

BY: M. of A. Woerner

COMMEMORATING the 50th Anniversary of Mary Ann Fortune's Dance Studio of Mechanicville, New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have enriched the lives of our citizens through dedication to the education, cultural development, and personal growth of our youth; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Mary Ann Fortune's Dance Studio, a cornerstone of the Mechanicville community since its founding in 1974; and

WHEREAS, In September 2024, Mary Ann Fortune's Dance Studio will mark 50 years of continuous operation, having provided generations of dancers with a place to explore their passion, refine their technique, and forge lifelong friendships; and

WHEREAS, Founded by Mary Ann Fortune at the age of 17 in the basement of her parents' home, the studio began with just 25 students and has grown into a thriving institution located at 226 South Central Avenue in Mechanicville, New York; and

WHEREAS, With a foundation in tap and ballet instruction from the esteemed Conway Sisters Dance Studio, Mary Ann Fortune began her teaching journey while continuing to develop her own skills-an endeavor supported unwaveringly by her parents and brother; and

WHEREAS, Mary Ann Fortune demonstrated exceptional entrepreneurial spirit, moving from her family basement to a commercial space owned by her father and eventually, in 1982, to her current location, which was further expanded in 2000 to accommodate growing demand; and

WHEREAS, Dedicated to professional growth, Mary Ann Fortune has participated in national conventions, tap festivals, and training sessions through the Dance Educators of America, where she maintains active membership; and

WHEREAS, Since 1975, the studio has hosted annual end-of-season recitals in June, celebrating the talent and progress of students across age groups and skill levels, including both recreational and competitive dancers; and

WHEREAS, Under Mary Ann Fortune's guidance, the studio began participating in competitive dance in the 1980s, starting with the Saratoga County Fair and advancing to statewide competitions at the New York State Fair in Syracuse and regional events in cities like New York and Boston; and

WHEREAS, The studio has evolved to incorporate diverse dance genres such as ballet, lyrical, jazz, contemporary, and hip-hop, reflecting

changing times and student interests, all while preserving the strong pedagogical foundation established in its early years; and

WHEREAS, Recital weekend features a cross-genre production dance involving all competitive dancers, showcasing the studio's unity and artistic breadth, and proceeds from these recitals are generously donated to charitable organizations including The Bernard & Millie Duker Children's Hospital at Albany Medical Center, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Saratoga Hospital, and Ronald McDonald House Charities; and

WHEREAS, Mary Ann Fortune's motivation stems from her students-their joy, growth, confidence, and commitment inspire her to continue teaching with passion, empathy, and excellence; and

WHEREAS, The enduring success of Mary Ann Fortune's Dance Studio is a testament to Mary Ann's vision, the support of her family, the dedication of past and present instructors, and the unwavering support of the community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Mary Ann Fortune's Dance Studio of Mechanicville, New York, and to honor the extraordinary legacy of its founder, Mary Ann Fortune; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Mary Ann Fortune.