

Proclamation



HORTICULTURAL THERAPY WEEK MARCH 18-24, 2018

WHEREAS, Horticultural therapy, a time-proven practice of using therapeutic benefits of working in a peaceful and non-threatening garden environment indoors or outdoors, and using horticulture as a modality to improve the quality of life, was practiced by Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and gained prominence in the United States in rehabilitating wounded veterans of World War II through the assistance of volunteers and trained professionals and continues today in veterans' hospitals across the country; and

WHEREAS, Horticultural therapy is practiced through vocational, therapeutic, and social programs, and successfully enables and empowers individuals to achieve their maximum independence in settings such as hospitals, correctional facilities, public schools, senior centers, and community gardens; and

WHEREAS, Horticultural therapy brings dignity and enhanced skills by allowing individuals to grow and function to the best of their abilities, and helps individuals such as those recovering from illness or injury, the elderly, socially disadvantaged individuals, and individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Awareness and growth of the profession of horticultural therapy is being realized through increased educational opportunities, beginning with the first Master of Science degree in horticultural therapy, awarded by Michigan State University in 1955, and continuing across the country in universities, colleges, and community colleges, and through horticultural therapy certificate programs; and

WHEREAS, Horticultural therapy is beneficial for people of all ages and all walks of life in a wide variety of rehabilitative, health care, and residential settings, providing benefits directly through formal programs with trained horticultural therapy professionals, and providing benefits indirectly through encouraging the designation and creation of public gardens and community gardens; and

WHEREAS, spring officially begins with the vernal equinox on March 20, 2018 and is an ideal time to focus our energy on the therapeutic benefits of garden environments designed to facilitate the healing elements of nature and having a positive effect on mental wellness.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Somerset that **March 18-24, 2018** is designated as **Horticultural Therapy Week** in the County of Somerset to increase public awareness of the importance of horticultural therapy in improving the quality of life for all and to increase opportunities for each individual to experience the endless benefits of the people-plant connection.

Patrick Scaglione, Freeholder Director

Patricia L. Walsh, Freeholder

Brian G. Gallagher, Freeholder

Brian D. Levine, Freeholder Deputy Director

Mark Caliguire, Freeholder

ATTEST:

Kathryn Quick, Deputy Clerk of the Board

March 13, 2018