



County of Prince Edward, Virginia Media Advisory – May 20, 2009

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO DEDICATE LIGHT OF RECONCILIATION MEMORIAL *Prince Edward County Honors its History*

The Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors will dedicate the ***Light of Reconciliation Memorial*** on the front lawn of the county courthouse. The event will take place Wednesday, June 3, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

This permanent marker honors Barbara Rose Johns and the students of Robert Russa Moton High School and all the children of Prince Edward County for their historic role in ending public school segregation in the United States. In addition, the marker contains a verse from the July 8, 2008 Board of Supervisors resolution, which reads: *“we, the undersigned members of the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors, believe that the closing of public schools in our county from 1959 to 1964 was wrong; and we grieve for the way lives were forever changed, for the pain that was caused, and for how those locked doors shuttered opportunities and barricaded the dreams our children had for their own lifetimes; and for all wounds known and unknown; we regret those past actions.”*

In 1959, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors closed its public schools in defiance of the desegregation ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown vs. Board of Education*. The schools remained closed until 1964, when a second Supreme Court decision, *Griffin vs. County School Board* forced the county to reopen its public schools.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors invites those who were of school age at any time from 1959 to 1964 to lead the community in a Walk of Honor, and be the first to view the Light of Reconciliation Memorial.

For additional information, please call 434-392-8837 or visit the Prince Edward County website at www.co.prince-edward.va.us.

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