

By: Craddick

H.C.R. No. 6

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, James Ellis "Jim" Hall has enjoyed one of the most
2 illustrious careers in the history of motor sports, and his
3 achievements are now chronicled in an imposing new gallery at
4 Midland's Petroleum Museum; and

5 WHEREAS, A native Texan, Mr. Hall was born in Abilene in 1935
6 and studied mechanical engineering at California Institute of
7 Technology (Caltech); he fell in love with sports car racing in
8 college, when he began racing his brother's Austin Healy, and he
9 continued racing after receiving his degree in 1957; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1961, the same year he moved to Midland, Mr. Hall
11 debuted a car built to his specifications by Tom Barnes and Dick
12 Troutman of California; he named the sleek machine the Chaparral,
13 and in 1962 he joined Hap Sharp in establishing Chaparral Cars;
14 based at Rattlesnake Raceway, a private track outside of Midland,
15 Mr. Hall designed and constructed a series of Chaparrals, whose
16 innovations defined the cutting edge of race car technology in the
17 1960s and 1970s; and

18 WHEREAS, Among the advances pioneered by Mr. Hall was the
19 harnessing of aerodynamic down force to increase traction, an
20 engineering breakthrough that revolutionized the sport; other
21 celebrated developments included the use of a fiberglass chassis,
22 composite wheels, automatic transmission, and ground effects
23 equipment; many of the innovations Mr. Hall introduced have not
24 only transformed auto racing but have improved passenger car safety

1 and fuel efficiency; and

2 WHEREAS, Chaparrals were campaigned in the United States Road
3 Racing Challenge, Canadian American Road Racing Series, World
4 Endurance Championships, and USAC and CART series; seated in the
5 cockpit of a Chaparral, Johnny Rutherford won both the 1980
6 Indianapolis 500 and the CART series championship; and

7 WHEREAS, While Chaparral Cars were becoming the talk of the
8 racing world, Jim Hall was also establishing an acclaimed career as
9 a driver; he is one of the few Americans to have ever competed in
10 Formula One racing, having joined the British Racing Partnership
11 for the 1963 season; in addition, he has won almost every major road
12 racing circuit in North America, including the 1965 12 Hours of
13 Sebring and Canadian Grand Prix, and in 1964 he claimed the U.S.
14 Road Racing Championship; and

15 WHEREAS, Jim Hall retired from driving in the early 1970s but
16 continued to play a leading role in the sport as a builder and team
17 owner/manager; with driver Brian Redman, he won the U.S. Formula
18 A/5000 championship in 1974, 1975, and 1976, and in 1978 he teamed
19 with driver Al Unser, Sr., to win the Triple Crown of 500-mile
20 races--Indianapolis, Pocono, and Ontario; and

21 WHEREAS, The numerous accolades accorded this eminent Texan
22 include induction into the U.S. Motorsports Hall of Fame and the
23 International Motorsports Hall of Fame; he has been named a
24 Distinguished Alumnus by Caltech, lauded by the American Society of
25 Mechanical Engineers, and recognized for the Best Engineered Car at
26 Indy; and

27 WHEREAS, The Petroleum Museum's Chaparral Gallery, which had

1 its grand opening April 15-17, 2004, features Jim Hall memorabilia
2 and all seven of the original Chaparrals; it is Mr. Hall's hope that
3 the gallery will impress on youngsters the crucial role that math
4 and science play in sports car racing and inspire in them a still
5 greater appreciation for the importance of education; and

6 WHEREAS, Jim Hall and his Chaparrals have electrified
7 countless race fans, contributed immeasurably to the advancement of
8 that sport, and won a lasting place for Midland in the annals of
9 race car history; now, therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas,
11 4th Called Session, hereby honor James Ellis "Jim" Hall for his
12 extraordinary achievements and extend to him sincere
13 congratulations on the opening of the Chaparral Gallery at the
14 Petroleum Museum; and, be it further

15 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
16 prepared for Mr. Hall as an expression of high regard by the Texas
17 House of Representatives and Senate.