**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CELEBRATE THE FORTIETH ANNUAL WARE SHOALS CATFISH FEASTIVAL, TO BE HELD MAY 26‑29, 2021, IN WARE SHOALS, AND TO WISH ITS ORGANIZERS EVERY SUCCESS FOR A GREAT EVENT.

Whereas, in 1981, the Catfish Feastival was born when Mr. Olin Wells and helpers from the town of Ware Shoals set up a National Guard mess tent and set about cooking four hundred pounds of catfish. This first event, which served over two thousand people, included live entertainment, a horseshoe tournament, and Ms. Edris Louise Robinson being proclaimed as the first Feastival Princess; and

Whereas, over the next eleven years, the event grew with the help of the local National Guard unit, the 218th National Battalion. The addition of the O’Dell family’s catfish stew recipe drew in an ever‑growing amount of delighted Feastival goers. In addition to the catfish stew, new carnival rides, a special children’s program of free entertainment, vendors, and arts and crafts served to enchant and impress the growing crowd; and

Whereas, in 2002, with the Feastival’s traditional partner, the National Guard, on standby for international commitments, a new and dedicated group was essential for the continued supply of food at the Catfish Feastival. Members of the Ware Shoals First Baptist Church met the challenge proposed by Deacon Joseph F. Skinner, chairman of the Feastival Board and Chef Extraordinaire of the Feastival. As Matthew 4:19 reads, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” With the assistance of the Baptists, who were guided by the Lord and infused with great spirit, the Feastival continued to grow and to flourish; and

Whereas, by 2011, the Catfish Feastival had become a large undertaking, serving over twenty‑five thousand people and serving over 2,800 pounds of catfish. Continuing to offer free live entertainment, excellent food, a variety of vendors, carnival rides and games, and arts and crafts, the Feastival expanded to include a Saturday morning parade, and a classic car show; and

Whereas, in 2020, due to the COVID‑19 pandemic the Catfish Feastival was cancelled. Determined to continue to legacy of the Feastival, plates of catfish, catfish stew, and other traditional menu items were made available for carry‑out from the usual cooking location near Katherine Hall; and

Whereas, now in 2021, the Catfish Feastival looks to welcome back Feastival goers to all the spectacular events they have come to expect and look forward to. The fortieth annual event looks to share superbly cooked food, craft vendors, carnival rides, wrestling, the traditional pageant, live entertainment, and a golf tournament, among other offerings; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives commends the Feastival organizers for bringing this delightful event to South Carolina and encourages all South Carolinians to patronize and enjoy its offerings. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, celebrate the fortieth annual Ware Shoals Catfish Feastival, to be held May 26‑29, 2021, in Ware Shoals, and wish its organizers every success for a great event.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the Catfish Feastival Board of Directors: Rick Holland, George Leagans, Bonnie Maxwell, Kiki O’Dell, Teresa Holland, Michael Powell, Lisa Powell, Brian Padgett, Jeannie Price, Ray Price, and volunteers.

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