

BY: Senator GALLIVAN

COMMEMORATING the 100th Anniversary of the Arcade and Attica Railroad in Arcade, New York, on May 17, 2017

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to call attention to those historic sites within the State of New York which serve as lasting reminders of our rich and unique past; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Arcade and Attica Railroad in Arcade, New York, to be celebrated from May 27-29, 2017, and July 1-2, 2017; and

WHEREAS, As railroads were stretching across the country, the farmers of Western New York saw the perfect opportunity for a link to the big cities; many small organizations that formed, began building railroads throughout the countryside; despite many stops and starts, railroads were built stretching across the picturesque Allegheny River Valley; and

WHEREAS, When the Pennsylvania Railroad wanted to connect to Buffalo, New York, they found the best way to do so would be to purchase all the small incomplete railroads and link them together; as a result, the Buffalo, Attica and Arcade Railroad was formed; and

WHEREAS, The narrow gauge line would connect Attica, New York, through Arcade, to the Pennsylvania State Line and then to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, adding the line between Attica and Curriers Corner, New York, in 1880; and

WHEREAS, The rails on the ground today were initially put down in 1881, and standardized in 1895 to connect with the Pennsylvania Railroad, allowing merchants easy connections between Arcade and Pittsburgh; and

WHEREAS, By 1917, the Railroad, operated by the Buffalo and Susquehanna Railroad, was in turmoil as they had considered closing down the section of the line; the businessmen along the trail were concerned, especially since the Merrell-Soule Company of Arcade (predecessor of the Borden Co.) operated a large mill processing plant and they, along with other large companies, needed access to the rail service; and

WHEREAS, With the help of interested parties, stocks were sold to farmers, merchants and concerned civilians; raising \$79,000, the people formed the Arcade and Attica Railroad Corporation, which exists to this day; and

WHEREAS, After a series of incidents involving bankruptcies and washout, such as the Tonawanda Creek flooding its banks and taking several feet of track with it, the Board of Directors of the Arcade and Attica Railroad Corporation voted to suspend all operations between

North Java and Attica, since nearly all the freight business was between Arcade and North Java; and

WHEREAS, In 1941, the Railroad purchased a 44-Ton General Electric diesel engine, becoming one of the first railroads in the nation to conduct operations with diesel power; the new locomotive performed so well, cutting expenses so drastically, that it saved the Arcade and Attica Railroad; and

WHEREAS, In the late 1950s, freight business began to slide and drastic measures needed to be taken to ensure the short line's livelihood; the decision was made to try steam powered passenger excursions; it had its inaugural run on July 27, 1962, for railroad officials and press; and

WHEREAS, Regular summertime excursions began less than a week later; open only 27 days, the Railroad carried 17,000 passengers in just two cars; the successful line became to be known as the Grand Scenic Route; and

WHEREAS, Today, the railroad is running regular freight services which continue to hold steady hauling between 450-500 cars per year; passenger excursions now include special events such as Civil War Days, Murder Mystery Rides, Fall Foliage Tours, Halloween Rides and The North Pole Express; and

WHEREAS, As the last operating Steam Excursion in New York State, the Arcade and Attica Railroad's active freight service has brought in thousands of people each year to Attica to view the scenic routes and enjoy one of the oldest steam powered trains in New York State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is pleased to have this opportunity to express its highest admiration for the Arcade and Attica Railroad, and for all the individuals who have worked to bring proper attention to a place and time which merits recognition in the great panorama of the history of our State and Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Arcade and Attica Railroad in Arcade, New York, on May 17, 2017; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Arcade and Attica Railroad.