



## 2009 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 95

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

22           Whereas, Racine’s J.I. Case was a member of the state legislature from  
23           1865–66, where he was so inspired by the bald eagle named Old Abe, whose battle  
24           cry inspired Wisconsin’s brave Civil War soldiers, that he made the bald eagle the  
25           Case Corporation mascot; and

1           Whereas, the Racine community encompasses the breadth of Frank Lloyd  
2 Wright’s career, most famously embodied by the SC Johnson administrative  
3 building, built in 1936, which includes Wright’s “Great Workroom”; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1           Whereas, Racine has enjoyed many contributions from the Racine Dominican  
2 Sisters, including St. Catherine’s High School, the Dominican College of Racine, and  
3 most recently, the Racine Eco–Justice Center; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

24           ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the members of the  
25 Wisconsin legislature commemorate the Demisemiseptcentennial (175th

1 Anniversary) of the founding of Racine, Wisconsin, and acknowledge the  
2 community's extraordinary contributions to the State of Wisconsin.

3 (END)