

2006 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5064

Offered September 27, 2006

Commending The Union Star on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

Patrons—Hawkins, Newman and Ruff; Delegates: Byron and Hogan

WHEREAS, The Union Star is recognized for its 100 years of outstanding service to the citizens of Brookneal; and

WHEREAS, founded in 1906, The Union Star was the official publication of the Tri-County Farmers' Union; and

WHEREAS, The Union Star was published in Brookneal, because the town was a central location of union members, who were mainly farmers and tobacco growers living in Halifax, Campbell, and Charlotte counties; and

WHEREAS, in 1914, B. F. Ginther, the father of Herman and Bennie Ginther, came to Brookneal at the request of the owner, A. F. Thomas, to become the newspaper's editor, replacing Thomas Steele; and

WHEREAS, B. F. Ginther also became the publisher of The Union Star in 1915, and he later bought the newspaper; and

WHEREAS, The Union Star was located in the old Wickliffe Building on lower Main Street where Brookneal Milling Company stands today and the first printing presses were run on gas before the electric power plant was built at Rush's Mill on the Falling River; and

WHEREAS, Herman and Bennie Ginther, who would eventually head The Union Star, experienced their father's trade when newspapers were set by hand and printed on a sheet-fed cylinder press producing one sheet of four pages at a time; and

WHEREAS, the Gintners witnessed the newspaper's advance to linotype, followed by modern offset printing; and

WHEREAS, for years The Union Star was a family production with Blannie Ginther, Herman and Bennie's aunt and the company's longest-term employee, mastering nearly every job in the newspaper process; and

WHEREAS, Herman Ginther became editor of The Union Star in 1950 when his father passed away, and after a railroad career, Bennie Ginther joined his brother at the newspaper in 1958 as publisher; and

WHEREAS, the Ginther family contributed greatly to the rich and colorful history of The Union Star and the Town of Brookneal, and the tradition of excellence and public service passed to Charles A. "Zan" Womack, the newspaper's third publisher and owner; and

WHEREAS, Zan Womack, who currently operates several Virginia newspapers, bought The Union Star from the Gintners in 1978, and it became a part of Womack Publishing Company, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, The Union Star will celebrate its 100th anniversary by featuring "Remember When" pages throughout the year and hosting a gala open house for the community on October 27, 2006, as well as other commemorative activities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend and congratulate The Union Star and its devoted employees on the occasion of the newspaper's 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Charles A. Womack on behalf of The Union Star, as well as the Ginther family, as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for their commitment to the citizens of Brookneal and best wishes for continued success.

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