

CHATHAM COUNTY 2009 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Hispanic Heritage Month is an opportunity to recognize the contributions of Hispanic Americans and to celebrate Hispanic heritage and culture; and

WHEREAS, the observation began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon B. Johnson; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, President Gerald Ford called “upon the people of the United States, especially the education community and those organizations concerned with the protection of human rights, to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities”; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, President Ronald Reagan expanded the national observance to one month, beginning on September 15 and ending on October 15; and

WHEREAS, this observance was enacted into Federal law on August 17, 1988, as Public Law 100-402, which authorizes and requests the President of the United States to issue an annual proclamation for National Hispanic Heritage Month and calls upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this time with ceremonies, activities, and programs; and

WHEREAS, this observance celebrates the culture and traditions of people whose ancestry can be traced to Spain, Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean islands; and

WHEREAS, according to the US Census Bureau, as of 2005, the Hispanic population in the US was 42.7 million or 14% of the nation’s population; and, as of 2008, an estimated 12% of Chatham County’s population is Hispanic; and

WHEREAS, all of this means that Chatham County is a multicultural tapestry that is home to people whose combined ancestries link to many nations; and

WHEREAS, Chatham County, takes great pride in our cultural diversity with the Hispanic community playing an important role in that diversity; and

WHEREAS, through a strong work ethic and a deep commitment to family and community, Hispanics have enriched the strength and vitality of our community; and

WHEREAS, Hispanics have also contributed in the fields of business, law, politics, education, community service, the arts, science, and more; and

WHEREAS, this observance affords special opportunities to become more knowledgeable about Hispanic heritage and to honor the many Hispanics who have contributed to the progress of Chatham County, the state, and the nation; and

WHEREAS, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, the Chatham County Human Relations Commission, and the Office of Human Relations continually strive to foster mutual understanding and respect among all of our people;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Chatham County Board of Commissioners and the Chatham County Human Relations Commission hereby join with the nation in proclaiming **September 15 to October 15** as **Hispanic Heritage Month** in Chatham County and encourage our citizens to participate in activities to celebrate the contributions of Hispanics to the County, the State, and the Nation.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 21st day of September, 2009.



George Lucier, Chair, Chatham County Board of Commissioners