&B group, Troop.

As I wrote in my first proposal, Troop's musical prowess, highlighted by three number-one singles and ten top-ten singles on the Billboard R&B Singles chart, is not just a testament to their remarkable talent but also a significant contribution to the world of music. Their enduring presence in the industry, solidified by appearances in the classic urban film *New Jack City* and their latest release "Lady In My Life" in 2023, showcases their ability to captivate audiences across generations.

Each member of Troop has left an indelible mark on the music industry:

****Reggie Warren (1968-2020)**** - Reggie was the life of the group, exuding positivity and joy. His infectious energy, love for dancing, and caring nature, offering food generously, made him irreplaceable. His untimely passing ignited a profound spark within Troop and the city of Pasadena.

****Rodney Benford**** - Rodney, as the glue holding the group together, pushed the boundaries of choreography, creating visual spectacles and fostering a tight-knit brotherhood.

****Jon Jon Harreld**** - Jon Jon's incredible vocal abilities and soulful sound shaped Troop's signature, enriching their repertoire and captivating audiences. As a child, Jon Jon was part of the Boys & Girls Club in Pasadena, showcasing Troop's connection with the local community.

****Steve Russell**** - Steve, the heart of Troop, not only contributed as a vocalist and songwriter but, as one of the best-noted Michael Jackson impersonators as a young child representing Pasadena, left a lasting impression on the city's cultural legacy. His Grammy-winning success as a writer and producer underscores his impact on the music industry. Troop's journey was also highlighted by appearances on shows like Arsenio Hall, further representing Pasadena on the national stage.

****Allen McNeil**** - Allen's sweet and melodious voice added a unique touch to Troop's harmonies, making him an essential part of the Troop experience.

Together, Reggie, Rodney, Jon Jon, Steve, and Allen formed an exceptional ensemble that produced a sound unlike any other, earning comparisons to legendary groups like New Edition. The dance named after them, "The Troop," became a testament to their captivating choreography.

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As a burn survivor and dancer, Troop's music transformed my darkest days, reigniting hope and resilience. Their influence propelled me back into the music industry, inspiring not only my journey but also the next generation—my children and grandchildren.

Renaming Dayton to Troop Way is not just an appeal; it's an affirmation of Troop's significance in our lives and a celebration of Pasadena's pride in nurturing exceptional talent. This change is a tribute that deserves to become a reality.

Moreover, Troop's representation of Pasadena, known for the Rose Bowl and the Rose Parade, is etched in our community's history. Since their young days, Troop has not only put on some of the world's best performances but has represented Pasadena in an unforgettable way, adding to the city's rich cultural heritage.

In another exciting development, in 2024, Troop's documentary will be showcased on the All Black Network, adding another chapter to their legacy and further representing Pasadena on a national platform.

I would like to share a personal connection to Troop's early success. When Troop first got their start on "Puttin On The Hits," my girl group Triple F and I met them at the audition. We loaned them our cassette tape of New Edition, as we were all impersonating New Edition. Because we gave them our tape, they made it through and won. This small act of connection marks the beginning of their incredible journey, and renaming Dayton to Troop Way is a fitting tribute to their enduring legacy.

Finally, I'm proud to share that my drill team won the Pasadena Rose Parade in the '80s, earning the opportunity to go to camp, adding another layer of connection between Troop and the vibrant history of Pasadena.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to City Manager Miguel Marquez, Asst. City Manager Brenda Harvey-Williams, Deputy Director/City Engineer Kris Markarian, P.E., and Director of Public Works Tony Olmos, P.E., for an exceptional meeting. Their collaboration and swift agreement on a location for Troop Way are truly appreciated. This historic street renaming is a remarkable opportunity to honor Troop while they are with us and enrich Pasadena's cultural tapestry.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Keisha Wilkins
CEO, Visionary Entertainment
Marketing & Promotions Manager