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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 885

Offered February 13, 2013

*Celebrating the life of George Montgomery Van Sant.*

Patrons—Cole, Cox, J.A., Farrell, Howell, W.J. and Orrock; Senator: Stuart

WHEREAS, George Montgomery Van Sant, a United States Marine Corps veteran who taught philosophy at the University of Mary Washington and served on the Fredericksburg City Council, died on January 20, 2013; and

WHEREAS, as a young man, George Van Sant interrupted his undergraduate studies at St. John's College to enlist in the United States Marine Corps in 1945, embarking on a distinguished military career that would span decades; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant joined the 1st Marine Division in North China, returned to the United States to complete a bachelor's degree at St. John's College, and then served his country again during the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant earned a master's degree and doctorate at the University of Virginia, where he was a member of the Raven Society, Omicron Delta Kappa, and the honor council and served as the president of the graduate student body; and

WHEREAS, in 1958 George Van Sant joined the faculty of Mary Washington College as an assistant professor of philosophy and enjoyed a 32-year career at the institution while remaining on active duty with the United States Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant served as chair of the philosophy department and marshall of the faculty, was elected to honorary membership in Mortar Board and Phi Beta Kappa, and spent a year as a visiting scholar at Cambridge University; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant was honored for his distinguished service to the school with its prestigious Grellett C. Simpson Award, which recognizes excellence in undergraduate teaching; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant retired from the United States Marine Corps Reserve in 1977 as a colonel, having trained officer candidates, taught at various service educational institutions, authored *Taking on the Burden of History: Presuming to be a United States Marine*, and earned numerous awards, including a Bronze Star with Combat "V," Purple Heart, and Meritorious Service Medal; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant, who first came to Fredericksburg on a troop train during World War II, had a special place in his heart for the town that so warmly welcomed him and he took an active role in community affairs; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant served as an original member of the Fredericksburg Chapter of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; board member, president, and drive chair of the Rappahannock United Way; and board member and chair of the Central Rappahannock Regional Library; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant served as chair of the Fredericksburg Democratic Committee for five years and then ran for a seat on the Fredericksburg City Council; and

WHEREAS, a respected community member, George Van Sant served for 12 years on the Fredericksburg City Council, playing a pivotal role in the annexation of land from Spotsylvania County and working diligently to improve government services; and

WHEREAS, during turbulent times, George Van Sant supported the city's first black mayor and worked to calm tensions in the community; and

WHEREAS, George Van Sant also worked to establish the Fredericksburg Area Museum and Cultural Center and encouraged the restoration of Old Town; and

WHEREAS, in retirement, George Van Sant relocated to Irvington, where he remained involved in community affairs as a founding board member of the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Neck and board member of the Lancaster Community Library; and

WHEREAS, a remarkable man, George Van Sant faithfully served his community and country throughout his life while imparting wisdom to rising generations of students; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his wives, Shirley, Peggy, and Susan, and son, Edward, George Van Sant will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Milena; daughter, Mary, and her family; stepchildren, Andrea, Steven, Nicole, and Brandon, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and former students and colleagues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of a respected citizen of the Commonwealth, George Montgomery Van Sant; 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 George Montgomery Van Sant as an expression of the General

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**59** Assembly's respect for his memory.