

BY: Senator O'MARA

COMMEMORATING the 30th Anniversary of The Windmill
Farm & Craft Market in Penn Yan, New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize the achievements of those individuals and businesses which substantially contribute to the economic vitality of their communities and the entire Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of The Windmill Farm & Craft Market in Penn Yan, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Windmill Farm & Craft Market is the first and friendliest farm and craft market in upstate New York, located right in the heart of the Finger Lakes Wine Region; midway between Penn Yan and Dundee on New York Route 14A, The Windmill has become a premier tourist attraction, with a weekly attendance exceeding 8,000 people; and

WHEREAS, From its humble beginnings of approximately 100 vendors, The Windmill Farm & Craft Market serves as an outlet for local producers and craftsmen; now in its 30th year, The Windmill plays host to nearly 200 shops; and

WHEREAS, In 1978, Bill and Ruth Gunderman, and Pat Gunderman and her husband, Ron Nissen took a trip to Ephrata, Pennsylvania, to visit a farm market; they were enamored with the concept and decided that one day they would attempt to create a similar market in Yates County; and

WHEREAS, In 1986, the two couples began talking over the concept of a farm and craft market with many of their English and Mennonite friends; after receiving positive reinforcement, they decided to set up a meeting to see if there was any interest in pursuing the idea; and

WHEREAS, In February of 1986, a meeting was held, and 80 people showed up; an initial plan was formulated, and a steering committee was formed to search for a location; a 26-acre site on New York State Route 14A was chosen; and

WHEREAS, This grass roots group opened its doors to the public for the first time on June 27, 1987, with 64 vendors in two enclosed buildings, 25 outside vendors, and lots of good will and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, The next Saturday, July 4, 1987, was even more successful than opening day; traffic was backed up for five miles in each direction trying to get into the market; and

WHEREAS, In 1988, a third enclosed building and an open produce shed were erected; the group was the recipient of a New York State Grant to construct sidewalks, concrete floors and restroom facilities; in 1995 an

additional seven and one-half acres were purchased to provide additional parking; and

WHEREAS, During the period of 1997-1999, other outside buildings were erected, and in 2004, a New York State Matching Fund grant was awarded to enclose the produce area and former hay auction barn thus making more permanent inside vending areas; and

WHEREAS, Bill Gunderman served as The Windmill Farm & Craft Market's first Treasurer, resident electrician and architect; he designed many of the buildings at The Windmill; he was also a member of the Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, Bill Gunderman's daughter, Pat Gunderman held the position of the first President, participated on the Board of Directors, and was the Treasurer after her father's retirement; in addition, she served as the Market Manager for six years until her retirement in 2001; she has been actively involved as a Market Consultant ever since; and

WHEREAS, Ron Nissen enjoyed selling hot dogs to thousands of loyal customers; he later served as Market Manager for many years and helped set up several other markets; and

WHEREAS, The success of The Windmill Farm & Craft Market is in direct correlation to the efforts of its staff, whose involvement is, and always has been, characterized by an impressive commitment, an unbridled enthusiasm, and an uncompromising standard of excellence in all endeavors on behalf of the institution and the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, It is with great pleasure that this Legislative Body acknowledges this exceptional business and its contributions to the local and State economies, fully confident that it will continue to enjoy the sparkling successes it has experienced thus far; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of The Windmill Farm & Craft Market in Penn Yan, New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Pat Gunderman and Ron Nissen, The Windmill Farm & Craft Market.