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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 243

Offered February 26, 2024

Celebrating the life of Lannie Davis Ballard.

Patrons—Hope, Clark, Green, Henson, Keys-Gamarra, Lopez, Martinez, McClure, Rasoul, Ware and Wyatt; Senators: Boysko, Deeds, Durant, Ebbin, Favola, Marsden and Reeves

WHEREAS, Lannie Davis Ballard, a well-known beekeeper and entrepreneur who made many contributions to the Natural Bridge community, died on October 12, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Lannie Ballard grew up in Sophia, West Virginia, a small coal mining town, where he began to develop an appreciation for hard work and responsibility at a young age by cleaning office spaces, delivering newspapers, and working at a local grocery store; and

WHEREAS, upon graduating from Sophia High School, Lannie Ballard served his country as a member of the United States Coast Guard, primarily stationed near New York and New Jersey; he became an accomplished ship's cook and proudly maintained an interest in the culinary arts throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, after his military service, Lannie Ballard worked part-time for the *Wall Street Journal* and the *National Observer* while he studied electro-mechanical drafting, then worked for 10 years as a design draftsman until he changed careers and opened a taxidermy shop; and

WHEREAS, Lannie Ballard had been an avid hunter in his youth and had long been interested in taxidermy; despite being self-taught, he became a regional leader in the industry and was at one point the only taxidermist in Northern Virginia certified to receive exotic animals from other countries; and

WHEREAS, Lannie Ballard judged numerous taxidermy competitions and taught classes in Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina; he had a passion for educating young people about wildlife management, conservation, and the taxidermy profession; and

WHEREAS, Lannie Ballard and his wife, Loretta, established the Virginia Taxidermists Association, and he held several leadership positions in the National Taxidermists Association, including as a member of the board of directors for 12 years and vice president for two years; and

WHEREAS, Lannie Ballard and his family settled in Woodbridge, where he was an active leader in the community and at his children's schools; he served as president of the Marumscos Woods Citizens Association and was the first "home room father" at Rippon Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, in the mid-1990s, Lannie Ballard decided to return to design drafting and went back to school to study computer-aided design; he accepted a position with Des Champs Laboratories in Buena Vista, where he ultimately became supervisor of the commercial and industrial design departments; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, Lannie Ballard relocated to Natural Bridge and took up another passion from his childhood, beekeeping; he eventually managed as many as 50 hives in three locations and developed a patent for a one-person hive lifting tool that allowed him to care for bees well into his 80s; and

WHEREAS, Lannie Ballard served as the legislative liaison for the Virginia State Beekeepers Association for 20 years; he preserved the history of the arrival of the honey bee to North America with the Jamestown settlers, raised awareness of the important role the honey bee plays as a natural pollinator, and promoted the culinary and medicinal uses of honey and wax; and

WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades throughout his life, Lannie Ballard received the L.L. Langstroth Award from the Virginia State Beekeepers Association, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Virginia Taxidermists Association, and the Director of the Year Award from the National Taxidermists Association; and

WHEREAS, guided by his faith throughout his life, Lannie Ballard was a longtime member of Manly Memorial Baptist Church, where he had served as an usher and a deacon, and he had recently become a member of Faith Baptist Church in Arnolds Valley, where he was a devoted member of the Glasgow-Natural Bridge Men's Prayer Breakfast; and

WHEREAS, in later life, Lannie Ballard was diagnosed with two rare cancer conditions and he shared his unique experiences to help support and inspire others; and

WHEREAS, Lannie Ballard will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his beloved wife of 63 years, Loretta; his children, Lisa and Lowell, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; 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 Lannie Davis Ballard, a highly admired entrepreneur, beekeeper, and active resident of Natural Bridge; 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 Lannie Davis Ballard as an expression of the General Assembly's

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58 respect for his memory.