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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the birth of Elzie Crisler Segar; and

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WHEREAS, Elzie Segar was born in Chester on December 8, 1894; he spent his formative years in Chester, soaking up the traditions, values, and relationships that would later influence the fantasy comic kingdom he would create; and

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WHEREAS, On December 19, 1919, Elzie Segar published his first installment of Thimble Theatre, a cartoon series that featured the comic antics of siblings Olive and Castor Oyl, their parents, and Olive's boyfriend, Ham Gravy; and

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WHEREAS, Elzie Segar introduced a salty, one-eyed mariner, Popeye, to the Thimble Theatre cast on January 17, 1929, and the fighting sailor would become the world's earliest superhuman hero, garnering coveted Guinness World Records for the most-produced cartoons and the longest-syndicated series; and

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WHEREAS, Elzie Segar's Popeye became so popular that he entered TV Guide's listing of the Top 20 Greatest Cartoon Characters of All Time and is endeared by millions of fans

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1 across the globe; and

2 WHEREAS, When he eventually took over the original Thimble  
3 Theatre comic strip, Elzie Segar's Popeye secured an iconic  
4 stature with an international fandom by charming young and old  
5 alike and helping to introduce many new characters, including  
6 Wimpy, Bluto, Sea Hag, and hundreds more; many of the eccentric  
7 characters were inspired by his real-life hometown residents;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Elzie Segar continued to create additional,  
10 exciting, comic personas throughout the rest of his life; The  
11 Popeye & Friends Character Trail in Chester was developed to  
12 celebrate these entertaining personalities; granite statues of  
13 Popeye characters were placed in various areas throughout  
14 Chester to pay tribute to Segar's imagination and to his roots;  
15 the Character Trail continues to draw thousands of fans and  
16 tourists from around the world and is a testimony to the  
17 enduring popularity of his achievement; and

18 WHEREAS, The Popeye & Friends Character Trail is a work in  
19 progress and currently has 24 statues; on the 125th anniversary  
20 of his birth, a life-size granite statue of Segar, dressed like  
21 his inspiration, Sherlock Homes, will be erected; and

22 WHEREAS, The City of Chester and the people who have

1 created, developed, and financially supported the Character  
2 Trail's goal to assure that Elzie Segar and his masterpieces  
3 will not be forgotten have demonstrated their devotion to home,  
4 county, and State; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
6 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
7 we commemorate the 125th anniversary of the birth of Elzie C.  
8 Segar and the 100th anniversary of his creation of Thimble  
9 Theater and congratulate The Popeye & Friends Character Trail  
10 for its resolve in honoring the endeavors of a prominent  
11 Illinois artist, its dedication to educating the public about  
12 the comic creations that are so much a part of the State's  
13 history, and its successful promotion of the local ties with  
14 Popeye, which bring thousands of tourists to the region  
15 annually; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
17 presented to the City of Chester and Michael W. McClure,  
18 creator and coordinator of the Popeye & Friends Character  
19 Trail, as an expression of our esteem and respect.