

## **PROCLAMATION**

**WHEREAS**, George Washington, starting as a young man, chose to live at Mt. Vernon with his stepbrother Lawrence; and called Alexandria his hometown where he assisted in surveying our streets; bought property, built a house, conducted business, caught up on local news, drilled his troops in Market Square and bade a final farewell to them from the steps of Wise's Tavern; and for many years enjoyed shopping, dining, dancing, playing cards, and celebrating important events in Alexandria; and

**WHEREAS**, George Washington was a visionary citizen who made numerous contributions to our city such as helping to found and endow the Alexandria Academy, including funding scholarships for poor boys and girls at a time when girls generally were thought to need little academic education; and

**WHEREAS**, George Washington donated generously to enhance public safety, and to support several local churches, including St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church (now the Basilica of Saint Mary), and regularly attended Christ Church where he owned a pew; and

**WHEREAS**, George Washington is honored as the father of our country because of his exemplary contributions to the American Revolution as Commander-in-Chief of our armed forces, his service as president of the Constitutional Convention and his unanimous election as first President of the United States of America; and whom his close Alexandria friend Gen. "Light-Horse" Harry Lee called "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen"; and

**WHEREAS**, the George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee was established by City Council to plan and carry out the annual George Washington Birthday Celebration on behalf of, and officially sponsored by, the City of Alexandria to show our affection, respect and gratitude to this hero; and

**WHEREAS**, the George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee supports a variety of events throughout the month of February celebrating the life of George Washington. These events include a Birthnight Banquet & Ball, a Symposium hosted by the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, the Cherry Challenge Contest at local restaurants, development of information about Washington's life and achievements for the media, the "George Washington's Alexandria" tours of Old Town sites associated with Washington, a ceremony honoring the Unknown Soldier of the American Revolutionary War, and the nation's largest George Washington Birthday Parade; and

**WHEREAS**, this year the George Washington Birthday Parade will be dedicated to the late Kathleen M. Kelly, who served on the Committee for nearly twenty years, was associated with the Birthnight Banquet & Ball for more than thirty years and had served as a volunteer for Historic Alexandria for more than forty years; and

**WHEREAS**, Robert H. Shumaker, having been shot down in 1965 on a mission over North Vietnam and having spent eight years as a prisoner of war, is declared as the Parade Grand Marshal to honor the service of all POWs; and

**WHEREAS**, these events may be enjoyed by all citizens and visitors to our City.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, JUSTIN M. WILSON**, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby proclaim the month of February to be:

### **"GEORGE WASHINGTON BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION MONTH"**

*In honor of the 288th birthday of our country's first President who was born on February 22, 1732.*

**FURTHER**, I hereby welcome all visitors to our City and urge everyone to attend and enjoy these unique activities offered during the month of February.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 11<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2020.

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***MAYOR JUSTIN M. WILSON***

*On behalf of the City Council  
of Alexandria, Virginia*

*ATTEST:*

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*Gloria A. Sitton, CMC City Clerk*