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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 892

Offered February 12, 2009

Celebrating the life of Thomas Vander Woude.

Patrons—Marshall, R.G., Abbitt, Albo, Alexander, Amundson, Armstrong, Athey, BaCote, Barlow, Bell, Bouchard, Bowling, Brink, Bulova, Byron, Caputo, Carrico, Cline, Cole, Cosgrove, Cox, Crockett-Stark, Dance, Ebbin, Eisenberg, Englin, Fralin, Frederick, Gear, Gilbert, Griffith, Hall, Hamilton, Hargrove, Herring, Howell, A.T., Howell, W.J., Hugo, Hull, Iaquinto, Ingram, Janis, Joannou, Johnson, Jones, Kilgore, Knight, Landes, Lewis, Lingamfelter, Lohr, Loupassi, Marsden, Marshall, D.W., Massie, Mathieson, May, McClellan, McQuinn, Melvin, Merricks, Miller, J.H., Miller, P.J., Morgan, Morrissey, Nichols, Nixon, Nutter, O'Bannon, Oder, Orrock, Peace, Phillips, Plum, Pogge, Poindexter, Poisson, Pollard, Purkey, Putney, Rust, Saxman, Scott, E.T., Scott, J.M., Shannon, Sherwood, Shuler, Sickles, Spruill, Tata, Toscano, Tyler, Valentine, Vanderhye, Ward, Ware, O., Ware, R.L., Watts and Wright; Senators: Barker, Blevins, Colgan, Cuccinelli, Deeds, Edwards, Hanger, Herring, Houck, Howell, Hurt, Locke, Lucas, Marsh, Martin, McDougale, McEachin, Miller, J.C., Miller, Y.B., Newman, Norment, Northam, Obenshain, Petersen, Puckett, Puller, Quayle, Reynolds, Ruff, Saslaw, Smith, Stolle, Stosch, Stuart, Ticer, Vogel, Wagner, Wampler, Watkins and Whipple

WHEREAS, Thomas Vander Woude, a devoted father, died on September 8, 2008, while saving his son's life; and

WHEREAS, on September 8, 2008, Thomas Vander Woude was working in his yard with his youngest son, 20-year-old Joseph, who has Down's syndrome, when Joseph fell through the septic tank cover into the septic tank; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Vander Woude tried to pull Joseph out of the tank but realizing that he could not, he leapt into the tank himself while a workman at the house told Thomas' wife to call 911; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Vander Woude managed to get underneath his son and push his son's head above the water while the workman and mother pulled Joseph from above; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Vander Woude was able to keep Joseph's head above the water so he could continue to breathe until help arrived 15 minutes later; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Vander Woude could not be revived when the paramedics arrived, but his heroic actions saved the life of his son; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Vander Woude's actions that day were a reflection of how he lived his life as a dedicated and hard-working father; and

WHEREAS, a devoted family man, Thomas Vander Woude and his loving wife Mary Ellen together raised seven sons; he enjoyed spending time with each one of them; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Vander Woude was actively involved in his sons' lives, coaching all of them in basketball through elementary school, high school, and college; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Vander Woude, a Vietnam War veteran, proudly served his country in the United States Navy for 17 years and went on to work as a commercial airline pilot for 26 years; and

WHEREAS, from 2002 to 2007, Thomas Vander Woude was the athletic director/coach at Christendom College in Front Royal, and he served as a sacristan at Holy Trinity Catholic Parish since 2001; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of a dedicated father and outstanding Virginian, Thomas Vander Woude; 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 Thomas Vander Woude as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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