

By: Kolkhorst

H.R. No. 43

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The city of Huntsville lost one of its most beloved  
2 residents and admired community leaders with the death of Lu Ellen  
3 Gibbs on June 18, 2005, at the age of 88; and

4           WHEREAS, Born Lu Ellen Evans on May 7, 1917, this esteemed  
5 Texan was a graduate of Galveston Ball High School and Texas  
6 Christian University and later earned a master's degree in English  
7 at Sam Houston State University; and

8           WHEREAS, Through her involvement with the Community Theater  
9 in Huntsville, she met J. Philip Gibbs, whom she married in 1940;  
10 Mr. Gibbs later became board chair for First National Bank and for  
11 Gibbs Brothers and Company, a land and timber investment firm that  
12 was founded in 1841 as a mercantile store and is thought to be the  
13 oldest company in Texas still under original family ownership; and

14           WHEREAS, Mrs. Gibbs used her affluence and influence as a  
15 member of one of the town's most prominent families in the best way  
16 possible, offering her leadership and financial support to  
17 countless civic and charitable organizations; a board member of  
18 Region VI, the Huntsville Memorial Hospital, the Methodist  
19 Retirement Center, the Texas Prison Museum, and Planned Parenthood,  
20 she was a charter member of the Study Club and the Elkins Lake  
21 Women's Golf Association; she also succeeded her husband as First  
22 National Bank board chair and served on the board of the J. Philip  
23 Gibbs Centre for the Performing Arts, named in honor of her late  
24 husband; moreover, this enthusiastic arts patron lent her

1 assistance to the Old Town Theater and the Arts Commission, to name  
2 but a few of the arts organizations that benefited from her support;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Mrs. Gibbs was also a consummate athlete in her  
5 earlier years, enjoying tennis, bowling, swimming, badminton, and  
6 especially golf, and she considered the Lu Ellen Gibbs Open Golf  
7 Tournament among her highest honors; she was a fan of Sam Houston  
8 State University's golf and softball programs, and as a  
9 Distinguished Alumna, she supported the school's academic  
10 endeavors as well, funding numerous scholarships and founding the  
11 President's Distinguished Lecturer series on campus; and

12 WHEREAS, Until the last weeks of her life, she personally  
13 delivered copies of the *Huntsville Item* and the *Houston Chronicle*  
14 to every patient at Huntsville Memorial Hospital each Sunday  
15 morning before attending the early service at First Christian  
16 Church, where she was a longtime member; known simply as "the  
17 newspaper lady" to many at the hospital, this modest and unassuming  
18 benefactor has been described as "having done more anonymous  
19 philanthropy in Walker County than any single person," frequently  
20 making contributions to organizations and paying tuition for  
21 countless students who never knew the source of their good fortune;  
22 and

23 WHEREAS, Lu Ellen Gibbs lived her life in service to others,  
24 truly making a profound difference in the lives of her fellow  
25 citizens of Huntsville, a town she dearly loved; although this  
26 remarkable Texas lady will be sorely missed, the by-products of her  
27 intrinsic kindness, generosity, and graciousness will continue to

1 be felt for many years to come; now, therefore, be it

2           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas  
3 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the life of  
4 Lu Ellen Gibbs and extend sincere sympathy to her family: to her  
5 children, Mary Laura and Donald; to her grandchildren, Noah, Ben,  
6 Seth, Tim, and Ruth; to her sister, Dorothy Bock; and to her other  
7 relatives and many friends; and, be it further

8           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
9 prepared for the members of her family and that when the Texas House  
10 of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Lu Ellen  
11 Gibbs.