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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 926

Offered February 15, 2007

Commending Hartwood Volunteer Fire Department.

Patrons—Cole and Howell, W.J.; Senator: Chichester

WHEREAS, Hartwood Volunteer Fire Department will celebrate its 40th anniversary of outstanding service to the community of Hartwood and Stafford County in 2007; and

WHEREAS, a disastrous fire struck Hartwood in 1966 and the nearest fire department was in Falmouth nine miles away, resulting in the loss of a neighbor's house; and

WHEREAS, concerned citizens and members from the Falmouth fire station met at Hartwood Presbyterian Church and decided to establish a volunteer fire department to protect the residents and property of Hartwood; and

WHEREAS, Falmouth Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) members agreed to help supply fire equipment if Hartwood residents would provide a building; consequently, with the help of the Hartwood Community League and the generous donation of land by Sadie Patton, Catherine Brady, and Stewart Jones, a new volunteer fire department was constructed and operational by 1967; and

WHEREAS, during the winter of 1967, members of the newly formed Hartwood VFD began training with the Falmouth firefighters, and after a few months of transition, the new station was assigned a 1952 Ford pumper truck with a front-mounted 500-gpm pump; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of President Restress Loving and Fire Chief L. Steve Dempsey, the Hartwood VFD grew and survived thanks to generous donations from neighbors, festive fundraisers, and town celebrations, the most memorable and profitable event being a talent show; in 1972 the Hartwood Community League dissolved and the fire station lost a valuable fundraising partner; and

WHEREAS, from 1967 to 1973, fire calls were received at the homes of firefighters and members' wives would call two to three other members, who would in turn call two to three more, and the fire station's unofficial dispatchers were often Barbara Dempsey and Bernice Walker, who answered many of the emergency calls; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Hartwood VFD worked long and hard to procure and painstakingly restore two additional pieces of fire equipment, a 1952 GMC pumper truck found at a salvage yard and a 1947 Dodge Power Wagon, the station's first brush pumper; and

WHEREAS, equipment had to be continually renewed and replaced and paid for by hundreds of hours of fundraising, which included door-to-door solicitations, dinners, bake sales, carnivals, a Fredericksburg Agricultural Fair food booth, selling of holiday cards, and raffles; and

WHEREAS, with the help of the County of Stafford, the Hartwood VFD purchased its first custom fire truck, a Hahn 1250 pumper, in 1982; and

WHEREAS, the Hartwood VFD became an independent fire station and a new storage building was added in 1989; the station was further enlarged to a two-story structure with two full bays, two dormitories, two restrooms, and a large classroom in 1989; and a new 1998 Ford pick-up utility, a third Hahn pumper truck, and a custom ambulance were procured over time replacing old and outdated equipment; and

WHEREAS, continually upgrading and modernizing, Hartwood VFD received a brand new Pierce Dash 1250-gpm engine/pumper in 2004 and a brand new custom Horton ambulance in 2006; and

WHEREAS, the well-trained, hardworking, and loyal members of the Hartwood VFD are community heroes, who have provided continuous and excellent fire service to their appreciative neighbors for 40 years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend and congratulate the Hartwood Volunteer Fire Department on the occasion of its 40th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Hartwood Volunteer Fire Department as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude to its members for their dedication to the citizens of Hartwood and the County of Stafford.

INTRODUCED

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