

2017 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 164

Commending the Shenandoah County Fair.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 24, 2017

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Fair in Woodstock, the oldest and largest fair in the Shenandoah Valley, is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2017; and

WHEREAS, the roots of today's Shenandoah County Fair can be traced to 1886, when the Shenandoah County Agricultural Society organized an event for the purposes of showcasing area agricultural, horticultural, and commercial products; and

WHEREAS, the first fair in Shenandoah County was held in October 1887, and the main grandstand entertainment featured horse racing of every description; and

WHEREAS, due to lack of interest, the fair fizzled sometime in the early twentieth century, but, in 1916, a group of local farmers and businessmen sought to organize an event to promote area farming, and it was decided that 420 shares of stock would be sold to raise funds for the venture; and

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Fair Association acquired 25 acres that were originally owned by the Shenandoah County Agricultural Society, and the first Shenandoah County Fair was held October 16-19, 1917; single admission to the first fair was \$.50 and a one-week pass cost \$1.00; and

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Fair has presented a wide array of performers during its 100-year history, and some of the earliest forms of entertainment were high-wire acts, lion taming, and bicycle racing; and

WHEREAS, today's Shenandoah County Fair features fun for the entire family, including children's activities, world-class grandstand entertainment, music, rides, livestock competitions, agricultural exhibits, a truck and tractor pull, harness racing, and a scholarship pageant, plus a wide variety of food vendors and commercial attractions; and

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Fairgrounds in Woodstock has expanded over the years to include 68 acres filled with food stands, the original grandstands, a horse track, exhibit buildings, and livestock barns; and

WHEREAS, local community and civic groups such as churches, the Lions Club, and the Ruritan Club raise a significant portion of their annual revenue at the Shenandoah County Fair; youth programs such as FFA and 4-H, as well as the Shenandoah County office of Virginia Cooperative Extension, are also closely involved; and

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Fair is now owned by 365 shareholders and the Shenandoah County Fair Association is governed by a volunteer board of directors, who donate countless hours of their time throughout the year to prepare for each fair; and

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Fair will mark its 100th anniversary during a special 2017 fair, scheduled for August 25-September 2, which will feature a star-studded lineup of entertainers headlined by Grammy-nominated country music superstar Martina McBride; and

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Fair has adapted to fit the needs of the community as they have evolved over the last century, but its primary goal has remained unchanged—to provide quality family entertainment while supplying a venue for area farmers and businessmen to showcase their products; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That the Shenandoah County Fair hereby be commended on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Tom Eshelman, general manager of the Shenandoah County Fair, as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for its esteemed history and the important role it continues to play in the Shenandoah County community.

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