

By: Flynn

H.R. No. 379

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Many proud citizens of Van Zandt County have come to
2 the State Capitol on March 19, 2003, to celebrate the significant
3 part they and their forebears have played in the development of the
4 Lone Star State; and

5 WHEREAS, Created by an Act of the Texas Legislature on March
6 20, 1847, this Northeast Texas county was named for Isaac Van Zandt,
7 a Republic of Texas lawyer, legislator, and diplomat; and

8 WHEREAS, Canton, the county seat, was laid out in 1850 and
9 incorporated in 1919; recently named a Main Street City, it is home
10 to the Van Zandt County Fair and First Monday Trade Days, one of the
11 country's best-known flea markets; a library of genealogy and local
12 history is also a popular attraction and preserves much of the
13 county's notable heritage; and

14 WHEREAS, The development of this fascinating area can be
15 traced in a number of other communities as well; Edgewood, settled
16 in the 1840s, boasts the Edgewood Heritage Park Museum, a facility
17 dedicated to the preservation of rural cultural and architectural
18 history; and

19 WHEREAS, Edom, established in 1856, is one of the oldest
20 towns in the county, and its past is highlighted by 10 state
21 historical markers, many of them researched by members of the Edom
22 Historical Society; the residents of this small community also give
23 hearty support to an active civic theater; and

24 WHEREAS, Fruit cultivation prompted the naming of Fruitvale,

1 where a nursery operated as early as the 1870s; several generations
2 in this century-old town have treasured the Randall Store, a local
3 institution since 1910; and

4 WHEREAS, Grand Saline, originally called Jordan's Saline,
5 the first Van Zandt County seat, takes its name from an immense dome
6 of pure salt lying beneath the city; more than a mile and a half wide
7 and 20,000 feet thick, the deposit is presently mined by Morton Salt
8 Company; the city celebrates salt with an annual Salt Festival;
9 those exploring the town can tour the Salt Palace Museum, a unique
10 structure built with rock salt crystal, stop by the historical
11 marker that commemorates native son Wiley Post, the renowned
12 pioneer aviator, and visit the new Veterans Memorial Wall Park,
13 featuring a genuine U.S. Army tank; and

14 WHEREAS, Van, established in 1891, remained a quiet farming
15 community until 1929, when the discovery of oil nearby transformed
16 the village into a boomtown; the Van Area Oil and Historical Museum
17 recaptures the excitement of that frenetic time and commemorates
18 the discovery with an annual Oil Festival; and

19 WHEREAS, Wills Point, settled in 1873 and originally known as
20 Iola, was renamed for William Wills, whose cabin served as a
21 stopping place for those traveling between Shreveport and Dallas;
22 the Wills cabin still stands, as does the Texas and Pacific Railroad
23 depot, which houses the Historical Society Museum; Wills Point,
24 which is officially the Bluebird Capital of Texas, hosts the annual
25 Bluebird Festival; and

26 WHEREAS, Ben Wheeler, surrounded by natural springs and rich
27 farmland, was named for Van Zandt County's first mail carrier,

1 Benjamin R. Wheeler, in 1876; and

2 WHEREAS, Martins Mill got its name from Dan R. Martin's
3 gristmill and was established in 1880; the community survived
4 destruction by tornadoes and fires and today boasts a successful
5 school district; and

6 WHEREAS, Other major events in the county include the Texas
7 State Bluegrass Festival, the Edom Arts Fair, and the Van Zandt
8 County Relay for Life; for the outdoor enthusiast, the Neches and
9 Sabine rivers, Purtis Creek State Park, and Lake Tawakoni State
10 Park offer wonderful opportunities for fishing, boating, swimming,
11 and camping; and

12 WHEREAS, The home of nearly 48,000 people, Van Zandt County
13 relies on tourism, oil, and agribusiness; the area is a major
14 producer of hay, blueberries, sweet potatoes, and nursery crops, in
15 addition to cattle, horses, hogs, and dairy products; and

16 WHEREAS, Present with us today in the Capitol are numerous
17 residents of Van Zandt County, including the Van Zandt County
18 Choir, city and county officials, and members of Vision 2003; also
19 in attendance are members of the Council of Van Zandt County
20 Communities, which sponsors the biennial visit to the state
21 legislature, an occasion for focusing on legislation affecting Van
22 Zandt County citizens; and

23 WHEREAS, The citizens of Van Zandt County take justifiable
24 pride in the hard work and ready cooperation that have made their
25 county an important part of this state, and it is a pleasure to join
26 them in honoring the county they are proud to call home; now,
27 therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
2 Legislature hereby recognize March 19, 2003, as Van Zandt County
3 Day at the State Capitol and extend sincere best wishes to the
4 visiting delegation for an informative and memorable day.