

2015-J1678

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 175th Anniversary of the Columbia County Fair in Chatham, New York

WHEREAS, Fairs and festivals empower communities to attract new visitors while capitalizing on local commercial and cultural value; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to recognize and support events of significance which contribute to the entertainment and vitality of the communities they serve and which exemplify the history and development of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the Columbia County Fair in Chatham, New York; this auspicious milestone will be recognized on Wednesday, September 2 through Monday, September 7, 2015, and will celebrate the history, traditions and legacy of this renowned event; and

WHEREAS, During a meeting in the summer of 1840, the County Court House in Hudson, New York, became the birthplace of what is now the Chatham Fair; and

WHEREAS, At the Fair Society's organization meeting, Edward P. Livingston of Clermont was elected as its inaugural President, and the Columbia County Agricultural Society was established to improve the condition of agriculture, horticulture, manufactures and domestic economy; and

WHEREAS, The first Columbia County Fair was held in the city of Hudson on Tuesday, October 12, 1841; and

WHEREAS, In 1856, 15 acres of land was purchased by the Fair Society in the Chatham Four Corners for use as its new fairgrounds; just one year later, harness racing was introduced; and

WHEREAS, In 1881, the erection of a grandstand was authorized, as well

as the construction of a poultry house and suitable quarters for the stabling of horses during the fair; in addition, a new building for horticultural and domestic purposes was completed in 1884, and remains in use today as the Fairhouse; and

WHEREAS, At its annual election in 1889, John P. Mickle, who had been prominent in the Chatham Fair picture for many years, passed the baton to his son, John D. Mickle, who was elected to the Board of Managers in 1900; and

WHEREAS, During this time, John D. Mickle served the Columbia County Fair with distinction for half a century, until his son, Philip D. Mickle came on board in 1951; he served as Fair Director, President and Treasurer for more than a quarter-century, bringing the combined Mickle service to nearly 100 years; and

WHEREAS, A new administration building was put into use shortly before the 1966 fair; the same year, 23 acres of vacant land was purchased at the south end of the fairgrounds, bringing the total acreage to its present 55, and opening the way for a second admission gate; and

WHEREAS, In 1970, a structure was built primarily for food concessions, including the Columbia County Fair's main restaurant, The Tower Club, which is currently run by the Spencertown Church; and

WHEREAS, Today, under the luminous direction of its President, Nelson R. Alford, Jr., the Columbia County Fair serves as an important destination and continues to leave its indelible imprint on the history of New York State; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those organizations that have brought entertainment and cultural enrichment to the citizens of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the Columbia County Fair's rich legacy and enduring contribution to the entertainment and heritage of the State of New York, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to join in the celebration to ensure that present and future generations may come to appre-

ciate the unique significance which its history plays in the progression of our State and Nation's evolution; now, therefore, be it RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the Columbia County Fair in Chatham, New York; and be it further RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Columbia County Fair, Chatham, New York.