

**BY:** Senator RATH

**CONGRATULATING** Joan Fishburn upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the "Unsung Hero" SPARK Award by Arts Services Inc.

**WHEREAS,** The arts, in whatever form depicted, are central to human expression; they are truly a universal language and their contribution to the development of friendship and understanding among all peoples cannot be underestimated; and

**WHEREAS,** Joan Fishburn has given not only of her time and energies but also of her competence, intelligence and leadership and consequently has been designated for special honor; and

**WHEREAS,** This Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate Joan Fishburn upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the "Unsung Hero" SPARK Award by Arts Services Inc. to be celebrated on Wednesday, May 26, 2021; and

**WHEREAS,** Since 2014, Arts Services Inc. has presented its Annual SPARK Awards to honor outstanding individuals and organizations from across Western New York for their dedication, talent and impact on the arts and cultural sector; and

**WHEREAS,** This year's esteemed "Unsung Hero" SPARK Award, which honors an unpaid individual who has made a significant impact on an arts organization, artistic discipline or the entire sector through their volunteer service, will be presented to Joan Fishburn for her many years of dedication to the Amherst Symphony Orchestra; and

**WHEREAS,** Originally from Philadelphia, Joan Fishburn began playing violin in third grade; in high school she added the trombone to her musical life; her passion for music is truly impressive and following graduation, she went on to Pennsylvania State University to pursue a degree in music education; and

**WHEREAS,** In 1959, Joan Fishburn moved to Buffalo with her family and immediately joined the all-volunteer Amherst Symphony Orchestra (ASO); there she made several connections and found opportunities for service, creativity, relationships, and personal growth; and

**WHEREAS,** While still playing with the ASO, Joan Fishburn served as President of both its Women's/Friends Committee and the Amherst Symphony Association's board; under her able leadership, many programs were initiated and expanded; additionally, she was instrumental in scheduling ASO members into area schools for educational presentations and for providing transportation and seating for residents of retirement homes to attend all ASO concerts; and

**WHEREAS,** Furthermore, through these relationships, Joan Fishburn was able to bring hundreds of young people to participate in ASO concerts

and be featured in pre-concert productions; and

**WHEREAS,** Joan Fishburn helped the ASO make meaningful and long-lasting acquaintances with the county, town, and village leaders to enhance and improve their community; she was invited to be part of the Glen Park Committee, where she served for 25 years, and she developed and maintained consistent relationships with local corporations to secure concert sponsorships; and

**WHEREAS,** This talented instrumentalist also developed and prepared the ASO's concert programs for more than three decades all while continuously playing in the orchestra; her 60 plus-year tenure with the ASO has created innumerable memories and friendships, and has truly made a lasting and impactful impression on the community; and

**WHEREAS,** Joan Fishburn has been the proud recipient of numerous awards and accolades, including the Behind the Scenes Individual Award from the Town of Amherst in 2016; and

**WHEREAS,** During the past two decades, Joan Fishburn studied the effect of music, participation and listening on the brain; so much has been learned in recent years of the importance of music on our health, individually and collectively; this information has only added to Joan's passion concerning the importance of music for all; and

**WHEREAS,** Rare indeed is the impressive dedication shown by an individual for the benefit of others which Joan Fishburn has displayed throughout her life; and

**WHEREAS,** It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate Joan Fishburn upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the "Unsung Hero" SPARK Award; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Joan Fishburn.