

Assembly Resolution No. 561

BY: M. of A. Burdick

MOURNING the death of James Arena, Jr.,
meritorious firefighter, devoted family man and
distinguished member of his community

WHEREAS, There are certain outstanding members of our community who, through their selfless commitment and dedication, have served to better the quality of life in our community and have had a measurable positive impact on the lives of its residents; James Arena, Jr., was one such individual; and

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of James Arena, Jr., noting the significance of his purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, James "Jim" Arena, Jr. of Katonah, New York, died peacefully on Saturday, January 29, 2022, at the age of 81; and

WHEREAS, Born on May 1, 1940, in Mount Kisco, New York, to the late James and Marion (Maria) Arena (Gerardi), James Arena, Jr. attended St. Mary's School in Katonah, and was a member of the first graduating class of John Jay High School; and

WHEREAS, James Arena, Jr. proudly served his country as a member of the United States Navy from 1959 until his honorable discharge in July of 1965; during this time, he courageously fought aboard the USS Lake Champlain during the Bay of Pigs; and

WHEREAS, In 1964, James Arena, Jr. wed the love of his life, Kathy, and together they built a home behind his parents in Katonah, where they raised their two beautiful children; and

WHEREAS, A truly hardworking, modest and humble man, James Arena, Jr. was employed by the Town of Bedford, Bedford Central School District, HH Park and ATI; a proud Teamster of Local 456, he retired as an Oil Burner Technician from Robison Oil; with this vast knowledge, he was always willing and able to help a neighbor in need; and

WHEREAS, Growing up, Jim's father was the local milkman, and later in life he enjoyed collecting milk bottles and memorabilia from years gone by; he was so very proud of the legacy of his family and how hard they worked to raise their families; and

WHEREAS, With a steadfast and unwavering commitment to his community, James Arena, Jr. tirelessly served as a member of the Katonah Volunteer Fire Department for 68 years; he was truly at home in the firehouse and considered his fellow firemen his family; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his illustrious tenure, which traversed nearly seven decades, James Arena, Jr. consistently demonstrated a level of commitment, dedication, integrity and professionalism which truly

exemplifies excellence in the volunteer service; his able leadership as Chief of Department from 1994 to 1997 will forever stand as a paradigm and inspiration for others; and

WHEREAS, An avid hunter, James Arena, Jr. enjoyed time in the Adirondacks at his brother Dominic's cabin, and in later years, he and his wife enjoyed retreating to their lake house to relax and get away; and.

WHEREAS, A resident of Katonah for more than 70 years, James Arena, Jr. cherished his beloved town and its residents; he brought the magic of the holiday season to life for 40 years in his role as the community's Santa Claus, bringing smiles and tears of joy to countless families; and

WHEREAS, James Arena, Jr. is survived by his children, James Arena, III (Gina) and Teresa O'Hagan; nine grandchildren, Casey Arena, Jessica Arena, Victoria Boquin (Juan), Amanda LeDonne (Nicholas), Jaime Arena, Brian O'Hagan, Elizabeth O'Hagan, Emma Arena and Michael Arena; two great-granddaughters, Aria Boquin and Leila LeDonne; his sister, Angela Pearsall; and brother, Dominic Arena; as well as many nieces and nephews; in addition to his adored wife, he was predeceased by his grandson, James "Jimmyboy" Arena; and

WHEREAS, James Arena Jr.'s infinite selflessness and benevolence will shine on through his family's vivid and happy memories; his insight and strength will forever serve as a beacon of love, light and hope to the countless lives he touched; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, James Arena, Jr. leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all who were privileged to have known and loved such an amazing man; he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of James Arena, Jr., and to express its deepest condolences to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of James Arena, Jr.