

SUPPORT FOR “SUPERMAN DAY” IN OHIO

It's been said that Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster created a universe on a piece of paper with a hero that drew on the struggles of a Depression weary America looking for some hint of a brighter future. The cornerstone of that new mythology was Superman, an immigrant from a dying planet whose parents sent him to Earth like a modern day Moses. The first kid who bought the first issue of *Action Comics* with a cover date of June 1938 sparked the “big bang” of popular culture. The character was an overnight phenomena, and the two Cleveland teenagers who created Superman also gave us a new segment of Americana that grows by the year. Siegel and Shuster didn't teach children how to read. They gave them a reason to want to read and so many of Superman's fans have gone on to write their own books, produce films, create, lead and promote the ideals of “Truth, Justice and the American Way.” These lofty goals recognized around the world for nearly eighty years were born in the minds of two Glenville High School students from Cleveland, Ohio.

Ohio residents have long known the importance of Superman and his creators and show their pride with commemorative license plates, record crowds visiting the new Superman / Siegel and Shuster exhibit at the main branch of the Cleveland Public Library and soon a statue honoring the Man of Steel and his creators on the city's lakefront. Declaration of an annual “Superman Day” in Ohio would add to the prestige the state can claim in laying the groundwork for a new genre of entertainment, and a billion dollar industry. Siegel and Shuster weren't looking for fame and fortune. They were humble men who simply wanted to create and provide for their families. In the process they gave us all a revered symbol of the goals we can all hope to attain and a reason to better ourselves toward greater self-fulfillment.

Cleveland's Siegel and Shuster Society is the non-profit group dedicated to preserving the legacy of Superman's creators. There are five literary characters known in every culture on every continent. They are Robin Hood, Tarzan, Sherlock Holmes, Mickey Mouse and Superman. When you ask young people who created Mickey Mouse they all know it was Walt Disney. But too often they don't know that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle authored Sherlock Holmes and Edgar Rice Burroughs created Tarzan. It's our mission to make sure that Siegel and Shuster are remembered for their remarkable achievement. Even folks who don't follow Superman know the Man of Steel was born on Krypton, but we stress that he was created here in Ohio. The measure to establish an annual Superman Day would help solidify our state's significant role in pop culture and bring worldwide attention to Ohio's rich history in developing a character that inspired so many to achieve their own dreams.

Jerry Siegel once wrote, “Do good to others and every one can be a Superman.” Truly, a “Superman Day” in Ohio would bring that message to a new audience encouraging them to treat others with the dignity, compassion, kindness and sense of fair play that gives us all hope for a better worldwide community. It would also pay tribute to two men whom the noted author Brad Meltzer described as “ordinary people

who did extraordinary things”, a standard that we can all aspire to based on their remarkable lives.

The Siegel and Shuster Society applauds the efforts for a “Superman Day” in Ohio, and strongly urges the passage of the measure to honor the place where an internationally renowned legend first soared to greater heights.

Mike Olszewski
President, The Siegel And Shuster Society