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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Emilie C. St. John of Peoria, who passed away on February 26, 2019; and

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WHEREAS, Emilie St. John was born in Arcadia, Michigan to Tilly (Neslund) and Fred O'Rorke on August 2, 1922; she graduated from Arcadia High School in 1939 at the age of 16; she earned an associate's degree from Grand Rapids Jr. College and graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Science in Home Economics and a minor in chemistry; and

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WHEREAS, Emilie St. John's first job was at the University of West Virginia in Morgantown as director of food services for the campus; she then accepted the position of Tea Room Director at the Y.W.C.A. in Peoria; and

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WHEREAS, Emilie St. John married George Roswell in 1948 and became a homemaker; the marriage ended in divorce, and she returned to work in 1959, first at the Met Lab and then at the Y.W.C.A., where she became Youth Program Director; and

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WHEREAS, Emilie St. John met John M. St. John in 1960, and they married a year later; and

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1           WHEREAS, By 1968, Emilie St. John had become the Y.W.C.A.'s  
2 Executive Director; under her leadership, the Ashanti Umoja  
3 Black Culture Center was created to promote activities for  
4 young African American teens; she was also intensely involved  
5 in the creation of a center for abused women in Peoria; and

6           WHEREAS, After retiring from the Y.W.C.A., Emilie St. John  
7 started a new occupation and worked at Jim Maloof Realtors,  
8 enjoying a successful real estate career spanning 20 years; and

9           WHEREAS, Emilie St. John and her husband, John, were avid  
10 sailors and long-standing members of the Ivy Club; one of their  
11 greatest sailing adventures came in 1998 when they traveled to  
12 South Africa by way of the Indian Ocean; and

13           WHEREAS, In 2001, Emilie St. John began to support a dance  
14 project in Ethiopia which promoted programs for social welfare;  
15 over the years, she supported one of the young dancers, Meseret  
16 Yirga, and traveled overseas twice to support Meseret Yirga's  
17 social work; now, Meseret has become the first woman  
18 choreographer in Ethiopia; and

19           WHEREAS, Emilie St. John was a member of many local  
20 organizations in Peoria, including the Altursa Club, the As You  
21 Like It Club, the Peoria Art Guild, the Peoria Symphony,  
22 various bridge clubs, a book club, and her beloved Friday Night

1 Soup Group; she and John were members of the First United  
2 Methodist Church in Peoria; and

3 WHEREAS, Emilie St. John traveled all over the globe; at  
4 the age of 84, she made her last overseas trips to Singapore  
5 and Japan; of all her travels, Egypt was her favorite; and

6 WHEREAS, Emilie St. John had an enduring belief that making  
7 friends with people of different faiths, walks of life, and  
8 cultures would enhance and enrich her own life; she fiercely  
9 saw all that was right with the world, and there was never any  
10 room in her heart for resentments; and

11 WHEREAS, Emilie St. John was preceded in death by her  
12 husband of nearly 40 years, John, and her siblings Tom,  
13 Margaret, and Audrey; and

14 WHEREAS, Emilie St. John is survived by her daughter,  
15 Christine (Crispin Cole) St. John; five nieces; and four  
16 nephews; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL  
18 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
19 Emilie C. St. John and extend our sincere condolences to her  
20 family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it  
21 further

1           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
2 presented to the family of Emilie St. John as an expression of  
3 our deepest sympathy.