

BY: M. of A. Butler

COMMEMORATING the 60th Anniversary of the
Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain
Lake on August 5, 2017

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that the quality of life of the citizens of the State of New York is greatly enriched by its exceptional cultural, educational and recreational institutions; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake to be celebrated at a Music Fest on Saturday, August 5, 2017; and

WHEREAS, For six decades, the Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake has strived to educate visitors about the unique history of the Adirondack region, the relationship between people and the Adirondack wilderness, and the importance of making informed choices for the future; and

WHEREAS, Since 1957, the Adirondack Museum, now known as the Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake, has shared the history of the people who have lived, worked and played in the Adirondack Park; the history of the very place on which it sits mirrors the history of the Adirondacks itself: from lumber camp to summer hotel to museum to Experience, it embodies the transformation of the Adirondacks from mineral and lumber resource to resort to recreation getaway; and

WHEREAS, The Adirondack Experience's story begins in 1867 when Connecticut farmer, Miles Talcott Merwin, acquired 11,230 acres in the Adirondacks, including most of Blue Mountain; six years later, Miles Talcott and his son, Miles Tyler Merwin, traveled here "in order to look over some prospects for lumbering"; after reaching Glens Falls, New York, by train, they hiked for five days through dense forest to reach Blue Mountain Lake; and

WHEREAS, In 1874, Tyler Merwin, employed a crew of men to build a set of shanties, clear up some land, and plant some potatoes to help feed a crew of lumbermen the next winter; he and his men logged two tracts of land, one on Blue Mountain and another around nearby Tirrell Pond, three miles to the north; and

WHEREAS, In the last quarter of the 1800s, the Adirondacks became a popular vacation destination; wealthy summer tourists came to spend several weeks or more each summer, escaping the heat and smog of urban life; and

WHEREAS, Tyler Merwin put up overnight guests, first in crude rooms in the lumber camp, then in a log annex; in 1880, he built a large frame

hotel with a broad veranda overlooking the lake, by 1907, his Blue Mountain House hotel could accommodate as many as 100 guests; and

WHEREAS, True to his Puritan background, Tyler Merwin banned the use of alcohol and tobacco on hotel grounds, although he did offer amusements including ping-pong, piano, Victrola, radio, and when occasion demanded, square and regular dancing; and

WHEREAS, The Blue Mountain House continued as a hotel into the 20th Century; on Saturday July 3, 1948, then owner, William L. Wessels, invited a group of men and women interested in the history of the Adirondacks and the preservation of mementos of the past to meet; together, they formed The Adirondack Historical Association; and

WHEREAS, Granted a charter by the New York State Legislature the following year, the group made plans to build a museum in Blue Mountain Lake; in 1954, the Adirondack Historical Association purchased the Blue Mountain House property from William L. Wessels, and began construction on a new museum building; and

WHEREAS, The Adirondack Museum opened on August 4, 1957, after two years of construction and collecting; the new museum's mission was "ecological in nature, showing the history of man's relation to the Adirondacks"; and

WHEREAS, The first objects collected were from the Blue Mountain Lake area, and exhibits featured the Marion River Carry Railroad engine and passenger car, the steamboat Osprey, a stagecoach, several horse-drawn vehicles, a birch bark canoe and dioramas depicting various aspects of life in the Adirondacks; and

WHEREAS, Since then, the Adirondack Museum collection has expanded to include artifacts representing community life from all over the Adirondack region; recently, renamed Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake, it continues to actively collect, preserve and exhibit objects which were made or used by Adirondackers; and

WHEREAS, These objects are historical records that tell how people live, work, and play on the Adirondack landscape; most of these objects have been donated by Adirondackers who want to preserve and share their family and community history; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake is comprised of approximately 30,000 objects, more than 70,000 photographs, 9,511 books, and 800 pages of original manuscript materials housed and exhibited there; and

WHEREAS, The success of the Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake 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; and

WHEREAS, The natural world is a community to which we all belong, and nowhere is this more consciously recognized than in the Adirondack

Park; the Adirondack Experience continues to bring to life the history of man's relationship to this landscape so we may make better-informed decisions about the future of this very special place; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that institutions which are founded in educational purpose, and which help to preserve the history and heritage of a people, merit the highest commendation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake on August 5, 2017; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake.