

Inventory of the

E.J. “Zeke” Giorgi
Rockford, Illinois

Papers

In the
Regional History Center

RC 136

INTRODUCTION

E.J. “Zeke” Giorgi donated his political papers to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on November 2, 1981.

Property rights in the collection are held by the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 12
 Number of containers: 13
 Northern Illinois Regional History Center
 Collection 136

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Giorgi Papers are organized into three series: (1) constituent correspondence (1967-1981), (2) topical files (1965-1979), and (3) topical newsclipping files (1969-1975). The topical files contain information Giorgi gathered from various sources and comprise the largest series. Major subjects covered include the Board of Higher Education, energy, environmental protection, equal rights amendment, Governor Walker’s news releases, health care, law enforcement, the lottery, the mental health department, schools, unemployment and workmen’s compensation, and welfare. Some of these subjects, among many others, are also documented in the alphabetically arranged newsclipping topical files.

For the most part, the constituent correspondence is organized chronologically. However, some of the folders are labeled by subjects—house bill numbers and E.R.A., for example. Researchers wishing to make use of the correspondence for particular subjects will need to know the approximate date when the topic became a governmental concern.

The collection contains very little material for Giorgi’s first few years as a state representative and nothing from his term as an alderman in Rockford. Nevertheless, the material documents a wide variety of subjects useful for background information on legislation. Of particular note are the legislative synopses (1965-1975, Box 5, ff 3-6) which indicate the current and past measures taken on all bills presented to the House of Representatives. The collection also contains information on Winnebago County and the City of Rockford.

Researchers interested in northern Illinois politics may wish to consult the other politicians’ papers held by the Center. The local government records collected in the region also may provide information on politics, although in a localized area rather than state-wide.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Edolo J. “Zeke” Giorgi was born in Rockford in 1923 to immigrant parents from Ferentino, Italy. After attending St. Anthony grade school and Central High School, Giorgi became a sergeant in the U.S. Army serving for 40 months during World War II. He also was educated at Washington and Lee University through the Army Information - Education program. Upon returning to Rockford, Giorgi worked at the Roper Corporation and for the Midwest Distributing Company. His career as a politician did not begin until 1955.

When Alderman Peter Cicero decided to retire from the Rockford City Council in 1955 Giorgi chose to run for the position as a Good Government candidate. Backed by Mayor Milton Lundstrom and Emmett Poyer, then the city's most powerful union leader, Giorgi easily won his first election. Since then Giorgi has been successful in all but one campaign; in 1969 he lost the mayoral race as the Democratic candidate against Republican incumbent Ben Schleicher.

Although Giorgi served as fifth ward alderman until 1967, his political aspirations began pointing towards offices at the state level as early as 1965. His chance to move up the political ladder came when the Illinois Supreme Court decreed that all the state representatives were holding office illegally on the basis of a redistricting problem. By joining forces with Representative William Pierce, Giorgi became a delegate to the Democratic convention, was nominated, and subsequently elected. Giorgi's constituents continued to back him in his political endeavors and today, Giorgi is serving his ninth term as state representative.

Giorgi's political career has mirrored his personal interests and concerns. Always the staunch supporter of individual rights, Giorgi worked to improve workmen's and unemployment compensation laws. He also has been concerned with upgrading mental health and higher education facilities throughout the state. In 1975, recognizing Giorgi's achievements, the Young Democrats of Illinois named him "Outstanding Legislator" and the Democratic Party elected him assistant majority leader in the House. His innovative work on the Illinois Lottery earned him the designation "Father of the Illinois Lottery" from Governor Dan Walker during the same year.

Giorgi passed away unexpectedly in 1993.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Democratic Party
 Giorgi, Zeke
 Illinois General Assembly
 Legislators
 Lottery
 Rockford (Ill.)
 United States– Politics and government
 Winnebago County (Ill.)

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	
Series I. Correspondence			
1	1-26	Constituent Correspondence, 1967-1975	
2	1-29	Constituent Correspondence, 1975-1981	
Series II. Topical Files			
3	1	Agriculture Department, 1971	
	2	Agriculture Appropriations, 1973-1975	
	3-4	Board of Higher Education, 1972-1973	
	5	Building Authority, 1971	
	6	Business and Economic Development, 1971-1972	
	7	Capital Development Board, 1971-1974	
	8	Children and Family Services, 1969-1972	
	9	Committee Assignments, 1979	
	10	Comptroller's Office, 1971-1973	
	11	Conservation Department, 1971-1974	
	12	Constitution Implementation, 1970	
	13	Corrections Department (6), 1971	
	14	Crime Victims Compensation, 1973-1974	
	15	C.T.A., 1973	
	16	Department of Labor, (12), 1970-1974	
	17-18	Energy, 1976-1980	
	19-20	Environmental Protection (IL), (14), 1971-1974	
	21	Equal Rights Amendment, n.d.	
	4	1-3	Equal Rights Amendment, 1975-1980
		4	Governor Ogilvie, News Releases, 1971-1972
		5-7	Governor Walker, News Releases, (210), 1973-1975
8		Governor Walker, Newsclippings, 1972-1976	
9-10		Health Care, 1971-1973	
11-12		Higher Education, 1965-1975	
13		Illinois Law Enforcement Commission, (45), 1975	
14		Industrial Commission, 1971	
15		Insurance Department, 1971-1973	
16		Judicial Retirement System, 1973-1975	
5	1-2	Law Enforcement Commission, 1970-1972	
	3-6	Legislative Synopses, 1965-1975	
	7-11	Lottery, 1971-1974	
	12-15	Mental Health Department, (60), 1969-1974	
6	1	Mental Health Department, (15), 1969-1974	
	2	Personnel Department, (18), 1974	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	
6	3	Pinball Information, 1965-1969	
	4	Press Releases (Giorgi), 1981	
	5	Public Relations, 1974-1975	
	6	Racing Board, 1971	
	7-8	Revenue Sources, 1973-1975	
	9	Rockford, Home Rule	
	10	R.T.A., 1979	
	11	Scholarships, 1976	
	12-16	Schools, 1971-1980	
	17	Schools, Private, 1972	
	18	Secretary of State, 1971-1972	
	19	Taxes, 1968-1975	
	7	1	Tollway, 1969-1973
		2	Traffic Safety, 1971
		3	Unemployment Compensation, 1975
		4-8	Unemployment/Workmen's Compensation, 1972-1977
		9	Veteran's Commission, 1971
		10	Veto, 1975
		11	Vocational Education, 1971-1981
12-14		Welfare, 1971-1974	
15		Winnebago County Schools, n.d.	
16		Transportation Dept. (23), 1966-1971	
8		Scrapbooks (newsclippings), 1966-1968	
Series III. Topical Newsclipping Files, 1969-1975			
9	1	Abortion	
	2	Airport	
	3-6	Aldermen, Rockford	
	7	Ambulance	
	8	Anti-Pollution	
	9	Anti-Smoking	
	10-11	Appropriations	
	12	Banking	
	13	Bills, General	
	14	Bills - Walker	
	15	Bingo	
	16	Brinkmeier, Robert	
	17	C.E.T.A.	
	18	Chicago Transit Authority	
	19	Children and Family Services	
	20	Common Cause	
	21	Congressman Vote Count	
22	Congressman John B. Anderson		
23-24	Crime - Investigations		
25	Cronin, Dr. Joseph		
26	Daley, Richard		

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	5
9	27	Death Penalty	
	28	Debates	
	29	Democratic Convention	
	30	Democratic Party	
	31	Dirksen Statues by Tolpe	
	32	Double Dipping	
	33	Elderly - Aging	
	34-36	Election - 1972	
	37-38	Election - November, 1976	
	39-40	Election - City and County	
10	1	Election Board	
	2	Equal Rights Amendment	
	3	Explosives	
	4	Extended Care Home (Death)	
	5	Fair	
	6	Federal Building/Public Safety Building	
	7	Flood Relief - Flood Control	
	8	Frey, Donald	
	9	Gun Control	
	10	Halfway House/Genesis House	
	11	Hanahan, Thomas J.	
	12	Hartigan, Neil	
	13	Health Plans	
	14	Holidays	
	15	Home Rule	
	16	House - Senate Result - '76 Primary	
	17-18	House of Representatives	
	19-20	Housing - Urban Renewal	
	21	Human Interest	
	22	Ice Rink	
	23	Illinois Law Enforcement Commission	
	24	Illinois Business	
	25-26	Judges - Judicial - Courts	
	27	Kerner, Otto	
	28	Landfill - Garbage	
	29-30	Legislators - Legislation - Legislature	
	31	Library	
	32	Licensing - Registration and Education	
	33	Liquor Licenses, Bars, etc.	
	34	Lindberg, George	
	35	Malpractice	
36-37	Railroads - Mass Transportation Highways		
38	Medicaid		
39	Medical School		
40	Melin Bridge		
41	Mental Health		
11	1	Metcalf, Ralph	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	
11	2	Metropolitan Sanitary District Pay-off Investigation	
	3	Minorities Hiring	
	4	Mortgages	
	5	National Affairs	
	6	Northern Illinois Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency	
	7	No fault Insurance and Divorce	
	8	Nursing Homes	
	9	Obscenity	
	10	Off Track Betting	
	11	Oktoberfest	
	12	Park District	
	13	Powell, Paul	
	14	Pension - City and State	
	15	Pension Funds	
	16	Personnel	
	17	State Planes	
	18	Police Photo Lab	
	19	Police - Fireman	
	20	Post Office	
	21	"Pot"	
	22	Press Room Space	
	23	Pressure Groups	
	24-25	Primary - 1976	
	26	Pruitt, Elmer Parole	
	27	Public Relations and Interest	
	28	Race Track	
	29	Red Lining	
	30	Remapping	
	31	State Rent Scandal	
	32	Republican Party	
	33	Republican Presidential Race	
	34	Revenue Sharing	
	35	Rockford Action Office Terry Siebert	
	36	Rockford - All American City	
	37	Rockford Mass Transit	
	38	Rockford Contemp Case	
	39	Rock Valley College	
	40	Salisbury's Probe	
	41	Sanitary District	
	42-45	Schools	
	12	1	Self-Service Gas Stations
		2	Senate
3		Senator Betty Ann Keegan	
4		Senator Vivian Hickey	
5		Shea, Gerald W.	
6		Simon, Paul	
7		Snowmobiles	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	7
12	8	Singer Mental Health Center Probe	
	9-11	State of Illinois - Miscellaneous	
	12	Stubblefield, Guy	
	13	Sunset Bill	
	14	Teachers - Schools	
	15-16	Unions, Labor	
13	1	Voting	
	2-3	Walker, Dan	
	4	West Side Community Organization	
	5	Whitman Street Interchange	
	6-7	Winnebago County Board	
	8	Winnebago County Democrats	
	9	Winnebago County - Employment	
	10	Winnebago County - Housing	
	11	Winnebago County - Zoning	
	12-14	Winnebago County - Miscellaneous	

ADDENDUM

15	Rockford Magazine article on Zeke Giorgi, April 1989
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