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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 523

Offered February 28, 2008

*Commending Norge Community Hall on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.*Patron—Pogge

WHEREAS, Norge Community Hall will celebrate its historic 100th anniversary of serving the community of Norge and James City County in 2007; and

WHEREAS, between 1898 and 1906, many Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish immigrants and their families abandoned their homesteads in the Midwest due to severe weather and illness to settle in the more agreeable climate of the Norge-Lightfoot-Croaker area; and

WHEREAS, these early residents of James City County called themselves the Vikings, and prominent citizens included Carl and Herman Anderson, Alfred Benson, Helmer and John Flatten, James Jenson, John and Oscar Kinde, Martin and Oscar Rustad, and Henry and Knute Tyssen; and

WHEREAS, the Vikings desired a "true Town Hall" following the custom in the old country in Europe, where community meetings and activities could be held; and the young people felt it imperative to build a place where they could enjoy dances and parties as their parents had in their youth; and

WHEREAS, the Viking neighbors combined their resources and skills and bought two lots on the corner of Richmond Road and Peninsula Street in Norge for five dollars from J. B. and Anna Jenson in 1907, and with entirely donated supplies, except for purchased nails, they built what is now Norge Community Hall; and

WHEREAS, the earliest documentation indicating that what is now Norge Community Hall was open in 1908 and available for use by the community was a formal invitation received by Miss Minnie Flatten to the Leap Year Dance to be held on Friday night, January 24, 1908, at Viking Hall; and

WHEREAS, Viking Hall was a wonderful facility for dances and parties with its beautiful dance floor made of heart pine, and after Toano High School was built, school functions were held at the hall, which had a stage for plays and recitals; and

WHEREAS, the first basketball court in James City County was installed at Viking Hall, with bleachers built in a gallery over the entrance, because the building was too narrow for fans to sit along the sidelines; and

WHEREAS, as the young people grew up and had children of their own, Viking Hall fell into disuse, and when a local farmer offered to buy the building in 1920 to store his crop of potatoes, the ladies of the local Norge Home Demonstration Club rescued the building, purchasing it for \$950; and

WHEREAS, by 1922 after legal wrangling and much debate, the Norge Home Demonstration Club became the Norge Community Club and Viking Hall became Norge Community Hall; and

WHEREAS, today, the Norge Community Club owns and maintains Norge Community Hall, and over the years, the building has undergone many repairs and changes, but it remains a center for community activity, a valuable meeting place, and a "true Town Hall," in the tradition of the early Vikings, for all of the residents of James City County; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend and congratulate Norge Community Hall on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Norge Community Club on behalf of the Norge Community Hall as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation of the hall's longtime service to the citizens of Norge and James City County.

INTRODUCED

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