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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are proud to recognize the life and legacy of
4 those individuals that have distinguished themselves through
5 significant personal achievement; and

6 WHEREAS, Burl Ives was born on June 14, 1909 in Hunt City;
7 he was the son of Levi "Frank" Ives and Cordelia "Dellie"
8 White; and

9 WHEREAS, Burl Ives' musical talent was recognized at an
10 early age; one day, Mr. Ives was singing in the garden with his
11 mother, and his uncle overheard them; he invited his nephew to
12 sing at the old soldiers' reunion in Hunt City; young Burl
13 performed a rendition of the folk ballad "Barbara Allen" and
14 impressed both his uncle and the audience; and

15 WHEREAS, From 1927 to 1929, Burl Ives attended Eastern
16 Illinois State Teachers College in Charleston (now Eastern
17 Illinois University), where he played football; during his
18 junior year, while sitting in English class listening to a
19 lecture on Beowulf, he suddenly realized that he was wasting
20 his time in school and rose up to leave; as he walked out the
21 door, the professor made a snide remark and Mr. Ives slammed
22 the door behind him; 60 years later, the school named a

1 building after its most famous dropout; and

2 WHEREAS, During the early 1930s, Burl Ives traveled about
3 the U.S. as an itinerant singer, earning his way by doing odd
4 jobs and playing his banjo; around 1931, he landed on WBOW
5 radio in Terre Haute, Indiana; he also went back to school,
6 attending classes at Indiana State Teachers College (now
7 Indiana State University); and

8 WHEREAS, In 1940, Burl Ives began his own radio show,
9 titled "The Wayfaring Stranger" after one of his ballads; the
10 show became very popular; in the 1940s, he popularized several
11 traditional folk songs, such as "Lavender Blue", "Foggy Foggy
12 Dew", "Blue Tail Fly", and "Big Rock Candy Mountain"; and

13 WHEREAS, Burl Ives was drafted to serve in the military in
14 early 1942; he first spent time at Camp Dix in New Jersey, then
15 at Camp Upton in New York, where he joined the cast of Irving
16 Berlin's "This Is the Army"; when the show went to Hollywood,
17 he was transferred to the Army Air Force; he was honorably
18 discharged in September of 1943; in December of 1943, Ives
19 returned to New York City and went to work again for CBS radio
20 for \$100 a week; and

21 WHEREAS, On December 6, 1945, Burl Ives married 29-year-old
22 script writer Helen Peck Ehrlich; the pair would later adopt a

1 son (Alexander); the following year, Mr. Ives was cast as a
2 singing cowboy in the film "Smoky"; and

3 WHEREAS, Burl Ives continued his burgeoning movie career
4 during the 1950s, with roles in "East of Eden" in 1955, "Cat on
5 a Hot Tin Roof" in 1958, "The Big Country" in 1958, which won
6 him an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor, and "Our Man in
7 Havana" in 1959; and

8 WHEREAS, In the 1960s, Burl Ives began singing country
9 music with greater frequency; in 1962, he released three
10 country music hits, "A Little Bitty Tear", "Call Me Mr.
11 In-Between", and "Funny Way of Laughing"; all three songs also
12 became big pop music hits; and

13 WHEREAS, During the 1960s and 1970s, Burl Ives took on a
14 number of television roles; he played the narrator, Sam the
15 Snowman, in the animated television special, Rudolph the
16 Red-Nosed Reindeer in 1964; Mr. Ives' song "A Holly Jolly
17 Christmas", featured during the special, remains a popular tune
18 during the Christmas season; he also performed in Pinocchio in
19 1968 and Roots in 1977; he was the star of two television
20 series, "O.K. Crackerby!" (1965-1966) and "The Bold Ones: The
21 Lawyers" (1969-1972); in 1962, he starred alongside Rock Hudson
22 in the movie "The Spiral Road"; and

1 WHEREAS, Burl Ives and Helen Peck Ehrlich divorced in 1971;
2 he then married Dorothy Koster Paul in London, England in that
3 same year and adopted her two children, Kevin and Robbie; and

4 WHEREAS, On October 25, 1975, Burl Ives was awarded the
5 prestigious University of Pennsylvania Glee Club Award of Merit
6 in honor of his vast influence on American vocal music; and

7 WHEREAS, In the 1970s, Burl Ives lent his name and image to
8 the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's "This Land is Your Land,
9 Keep It Clean" campaign; and

10 WHEREAS, Burl Ives passed away at the age of 85 on April
11 14, 1995 in Anacortes, Washington after a valiant fight against
12 cancer; he is interred at Mound Cemetery in Hunt City Township
13 in Jasper County; and

14 WHEREAS, Burl Ives appeared in many Broadway shows,
15 including "The Boys From Syracuse", "Heavenly Express", "This
16 is the Army", "Sing Out Sweet Land", "Paint Your Wagon", and
17 "Dr. Cook's Garden"; his most notable Broadway performance,
18 however, was the role of Big Daddy Cane in "Cat on a Hot Tin
19 Roof", a role written specifically for Ives by Tennessee
20 Williams; he would later reprise the role in the 1958 movie
21 version; and

1 WHEREAS, Burl Ives published his autobiography, "The
2 Wayfaring Stranger", in 1948; he also wrote or compiled several
3 other books, including the "Burl Ives Songbook" (1953), "Tales
4 of America" (1954), "Sea Songs of Sailing, Whaling, and
5 Fishing" (1956), and "The Wayfaring Stranger's Notebook"
6 (1962); and

7 WHEREAS, During the course of the multi-decade career; Burl
8 Ives recorded more than 100 albums and scored dozens of hits;
9 his music is still adored and emulated by countless numbers of
10 fans and fellow musicians; and

11 WHEREAS, Burl Ives' legacy lives on through his legions of
12 devoted fans and his unforgettable catalog of incredible music;
13 his contributions to the world of music and the people of the
14 State of Illinois are enormous; therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
16 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
17 celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Burl Ives on
18 June 14, 2009 and urge the citizens of the State of Illinois to
19 celebrate as well; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
21 presented to the family of Burl Ives, the Jasper County Board,
22 and the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce as a symbol of our

1 esteem and respect.