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Celebrating International Human Rights Day

Monticello, NY – The Sullivan County Human Rights Commission encourages County residents to make human rights a topic for discussion with their families on International Human Rights Day this Sunday, December 10.

Crafted as a means to prevent a repeat of the atrocities experienced during the Second World War, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly nearly 70 years ago on December 10, 1948.

An American great, Eleanor Roosevelt was one of the original 18 members of the Commission on Human Rights, empowered with writing the Declaration during a time when the world was splintered and recuperating from the devastation of World War II.

The final version of the Declaration took two years to complete. Its Preamble and 30 Articles are meant to protect all people from inhumane treatment.

“We must remember why those 30 Articles exist. World War II exposed great numbers of people to terrible injustices and extreme methods of punishment,” said Ari Mir-Pontier, Executive Director of the Sullivan County Human Rights Commission. “Our world, our country, and our County have become safer places to coexist because of the Declaration of Human Rights.”

The Commission recommends and encourages families to research the Declaration of Human Rights at their local public library or at www.un.org.

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual

person: the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.” – Eleanor Roosevelt.

The Commission meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Sullivan County Government Center, 100 North Street, Monticello. Meetings are open to the public. Mir-Pontier can be reached at 845-807-0189, or visit the Commission website at

www.co.sullivan.ny.us/Departments/HumanRightsCommission/tabid/3205/default.aspx.