

By: Veasey

H.R. No. 170

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The Garden of Eden Neighborhood Association in  
2 Tarrant County was the Grand Prize winner of the 2006 Neighborhood  
3 of the Year competition, sponsored by the nonprofit organization  
4 Neighborhoods, USA; and

5           WHEREAS, Though less than three years old at the time, this  
6 dynamic organization also collected a first-place award in the  
7 Social Revitalization--Single Neighborhood category at the  
8 Neighborhoods, USA, annual conference; both awards were conferred  
9 in recognition of the association's outstanding project, a  
10 three-day neighborhood reunion that brought together more than 200  
11 individuals, some of whom hadn't seen each other in 40 years; while  
12 celebrating and rededicating the land on which their families had  
13 lived for more than a century and a half, the reunion also raised  
14 funds for a planned neighborhood museum; and

15           WHEREAS, The Garden of Eden neighborhood is situated on the  
16 site of Birdville, the earliest settlement in Tarrant County;  
17 today, residents of this historic neighborhood claim ties to the  
18 Cheney/Loyd/Sanders families, with roots in the area going back to  
19 the 1840s; Major Cheney, who inherited 300 acres of land there in  
20 the later 1800s, married Malinda Loyd in 1881; she also came from a  
21 family of substantial Tarrant County landowners and was noted as  
22 living in the Garden of Eden in the 1860 census, when she was seven  
23 years old; approximately 250 of Malinda and Major Cheney's  
24 descendents still live in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and some 15 to

1 20 of them reside on Carson Street, the heart of the Garden of Eden  
2 neighborhood; and

3 WHEREAS, When a 2004 zoning change threatened to make part of  
4 Carson Street a light-industrial area, residents succeeded in  
5 having the zoning designated "single family"; at the same time,  
6 they formed the Garden of Eden Neighborhood Association to  
7 represent the Garden of Eden and the Joe Louis Addition; members of  
8 the association chose as their motto "Neighborhood DNA--Defining  
9 Our Neighborhood's Assets"; and

10 WHEREAS, The Garden of Eden NA has advocated for  
11 infrastructure repairs and environmental causes, created a  
12 newsletter, undertaken a voter registration drive, and collected  
13 cell phones for victims of domestic violence; the association has  
14 also formed a nonprofit organization, the Carson Street Historic  
15 Preservation Group, to build alliances with businesses and  
16 government agencies and develop residential properties; and

17 WHEREAS, One of the neighborhood's most ambitious projects is  
18 the creation of an agricultural museum that will help Metroplex  
19 schoolchildren gain an understanding of what life was once like on  
20 area farms; among the museum's amenities will be a library, art  
21 gallery, nature trail, and bird sanctuary; and

22 WHEREAS, Since its founding, the Garden of Eden NA has  
23 collected a host of accolades; the City of Fort Worth, the Fort  
24 Worth League of Neighborhood Associations, and the Fort Worth  
25 Neighborhood Education Center jointly named it the Neighborhood of  
26 the Year in 2004 and the following year conferred on it the Spirit  
27 of Fort Worth Award; in 2005, the City of Fort Worth also designated

1 Carson Street as the first African American historical and cultural  
2 district in Tarrant County, a recognition that subsequently helped  
3 earn the Garden of Eden NA a Citation of Merit from the Historic  
4 Fort Worth, Inc., Board of Directors; and

5 WHEREAS, The far-reaching endeavors undertaken by the Garden  
6 of Eden Neighborhood Association are considered a model for  
7 preservation efforts in other historic African American  
8 communities, and the members of that association are to be  
9 commended for their exceptional stewardship of a heritage rich in  
10 tradition, achievement, and public service; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas  
12 Legislature hereby congratulate the Garden of Eden Neighborhood  
13 Association on its receipt of the 2006 Grand Prize as Neighborhood  
14 of the Year from Neighborhoods, USA, and extend to all those  
15 affiliated with the association sincere best wishes for continued  
16 success; and, be it further

17 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
18 prepared for the Garden of Eden Neighborhood Association as an  
19 expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.