

By: Hardcastle

H.C.R. No. 48

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Situated just to the east of the Llano Estacado, the
2 city of Spur epitomizes, in the sweep of its landscape and history
3 and in the proud, forward-looking attitude of its citizens, the
4 expansive character of the American West; and

5 WHEREAS, In the 18th century, bands of Comanche Indians
6 migrated southward into Texas, pushing aside the Apaches and
7 Tonkawas; one of those bands, the Wanderers, established itself in
8 the area surrounding present-day Spur; less than two centuries
9 later, however, Comanche dominion over the Texas plains came to an
10 end; during the fateful decade of the 1870s, white hunters
11 exterminated the southern buffalo herd, which supplied most of the
12 tribe's essential needs, and a series of engagements with federal
13 troops resulted in the Comanches' final subjugation; and

14 WHEREAS, Within a few years, the plains of West Texas began to
15 fill with ranches; Dickens County, where the city of Spur is
16 located, became home to three of the most famous: the Matador, the
17 Pitchfork, and the town's namesake, the Spur; and

18 WHEREAS, The Spur Ranch had its genesis in 1878 with 1,900
19 head of cattle that had been trailed northward from Refugio County;
20 soon, however, small ranchers on the plains, including the owners
21 of the Spur, were forced to sell their herds to larger concerns,
22 which were buying, leasing, and fencing vast amounts of land that
23 had formerly been open range; in this process of consolidation, the
24 Spur name was taken over by a sprawling ranch that encompassed some

1 569,000 acres; and

2 WHEREAS, From 1885 to 1907, the Spur Ranch was owned by a
3 group of British financiers who operated as the Espuela Land and
4 Cattle Company; after failing to realize much success, they sold
5 the ranch in the early 20th century to a group known as the Spur
6 Syndicate, which disposed of the cattle and, over the next three
7 decades, sold off the land to settlers; and

8 WHEREAS, To manage the breakup of the ranch and promote the
9 commercial development of the area, the syndicate hired Charles
10 Adam Jones as ranch manager; in less than a decade, Mr. Jones
11 platted several town sites, helped to establish schools and
12 churches, and succeeded in attracting mercantile businesses to the
13 region; he founded Spur in 1909, and he gave that community a
14 substantial boost by persuading the leadership of a new railroad,
15 the Stamford and Northwestern, to build their line through the
16 town; and

17 WHEREAS, During its first two years of existence, Spur
18 acquired a one-room schoolhouse, a bank, organized by Mr. Jones,
19 and a newspaper, the *Texas Spur*; the town incorporated in 1911, and
20 over the next 20 years it experienced steady growth; and

21 WHEREAS, The Texas Legislature established a Texas A&M
22 Agricultural Experiment Station in Spur in 1909, and the station
23 remained active until 1986, engaging in significant research on a
24 number of fronts and drawing visitors from both the U.S. and abroad;
25 under the leadership of Ray E. Dickson, who served as station
26 superintendent from 1914 to 1950 and who became known as "the man
27 who made water walk," the unit pioneered the "syrup pan" terracing

1 system and other important advances in the area of soil and water
2 conservation; Mr. Dickson also played an instrumental role in
3 drafting the amendment that created the federal Soil Conservation
4 Service, now the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and

5 WHEREAS, Later station superintendents included C. E.
6 Fisher, who oversaw an extensive program of brush control studies;
7 that research resulted in the development of chemical, mechanical,
8 and biological methods of brush control that were adopted across
9 the state; Superintendent Paul T. Marion guided beef cattle
10 industry studies, which explored nutrition, crossbreeding, and
11 grazing management practices and which led to the development of
12 successful artificial insemination and containment techniques; and

13 WHEREAS, The town's positive growth and development was
14 further enhanced by the leadership of Clifford Bartlett Jones, who
15 succeeded his father as manager of the Spur Ranch and also served as
16 mayor of Spur, president of the Spur Chamber of Commerce, and
17 president/director of banks in Spur, Lubbock, and Dallas; at one
18 time a regional advisor for the Public Works Administration,
19 Clifford B. Jones was inaugurated in 1939 as president of Texas
20 Technological College; and

21 WHEREAS, Another prominent Texan associated with the
22 community is Spur native Red McCombs, the distinguished businessman
23 and philanthropist and the former owner of the San Antonio Spurs,
24 Denver Nuggets, and Minnesota Vikings; and

25 WHEREAS, Today, Spur is the largest town in Dickens County,
26 and it continues to serve as a shipping center for cotton, wheat,
27 and cattle; its civic-minded residents, recognizing the

1 immeasurable importance of their historic resources, have secured
2 Main Street City status in order to promote, simultaneously,
3 historic preservation and economic development; and

4 WHEREAS, Reflecting the community's commitment to excellence
5 and to building for the future, the Spur Independent School
6 District has achieved "exemplary" status, the highest rating
7 accorded by the Texas Education Agency; the school plays a central
8 role in the life of the town, and the annual Spur Homecoming ranks
9 as one of the year's highlights, bringing many former residents
10 back for class reunions and a full schedule of homecoming and other
11 community events; another much-anticipated occasion is the Cowboy
12 Christmas Ball, sponsored by the Spur Area Chamber of Commerce; and

13 WHEREAS, Heirs to a rich legacy, the citizens of Spur are
14 meeting the challenges and opportunities of today with the same
15 energetic, can-do resourcefulness that their forebears brought to a
16 new frontier, and it is fitting that they and their community be
17 recognized as bearers of a celebrated and vital tradition; now,
18 therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
20 hereby formally designate the city of Spur, Texas, as the Spirit of
21 the West.