

2006 SPECIAL SESSION I

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5082

Offered June 6, 2006

Celebrating the life of Duane Heisinger.

Patrons—Hugo; Senator: Cuccinelli

WHEREAS, Duane Heisinger of Centreville, respected citizen, author, and advocate for America's prisoners of war in World War II, died on May 1, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Duane Heisinger served his country in the United States Navy, completing three tours of duty in Vietnam as commander of a landing ship transport and of a destroyer; and

WHEREAS, Duane Heisinger also worked as an emissary for the military in intelligence and defense matters, and his last overseas post was as an attaché in London during the Falklands War; and

WHEREAS, after a distinguished 30-year military career, Duane Heisinger retired from the Navy as a captain and began a career as a consultant for companies working with the Department of Defense; and

WHEREAS, as a mission of love and respect, Duane Heisinger wrote a captivating book about his father, Lawrence Heisinger, called *Father Found*, which chronicled the life and death of his father as a Japanese prisoner of war during World War II; the heart-wrenching account has aided countless descendants of American and other POWs to understand what may have happened to their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Duane Heisinger's father was one of thousands of POWs who were transported by sea in deplorable conditions on Japanese "Hell Ships," as they were later dubbed, from areas occupied by Japan, and most perished from inhumane treatment, starvation, sickness, or as a result of being unknowingly destroyed by friendly forces that were totally unaware that prisoners were being held on board the death vessels like cargo; and

WHEREAS, Duane Heisinger was a driving force in the planning, fund-raising, and establishment of the Hell Ships Memorial located in the Philippines at the site of one of the most horrific POW tragedies of the war in 1944—the hell ship *Oryoku Maru* was sunk by repeated air attacks from American fighters; and

WHEREAS, the impressive WWII memorial, dedicated on January 22, 2006, at Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, contains four marble and granite monoliths inscribed with the words of Duane Heisinger in honor of his father and all of the other POWs who died on all the Japanese hell ships; and

WHEREAS, Duane Heisinger will be remembered and greatly respected for his valuable contribution to the memories of the prisoners of war of World War II, and will be missed by his devoted and loving family and his numerous friends and admirers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of an American patriot and outstanding Virginian, Duane Heisinger; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Duane Heisinger as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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