

Chess Champion Proclamation Transcript

January 30, 2017

CM Claudia Balducci:

Thank you Mr. Chair

I am pleased to stand here today to recognize Naomi Bashkansky - Banskansky did I say that correctly? Thank you. I've tried. Can you please come over here and join me, Naomi? We are recognizing Naomi for her win last month in the 2016 World School Chess Championship for the Girls under 13 category in Sochi Russia.

Naomi is an impressive competitor a credit to her family who's here with her today and her community some members of which are here with her today including her chess president. And she brings to chess the skill of strategic thinking, and determination she brings to chess will serve her well in the rest of her life."

This is one of many competitions Naomi has won and it earned her the title of Woman FIDE Master from the World Chess Federation, which is a step along the way to becoming a grandmaster and at such a very young age.

Naomi is known for her aggressive playing style. She was quoted in the Seattle Times saying "You try to get in a better position so that you keep crushing the opponent, and squeezing them." (laughter heard from other councilmembers) You don't want to mess with Naomi, she's a deceptively very kind and happy looking but she'll crush you!

Naomi's goal is to become a Woman's Grandmaster or International Master by the time she finishes high school. There are currently 1598 male grandmasters and only 33 female grandmasters so I sincerely hope she reaches her goal and inspires more girls to follow her example.

As the parent of a child about Naomi's age, I know that her parents are integral to her success. I want to recognize her father Guy and mother Ludmila. Their enthusiastic support for their daughter shows in her success. They use Naomi's many trips to international chess competitions as opportunities for family vacations, going to Brazil, Mexico, Greece, Russia and other places. When they travel, they make sure to leave the chess board behind once in awhile to explore and enjoy the cities they visit.

Guy and Ludmila, who emigrated from Russia by way of Israel and are now raising two great

kids in the Bellevue public school system, are outstanding examples of the types of people who make Bellevue and King County a diverse and thriving place.

So I'm now I'm going to read the proclamation.