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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 248

Offered February 11, 2025

*Celebrating the life of Jane Baber White.*

Patron—Peake

WHEREAS, Jane Baber White, talented landscaper and historic preservationist who restored or rehabilitated several notable buildings and gardens in Lynchburg, died on June 17, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Jane White grew up in Lynchburg and earned a bachelor's degree in biology from what is now Hollins University in Roanoke; and

WHEREAS, Jane White initially began her career working in a biology lab, but eventually answered her true calling and became a landscaper; her unwavering dedication and transformational leadership in her field helped revitalize several Lynchburg neighborhoods and preserved important aspects of local history for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, over the course of her career, Jane White restored or enhanced Aubrey Barbour Park, the Yoder Community Center, E.C. Glass High School Art Collection, and the Phillis Wheatley Shelter for Battered Women; she also cofounded the Friends of Tinbridge Hill Group, which led a neighborhood revitalization project that involved many local charitable organizations and city agencies; and

WHEREAS, Jane White also oversaw the placement of 25 historical highway markers that called attention to the achievements of historical women and people of color in the Lynchburg area; and

WHEREAS, Jane White was best known for her work on Old City Cemetery and the Anne Spencer House and Garden Museum, both of which are significant historical sites and support the local economy as popular tourism destinations; and

WHEREAS, after the Old City Cemetery sustained severe damage from a storm in 1993, Jane White spearheaded a comprehensive restoration movement and served as director of the cemetery from 1993 to 2007; and

WHEREAS, as one of the oldest municipal cemeteries in the country, Old City Cemetery represents a cross-section of Lynchburg's population dating back to the early 1800s, and Jane White guided repairs in a respectful manner that preserved the site's unique character; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Jane White was asked personally by the son of Anne Spencer, a poet and prominent figure in the Harlem Renaissance of the early 20th century, to restore the garden at his mother's former home; and

WHEREAS, Jane White's attentive rehabilitation of the Anne Spencer Garden, a tranquil space that inspired much of Anne Spencer's poetry, contributed to a better understanding of the poet's life and works; and

WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades over the course of her career, Jane White received the Massie Medal from the Garden Club of Virginia, the Brownson Medal from the Virginia Association of Museums, and a Lifetime Achievement award from Who's Who; and

WHEREAS, Jane White will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her husband, Kenneth; her children, Virginia, Kenneth, Jr., and Charles, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of Virginia hereby note with great sadness the loss of Jane Baber White, who transformed the Lynchburg community through her achievements as a landscaper and historic preservationist; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Jane Baber White as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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