

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 47

Commending the Optimist Acorns youth rifle team.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 22, 2004
 Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 30, 2004

WHEREAS, the Optimist Acorns youth rifle team won the 2003 national championship at the NRA Open Smallbore Rifle Team shooting matches at Camp Perry, Ohio, by defeating all other youth and adult teams, after winning the NRA Open Precision Air Rifle Junior National Championship in 2002; and

WHEREAS, the team members, have excelled not only in air rifle and firearm competition, but also in high school academic achievement and as good citizens of their community, while continuing to advance their skills and dedication to purpose; and

WHEREAS, the team members are individuals that all Virginians may be proud of:

1. Kristina L. Fehlings, winner of 51 national, state, regional and other major tournament championships or first place finishes, numerous second or third place finishes, 10 high honors including selection to three national teams, awarded 20 national records and many other recognitions for outstanding performance, while maintaining an overall high school grade point average of 3.82 with induction into the National Honor Society, and is now attending the University of Nebraska in the Honors program, on both athletic, for rifle, and academic scholarships;

2. Emily Houston, at age 16, holds 10 national records in smallbore rifle and precision air rifle competition, current Virginia smallbore and Precision Air Rifle State Champion, a high place finisher in many other prestigious tournaments, on the NRA's Junior Advisory Council, a 4.0 grade point average student taking advanced classes, and has been nominated to the National Honor Society;

3. Daniel S. Peterson has been a top performer in over a hundred competitive team events while becoming a competitive swimmer, lacrosse player, Eagle Scout with bronze eagle palms, maintained a 3.8 high school grade point average with induction into the National Honor Society, and earned a full tuition scholarship to attend Montgomery College in Maryland;

4. Thomas A. Knight began with a BB rifle shooting as a Cub Scout, earned Boy Scout merit badges in rifle and shotgun shooting, competed as a member of the Robinson High School rifle team in Fairfax County, is Vice Commander of the Randolph-Macon Academy Air Force JROTC Cadet Corps where he has twice scored the highest average in the Virginia Military Schools Rifle League, has twice been the Virginia Resident Male Champion to qualify for the Junior Olympic National Championships while maintaining a 4.0 high school grade point average and being inducted into the National Honor Society;

5. Brian Watson began competitive shooting at age 12, is a six year member and 2003 Captain of the Optimist Acorns, competed in the National Matches at Camp Perry since 1999, was Maryland State air rifle and smallbore rifle champion in 2001, 2002 and 2003, was a Junior Olympian in 2002, in 2003 ranked fourth in National Sectional four-position rifle and eleventh in International air rifle, is an Eagle Scout, is now on a scholarship at Xavier University as a member of its NCAA rifle team, and he credits competitive shooting for his ability to focus and his concepts of teamwork, problem solving, and discipline; and

WHEREAS, the historic achievements of the Optimist Acorns are a tribute to their coaches, Bill Terry, Floyd Houston, Allan Fehlings, and Larry Terry, who have imparted through their training and mentoring the foundational principles for honorable and successful lifetimes in leadership and service to the American society; and

WHEREAS, all of the team members and coaches of the Optimist Acorns have brought honor to their families, their schools, their home communities, and the Commonwealth of Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, that the Optimist Acorns be hereby commended and congratulated on their outstanding performance; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Clerk of the Senate prepare copies of this resolution for presentation to the five members and the four volunteer coaches of the Optimist Acorns youth rifle team.