

2011-K238

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION celebrating the life and mourning the passing of Mescal Hornbeck, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Mescal Hornbeck of Woodstock, New York, died on Wednesday, January 19, 2011, at the age of 99, just six months before her 100th birthday; and

WHEREAS, Mescal Hornbeck, beloved Woodstock mainstay, was born on June 17, 1911, in Shokan, New York; a 1928 graduate of Kingston High School, she went on to attend Arnot-Ogden Hospital School for Nursing and became a registered nurse in 1933; and

WHEREAS, Mescal married Samuel Earl Hornbeck in 1937, and together they had four wonderful children; in addition to raising her family, Mescal maintained her own nursing career while moving around the country to accommodate her husband's demanding career; and

WHEREAS, Her nearly five-decade long nursing career included teaching, private-duty nursing and public-health nursing throughout New York and Kentucky; during World War II, she taught cadet nursing and worked evening shifts as an industrial nurse; and

WHEREAS, Mescal Hornbeck retired a year after her husband Samuel's death in 1970, and moved to Woodstock where she provided private nursing and cared for her then 87 year-old mother; her activity seemed to accelerate throughout her life resulting in years of noble activism; and

WHEREAS, Whenever people mobilized to fight for a good cause in Woodstock, Mescal Hornbeck was part of the effort; she was a strong, intel-

ligent and pragmatic activist who was very community-minded; subsequently, she was the recipient of the 2007 Alf Evers Volunteer of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, Mescal Hornbeck was instrumental in establishing Ulster County's first Meals on Wheels program and volunteered as a health advisor to Meals Together programs allowing seniors to enjoy meals at a reasonable price in a social setting; she believed that communities should offer both the nutritional needs of senior citizens as well as social interaction; and

WHEREAS, Mescal Hornbeck was active in creating Ulster County's Office of the Aging, as well as influential in salvaging the Woodstock Community Center from demolition, and assisting with the relocation effort of the Town Court; and

WHEREAS, Moreover, this remarkable woman spearheaded senior citizens' activities in Woodstock and was an advocate for seniors rights throughout the county; she organized senior citizens' groups and in 1982, she created the community's Senior Recreation Committee; under her luminous direction, the group's activities grew to include classes in art, drama, exercise, writing, folk dancing, chorus, bridge, and improvisation, all offered free of charge to Woodstock elders; and

WHEREAS, Mescal Hornbeck was elected to the Woodstock Town Board in 1982; she served a four year term, during which time she was appointed to the Senior Citizen Anti-Crime Task Force, a branch of the sheriff's department, being the first senior citizen to serve on the board; and

WHEREAS, A political advocate for issues she believed in, Mescal Hornbeck led the Woodstock Chapter of Citizens for Universal Healthcare and made health services available to the elderly; she provided a wealth of

information for her peers about health and nutrition and taught nursing classes on important health issues; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, Mescal Hornbeck was known for her Woodstock Times column, "Mescal's Message"; even as a nonagenarian, she remained

sharp as a tack and politically astute; and

WHEREAS, A talented painter and gardener, Mescal Hornbeck enjoyed playing Scrabble, cooking, and traveling; she visited New Zealand twice, had a sea voyage from Australia to England, and a trip to Europe that included Amsterdam, Barcelona, and Siena; and

WHEREAS, Mescal Hornbeck is survived by her daughter, Ruth, and her three sons, Frederick, Peter, and Henry, as well as seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit, imbued with a sense of compassion, and comforted by a loving family, Mescal Hornbeck leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all she served and befriended; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to publicly recognize those who have reached such a remarkable age and who have witnessed and celebrated the innovations, cultural developments and awesome achievements of this country during the last century, while themselves contributing to the growth and excellence of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate the life and mourn the passing of Mescal Hornbeck, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Mescal Hornbeck.