

2017 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 631

Commending Peter Allen Lewis.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 13, 2017

Agreed to by the Senate, January 26, 2017

WHEREAS, Peter Allen Lewis, an educator and founder of Apple Ridge Farm in Floyd County, transformed the lives of thousands of Roanoke's underserved children and families by providing unparalleled educational, cultural, and outdoor experiences for almost 40 years; and

WHEREAS, through Peter Lewis' leadership as president and executive director of Apple Ridge Farm, over 80,000 children have had the opportunity to participate in workshops, retreats, and academic programs in a rural camp setting; and

WHEREAS, Peter Lewis worked as an educator for 34 years before retiring from Roanoke City Public Schools in 2000; he has been a teacher, coach, assistant principal, and principal of an alternative education program for troubled students; and

WHEREAS, the beginnings of Apple Ridge Farm can be traced to 1975, when Peter Lewis purchased a farm in Copper Hill with the goal of establishing a mountain camp to give inner-city students from Roanoke an educational experience at a rural retreat; and

WHEREAS, soon the nonprofit Apple Ridge Farm was organized and Peter Lewis and his family donated a barn and eight and a half acres to build the summer camp; from those humble beginnings Apple Ridge Farm grew and expanded to its current size of 26.5 acres, and in 2015, about 400 children came to the camp over four two-week sessions; and

WHEREAS, the wooded areas and country spaces of Apple Ridge Farm have been magical places for urban youth to develop self-esteem and learn positive values from role models such as judges, police officers, and engineers, who come to speak at the camp; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, Peter Lewis announced he was stepping down from his day-to-day role at Apple Ridge Farm, passing the torch to his son, John Lewis, who now oversees operations; and

WHEREAS, Peter Lewis was honored for his long service to the children of Roanoke with the Cabell Brand Hope Award from Total Action for Progress, an anti-poverty agency, in October 2016; and

WHEREAS, over the past three decades, Peter Lewis poured his blood, sweat, and tears into guiding the personal and academic growth of scores of young campers and making Apple Ridge Farm the success story it is today; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Peter Allen Lewis on his dedication to inspiring the underserved children of Roanoke to greatness through educational, cultural, and outdoor experiences at Apple Ridge Farm; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Peter Allen Lewis as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his life's work.

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