

No. R-268. House concurrent resolution congratulating former Representative and Unadilla Theater impresario William Blachly of Calais on his 100th birthday.

(H.C.R.203)

Offered by: Representatives O'Brien of Tunbridge and Mihaly of Calais

Offered by: Senators Cummings, Perchlik, and Watson

Whereas, for a man who was unable to read until the seventh grade and finds math a steep challenge, Bill Blachly has summited seemingly insurmountable peaks in life and especially in the dramatic arts, and

Whereas, Bill Blachly's personal journey, which has featured the inevitable comic and tragic scenes, started with his birth on April 13, 1924 in New Jersey, where he was raised in the Township of Montclair; and, as a youth, he enjoyed attending Broadway shows and Metropolitan Opera performances in New York City, and

Whereas, during his World War II U.S. Navy service, his vessel sank, but, fortunately, he was rescued, and he later attended Oberlin College in Ohio and graduated from Goddard College, and

Whereas, in 1956, Bill Blachly abandoned a career in college administration and purchased the dilapidated Broadview Farm in Calais, where he initially milked a small dairy herd and later raised a flock of sheep, and

Whereas, in 1965, prior to the historic Vermont legislative reapportionment, the voters of the Town of Calais elected Bill Blachly, for one term, as their first Democratic State representative—and their last, regardless of political party—to serve in the “Big House,” and, despite his mathematical shortcomings, he later worked in the Vermont Department of Taxes, and

Whereas, Bill Blachly volunteered with community theater organizations in Plainfield and Barre, and was a leader in the restoration of the Barre Opera House; and, in 1983, on extremely short notice, he transferred a Plainfield Little Theater production of Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* to a nonexistent performance venue in his own barn, which he named the Unadilla Theater after the manufacturer's name that was listed on the building's rafters, and

Whereas, 21 Gilbert and Sullivan, 10 Shakespeare, 10 Chekhov, six Fugard, six Shaw, three Ibsen, and 130 other productions later, he has created a community theater legacy with his partner since 1980, Ann O'Brien; along with his former wife, Alice; and other family members and friends, and

Whereas, his own thespian desires were satisfied as the incumbent member of Congress who Fred Tuttle challenges in the 1996 classic Vermont film *Man with a Plan*, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates former Representative and Unadilla Theater impresario William Blachly of Calais on his 100th birthday, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Bill Blachly.