

No. R-92. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Brookfield Ice Harvest at the Floating Bridge on its 40th anniversary and honoring the event's founder, Al Wilder.

(H.C.R.74)

Offered by: Representatives Jickling of Randolph and Hooper of Randolph

Offered by: Senator MacDonald

Whereas, before refrigeration was available, local farmers would gather at Sunset Lake in Brookfield to harvest ice, and

Whereas, throughout January, strenuous efforts were made to plant an ice boom to haul out large blocks of ice, keep the ice clear, and create a channel in the lake to serve as a conduit for the ice, and

Whereas, in addition to local sales, Brookfield maintained a contract with the Central Vermont Railroad, which purchased blocks of ice for maintaining the cold temperature of milk en route to Boston, and

Whereas, once the train arrived in Boston, the ice blocks were sold to local icemen who in turn sold them to area customers, and

Whereas, Al Wilder is a Norwich University graduate and a 21-year U.S. Army veteran and concluded his military service as an advisor to the Vermont Army National Guard, and

Whereas, after his military discharge, Al Wilder owned the first self- service gasoline station in central Vermont, and for many years, he has resided on a hill overlooking Sunset Lake, and

Whereas, one day in 1978, he heard a noise on the lake and discovered that an ice harvesting demonstration had attracted a crowd of at least 50 persons, and

Whereas, thinking it would be fun to repeat this event, Al Wilder obtained saws and other equipment, mostly from the owners of local barns, and

Whereas, in 1980, on the last Saturday in January, while Al Wilder and his late wife, Jackie, owned the Fork Shop Restaurant, he organized the first Brookfield Ice Harvest at the Floating Bridge, and

Whereas, Al Wilder's ice harvest garnered much attention, and this annual event is eagerly anticipated every January, and

Whereas, Al Wilder remained the ice harvest's primary organizer for over 30 years, and although he has now relinquished this role, he remains closely associated with this annual winter celebration, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Brookfield Ice Harvest at the Floating Bridge on its 40th anniversary and honors its founder, Al Wilder, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Al Wilder and the Brookfield Town Clerk.