

2013-J493

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian Garden upon the occasion of celebrating its 10th Anniversary on July 28, 2013

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 commend the Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian Garden upon the occasion of celebrating its 10th Anniversary on Sunday, July 28, 2013; and

WHEREAS, The Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian Garden, through the experience of an immigrant family's 1890s home, preserves and interprets the cultural and horticultural heritage of Flushing, Queens and adjacent communities to engage their ever-changing populations; and

WHEREAS, The Voelker Orth Museum is an 1891 house and Victorian-styled garden located in the Murray Hill section of Queens, an early commuter suburb for New York City's growing middle class, established in the late 1800s; and

WHEREAS, Chartered by the New York State Board of Regents as a history museum, the Voelker Orth Museum is a multi-disciplinary organization whose name and focus, and principal support was derived from the Museum's benefactor, the late Elisabetha Orth; and

WHEREAS, The property was originally part of the estate of the Parsons family who developed a successful nursery business in the 19th century; and

WHEREAS, Conrad Voelcker purchased the home in 1899; a German immigrant, he started a printing business in Manhattan and published a widely read German newspaper; and

WHEREAS, Conrad Voelcker's daughter married Dr. Rudolph Orth, the son of German immigrants and a Cornell graduate, who became a police surgeon with the NYC Police Department; they had a daughter, Elisabetha who

became a teacher and lived in the family home throughout her life; and
WHEREAS, When Elisabetha died in 1995, she left the house and property
to establish the Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian
Garden; and

WHEREAS, Acting posthumously, on the directions described in Elisabetha Orth's will, a committee formed drawing representatives from the
Queens Botanical Gardens, the Queens Historical Society and the Theodore
Roosevelt Bird Sanctuary to establish the new organization in 1997; and

WHEREAS, The Voelker Orth Museum was incorporated in 1999 and opened
to the public in 2003 following extensive restoration of the 1890s house
and garden; and

WHEREAS, Based in an area that is rich in history and dynamic in its
diversity, the Voelker Orth Museum invites audiences in Flushing and
beyond to explore and experience connections to the past and our shared
heritage; it is a place for discovery, reflection and learning; and

WHEREAS, The Voelker Orth Museum engages audiences through the arts,
nature, horticulture and local history; it is committed to presenting
programs in a multi-disciplinary manner, using different modes of
inquiry and discovery; and

WHEREAS, The Museum provides a number of volunteer and intern training
opportunities, working with the Chinese Planning Council, Flushing
International High School, Korean Community Family Services, and other
area schools and colleges; young people get to experience working with

primary source documents in the archives, learn researching methods and
participate in gardening; and

WHEREAS, Public programs include an annual Oktoberfest, free summer
performances of Shakespeare in the garden, jazz and classical performances in the parlor, family programs about honeybees and home gardening,
jewelry-making workshops, lectures and tours about local history; and

WHEREAS, The remarkable success of the Voelker Orth Museum is due in
large part to its dedicated board of directors and Executive Director
Deborah Silverfine; the board members are Ferdinand Gerber, President;
Catherine Fitts, Vice-President; James Driscoll, Vice-President; Lola
McLinden, Treasurer; Marianne Giacalone, Secretary; Arlene Cusumano;
Lynn Hanousek; Joan Kingsley; Patricia Sherwood; Barbara Silver; Roland
G. Wade; and

WHEREAS, The expert staff of the Voelker Orth Museum, are and always

have been characterized by an impressive commitment, an unbridled enthusiasm, and an uncompromising standard of excellence, and accordingly merit the commendation of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian Garden upon the occasion of celebrating its 10th Anniversary on July 28, 2013; and be it further RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian Garden.