

By: Cook of Navarro

H.R. No. 1452

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The citizens of Corsicana lost a dedicated public
2 servant, longtime educator, role model, and friend with the passing
3 of Olin Nickleberry on April 13, 2005, at the age of 75; and

4 WHEREAS, Born on August 7, 1929, in Marietta, Texas, Mr.
5 Nickleberry was the oldest son in a family of nine children; raised
6 on a farm, he worked hard and developed a sense of responsibility
7 from a young age, and the size of his family also provided him with
8 early lessons in the importance of sharing and teamwork; as a young
9 adult, he won a basketball scholarship to Bishop College, where he
10 was voted most outstanding athlete and earned his bachelor's degree
11 in education; after graduation, he put his career plans on hold for
12 two years to serve as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army; in 1965, he
13 moved to Corsicana to accept the position of head basketball coach
14 at G. W. Jackson High School, and he later earned his master's
15 degree in physical education and his certification in special
16 education from East Texas State University; and

17 WHEREAS, During the course of his life, this esteemed
18 gentleman was a teacher, a coach, and a special needs instructor in
19 the Corsicana and Blooming Grove public school districts; his
20 lifelong involvement in sports began as a player and extended to his
21 years as a coach and as a referee, an avocation he pursued for 50
22 years; drawing on the discipline he learned in the army and the
23 insight he gained through his many years officiating at sporting
24 events, he brought consistency and fairness to his service in

1 public office, which began in 1991, when he became the first African
2 American commissioner in Navarro County, a post to which he was
3 elected three times; and

4 WHEREAS, A deeply spiritual man and devout Christian, Mr.
5 Nickleberry was a faithful member of Bethlehem Baptist Church for
6 40 years and served as a deacon and chair of the deacon staff; and

7 WHEREAS, In addition to numerous other affiliations, Mr.
8 Nickleberry was a member of the VFW in Corsicana and the Kerens and
9 Corsicana/Navarro County chambers of commerce, a charter member of
10 the Central Texas Baseball Umpires Association, a former vice
11 president of the Texas Association for Adult and Continuing
12 Education, and a former president of the Sunrise Lions Club; and

13 WHEREAS, The strength of our communities depends on the
14 dedication of individuals like Olin Nickleberry, who spent his life
15 nurturing the development of young people while working tirelessly
16 to improve the city of Corsicana; though it is impossible to gauge
17 the full effect of a man's life, some individuals leave their
18 unmistakable mark on the world as they move through it, and Olin
19 Nickleberry's contributions to his fellow Texans will continue to
20 resonate for many years in the lives of all who knew him; now,
21 therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
23 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Olin Nickleberry and
24 extend deepest sympathy to the members of his family: to his wife,
25 Edith Iles-Nickleberry; to his daughters, Oretha Nickleberry and
26 Brenda Gardner and her husband, Arcraig; to his grandchildren,
27 DeShawn Gardner II and Brendé Gardner; to his brothers, Joe

1 Nickleberry, Vernon Nickleberry, and Benny Nickleberry and his
2 wife, Margie; to his sister, Lois Nickleberry and her husband,
3 Willis; and to his other relatives and many friends; and, be it
4 further

5 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
6 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
7 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Olin
8 Nickleberry.