

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

IN CITY COUNCIL

June 09, 2016

RESOLUTION HONORING FRANCO-AMERICANS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CITY OF NEW BEDFORD ON ST. JEAN-BAPTISTE DAY

WHEREAS, June 26, 2016, is the Feast Day of Saint Jean-Baptiste, the Patron Saint of Franco-Americans and July 14, 2016, is Bastille Day, the French National Day, which commemorates that Country's independence; and

WHEREAS, France and French-speaking Canadians and their peoples have historically had ties with Old Dartmouth and New Bedford, both during Colonial Times and the American Revolution, until today; and

WHEREAS, New Bedford provided a haven for French whalers seeking refuge from wars during the 1700's and again during the 1820's; French and French-Canadians served as crewmen on whale ships through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century; and

WHEREAS, Large numbers of French-Canadians and smaller numbers of French migrated to New Bedford after the mid 19th Century, becoming a mainstay of the textile industry and creating vibrant communities of their own, our Citizens of French and French Canadian descent, beneficiaries of great religious, social and literary heritage based on freedom, such as our Nation cherishes, are an important segment of the culturally diverse citizenry of New Bedford; and

WHEREAS, The celebration of "La Fete de Saint Jean-Baptiste" can be traced back to King Clovis, the first Catholic French King, a tradition later brought to Quebec and made a holiday; and

WHEREAS, In 1908, Pope Pius X officially proclaimed Saint Jean-Baptiste, the Patron Saint of French-Canadians; and

WHEREAS, At special ceremonies on this day, Franco-American Veterans of all wars will be honored at the Franco-American Veterans Square, where the thirty-five ton Pershing Tank has been installed, in the presence of "Le Regiment Bourbonnais", that portrays one of the French Infantry regiments that were sent to America in 1780, to assist General George Washington's Continental Army during the War for American Independence; and

WHEREAS, The many contributions of the Franco-American people to the general welfare of the City of New Bedford are greatly appreciated and deserve to be; and

WHEREAS, Every year students of Franco-American descent receive College Scholarships, this year the Roland G. Vanasse Ligue des Franco-Américains Scholarship has been awarded to Cole Pavao, Bishop Stang High School, in honor of La Fete de Saint Jean-Baptiste; and

WHEREAS, On Sunday, June 26, 2016, at the Ligue of Franco-Americans banquet, the following Franco-Americans will be recognized for their contributions to the community: George T. Charbonneau and Armand R. Marchand, Franco-Americans of the Year, Gerard E. Payette, Franco-American Veteran of the Year and Alfred H. Saulniers, Franco-American Historian of the Year:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the New Bedford City Council, in recognition of the esteem in which these Citizens are held and the many contributions they have made to the religious, social and cultural life of the City, hereby thanks the **FRANCO-AMERICANS** for enriching the life of this community.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That on June 24, 2016, in recognition of their great religious holiday in honor of their Patron Saint, Jean-Baptiste, the Maple Leaf Flag of Canada be flown at City Hall, and on July 14, 2016, the day commemorating the independence of the French people, Bastille Day, the French Flag be similarly displayed.