

# State of Wisconsin



2009 Assembly Joint Resolution 95

---

## ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION

---

**Relating to:** commemorating the City of Racine's Demisemiseptcentennial (175th Anniversary).

Whereas, the City of Racine was established as a permanent settlement in November of 1834; and

Whereas, the settlement now known as the City of Racine was proclaimed Port Gilbert by Captain Gilbert Knapp, who later became the first representative to the Wisconsin territorial legislature from the Racine area; and

Whereas, this area had been previously settled by the Potawatomi Nation who called the river and its surrounding area Kipikawi; and

Whereas, this area had been visited by French Voyageurs in 1679; and

Whereas, the Racine area was once the site of a fur trading post on a trail running between Chicago and Green Bay, with French fur traders Vieaux and Kinzie trading with the Potawatomi; and

Whereas, the river for which Racine is known has always been called the "Root" in at least three languages: the "Kipikawi" in Potawatomi, the "Racine" in French, and the "Root" in English; and

Whereas, the Horlick Dam was established on the rapids of the Root River, bringing early industry and prosperity to the community; and

Whereas, Racine was also called the "Belle City of the Great Lakes," from the French word "belle" meaning beautiful; and

Whereas, the DeKoven Center has long been a landmark in the Racine Community, first opening its doors as Racine College, affiliated with the Episcopal Church, in 1852, and to this day its Gothic architecture still graces Racine's lakefront; and

Whereas, Racine High School graduated the first high school class in the state of Wisconsin in 1857; and

Whereas, well before the Civil War, Racine was known for its strong opposition to slavery, with many slaves escaping to freedom via the Underground Railroad passing through the city; and

Whereas, the Racine community demonstrated this strong opposition to slavery and to the Fugitive Slave Act by breaking into jail to free Joshua Glover, an escaped slave who had made his home in Racine and who, after being liberated by Racine's abolitionists, found his way to Canada and freedom; and

Whereas, Olympia Brown, who in 1863 became the first ordained female minister in the United States, served as the minister at Racine's Good Shepherd Universalist Church, today known as the Olympia Brown Unitarian Universalist Church; and

Whereas, Paul P. Harris, born in Racine in 1868, founded Rotary International, the world's first and most international service organization; and

Whereas, the lighthouse at Wind Point has guided ships into the Racine Harbor since 1880, ensuring the safe passage of ships into what was once the fifth largest port on all the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, the Racine community is and has been home to inventors and innovators; explorers and astronauts; and tradespeople and risk-takers; and

Whereas, malted flavoring was invented in 1873 by Racine's James and William Horlick; and

Whereas, the Racine community is or has been home to innovative businesses such as the J.I. Case Company, SC Johnson Wax, Horlick's Malted Milk Company, Gold Medal Folding Furniture, Western Publishing, Hamilton Beach, Oster, Massey Ferguson, Jacobsen, Andis, Modine, Twin Disc, In-Sink-Erator and countless other manufacturers, global and local, whose products have been dispersed around the globe; and

Whereas, organized labor remains highly influential in Racine due to the city's heavy concentration and diversity of industry, and has been largely responsible for improving the lives and working conditions of the community's residents; and

Whereas, Racine became known as the "Small Engine Capital of the World" and the term "Made in Racine" has become a mark of excellence known all over the world; and

Whereas, Racine's J.I. Case was a member of the state legislature from 1865-66, where he was so inspired by the bald eagle named Old Abe, whose battle cry inspired Wisconsin's brave Civil War soldiers, that he made the bald eagle the Case Corporation mascot; and

Whereas, the Racine community encompasses the breadth of Frank Lloyd Wright's career, most famously embodied by the SC Johnson administrative building, built in 1936, which includes Wright's "Great Workroom"; and

Whereas, Racine was home to the Racine Belles, one of the nation's only women's professional baseball teams and the winner of the league's first championship in 1943; and

Whereas, Racine has been home to a minor league football team, the Racine Raiders, since 1953; and

Whereas, Racine has grown as a diverse community, enriched by the contributions of successive immigrant populations, celebrated through annual festivals such as Italian Fest, Armenian Fest, Greek Fest, Bohemian Fest, Serbian Fest, and Mexican Fiesta; and

Whereas, Racine has long had a strong and vibrant African American community, featuring leaders such as Corinne Owens, who founded the Racine chapter of the NAACP; and

Whereas, Racine has a large Danish population with many bakeries in the area, most famously known for their delicious pastry, Kringle; and

Whereas, the people of the Racine Community have the good sense to refer to a water fountain as a Bubbler; and

Whereas, Racine's Fourth of July parade is the Midwest's largest, attracting over 100,000 people annually; and

Whereas, Racine has a long and patriotic tradition of defending our country through military service, with Racine veterans fighting in every war from the Revolutionary War through current U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

Whereas, Racine has enjoyed many contributions from the Racine Dominican Sisters, including St. Catherine's High School, the Dominican College of Racine, and most recently, the Racine Eco-Justice Center; and

Whereas, Racine Technical College, now known as Gateway Technical College, was the nation's first publicly supported technical institute, founded in 1911; and

Whereas, since 1923, Racine has been home to the Racine Zoo, first at Island Park and then at its current location on the shores of Lake Michigan; and

Whereas, the Racine Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1932, is the oldest continually operating symphony in Wisconsin; and

Whereas, Jens Jensen, internationally renowned landscape architect, designed many of Racine's parks and public green spaces; and

Whereas, in 1987, the new Racine harbor and marina was dedicated, turning a declining downtown area into a vital, attractive harbor complex, attracting tourism, convention, and civic and business activity; and

Whereas, Racine is home to North Beach, the cleanest beach on all the Great Lakes and the first to receive the Blue Wave Clean Beach designation; and

Whereas, the Racine Heritage Museum is home to more than 200,000 objects and more than 6,500 linear feet of archival material that documents the wonderful story of Racine; and

Whereas, the City of Racine's accomplishments, leaders, and contributions are far too numerous to list in full and the above-mentioned list represents only a partial enumeration of Racine's first 175 years of progress, innovations, and historical markers; now, therefore, be it

***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the members of the Wisconsin legislature commemorate the Demisemiseptcentennial (175th Anniversary) of the founding of Racine, Wisconsin, and acknowledge the community's extraordinary contributions to the State of Wisconsin.

---

Senator Fred A. Risser  
President of the Senate

---

Representative Michael J. Sheridan  
Speaker of the Assembly

---

Date

---

Patrick E. Fuller  
Assembly Chief Clerk