



## PROCLAMATION

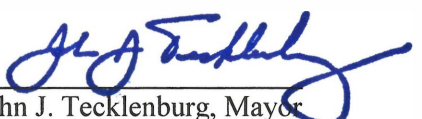
- WHEREAS, Muhammad Ali, professional American boxer, activist, entertainer, poet, and philanthropist, is widely regarded as one of the most significant and celebrated sporting figures of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and is frequently ranked as the best heavyweight boxer and greatest athlete of that time. He became a symbol of racial pride for African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement and throughout his illustrious career; and
- WHEREAS, Muhammad Ali began training as an amateur boxer at age 12 and at 18, he won a gold medal in the light heavyweight division at the 1960 Summer Olympics, ultimately turning professional later that year. He won the world heavyweight boxing championship from Sonny Liston on February 25, 1964, when he was just 22; and
- WHEREAS, in 1966, citing his religious beliefs and ethical opposition to the Vietnam War, Muhammad Ali refused to be drafted into the United States military. He was found guilty of draft evasion, which carried the threat of five years of imprisonment, and was stripped of his boxing titles; and
- WHEREAS, Muhammad Ali appealed his case to the United States Supreme Court, which overturned the lower court's decision on June 28, 1971, just days before he was scheduled to appear at a boxing exhibition at Stoney Field in Charleston, SC; and
- WHEREAS, the 1971 boxing exhibition in Charleston was arranged by local boxing promoter Reggie Barrett, Jr., principal owner of Barrett's Bombers, a local boxing team. Jack Adams, the city of Charleston's former director of Recreation, played a key role in ensuring the success of the 1971 Muhammad Ali exhibition at Stoney Field; and
- WHEREAS, Muhammad Ali's appearance at the 1971 boxing exhibition drew a large audience of fans. The event opened with a vocal rendition of the National Anthem by Burke High School graduate Annette Spann, who is now a 35-year veteran opera singer with the Metropolitan Opera. The Marine, Navy and Army amateur boxers competed against the Barrett's Bombers in preliminary bouts. Then, to the thunderous cheers of onlookers, Muhammad Ali entered the stadium. Once in the ring with his first opponent, Alex Mack, Ali did the "Ali Shuffle," a boxing move he made famous in championship boxing matches all over the world; and
- WHEREAS, June 30, 2021 represents the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Muhammad Ali's historic boxing exhibition at Stoney Field on June 30, 1971, an event that was a source of inspiration and pride for citizens throughout Charleston.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, John J. Tecklenburg, Mayor of the City of Charleston, do hereby proclaim Wednesday, June 30, 2021 as:**

### **THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF MUHAMMAD ALI'S STONEY FIELD EXHIBITION**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereby set my hand, and cause the seal of Charleston to be affixed, this 28<sup>th</sup> day of June in the year of 2021.



  
John J. Tecklenburg, Mayor