

By: Gonzalez Toureilles

H.R. No. 323

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Atascosa County, in South Texas, is celebrating its  
2 150th anniversary in 2006; and

3           WHEREAS, The area of the present-day county was home to  
4 Coahuiltecan Indians for several thousand years before Spanish  
5 explorers first arrived in Texas in the 1500s; these Native  
6 Americans disappeared as a distinct people after the arrival of  
7 Europeans and were succeeded, in the vicinity of Atascosa County,  
8 by Lipan Apaches and Comanches, who posed a threat to settlers until  
9 after the Civil War; and

10           WHEREAS, Notwithstanding the danger of Indian raids,  
11 families from northern Mexico began to establish ranches in the  
12 area by the mid-1700s; one of the largest cattle spreads, El Rancho  
13 de Atascosa, belonged to Mission San Jose; though roads in the  
14 region were poor, an important route, the Lower Presidio Road,  
15 passed through Atascosa County, connecting northern Mexico with San  
16 Antonio; and

17           WHEREAS, In 1812, with Mexico in revolt against Spain, a  
18 group styled the Republican Army of the North crossed into Texas  
19 from Louisiana; after capturing several towns, it took San Antonio  
20 in April 1813, whereupon its leaders issued a declaration of  
21 independence; the following August, however, what remained of the  
22 army was annihilated by royalist forces at the Battle of Medina, a  
23 ferocious encounter memorialized by a Texas Historical Marker in  
24 the northern part of the county; and

1           WHEREAS, Anglo settlers began to move into the area in the  
2 late 1840s, and in 1856 the Texas Legislature created Atascosa  
3 County; the prominent Texas statesman Jose Antonio Navarro, whose  
4 relatives still live in the county, donated land from his large  
5 holdings for the creation of a county seat, named Navatasco; a year  
6 later, in 1858, the county seat was moved to Pleasanton, and in 1910  
7 it was established at Jourdanton; and

8           WHEREAS, Throughout the history of Atascosa County, the  
9 cattle industry has remained a pillar of the local economy; cattle  
10 ranching surged to the fore, especially during the period of the  
11 great trail drives in the years after the Civil War; and

12           WHEREAS, The first rail track was laid in the area by the  
13 International-Great Northern Railroad Company, which built through  
14 the far northwestern corner of the county in the early 1880s;  
15 together with other railroads that entered the county in 1909 and  
16 1912, the IGN spurred an increase in both the population and the  
17 number of farms; and

18           WHEREAS, By 1900, cotton had become the dominant crop in  
19 Atascosa County, but the drilling of artesian wells and the  
20 introduction of irrigation in the first decades of the 20th century  
21 made it possible also to raise fruit and vegetables; by 1960, the  
22 county ranked as the third-largest producer of strawberries in  
23 Texas, and at the beginning of the 21st century, the county's chief  
24 crops were strawberries, peanuts, corn, milo, watermelons, and  
25 wheat; and

26           WHEREAS, With the opening of several oil fields in the 1940s,  
27 petroleum became a significant part of the county's economy as

1 well; today, the chief industrial activity centers on oil and gas  
2 extraction and on the mining of lignite coal, which is used to power  
3 a major electrical generating plant; and

4 WHEREAS, Many visitors are drawn to Atascosa County by the  
5 opportunities it offers for quail and deer hunting and by such  
6 popular attractions as the Atascosa County Fair, the Pleasanton  
7 Cowboy Homecoming and Rodeo, and the Poteet Strawberry Festival,  
8 reputed to be the largest agricultural festival in Texas; and

9 WHEREAS, The citizens of Atascosa County are heirs to a rich  
10 heritage, and they are working to preserve the best of their past  
11 even as they look forward to the challenges and opportunities that  
12 lie before them; as they pause to commemorate this special  
13 milestone, it is a pleasure to recognize their industry, their  
14 achievements, and their public spirit; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas  
16 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby congratulate the residents  
17 of Atascosa County on the occasion of their sesquicentennial and  
18 extend to them sincere best wishes for a joyful and memorable  
19 celebration.