

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 470

**WHEREAS**, Citizens of Van Zandt County are visiting the State Capitol on March 13 and 14, 2007, to celebrate the significant role they and their forebears have played in the development of the Lone Star State; and

**WHEREAS**, Created by an Act of the Texas Legislature on March 20, 1847, this Northeast Texas county was named for Isaac Van Zandt, a Republic of Texas lawyer, legislator, and diplomat; and

**WHEREAS**, Canton, the county seat, was laid out in 1850 and incorporated in 1919; recently named a Main Street City, Canton is home to the Van Zandt County Fair and First Monday Trade Days, one of the country's best-known flea markets; a library of genealogy and local history is also a popular attraction and preserves much of the county's notable heritage; and

**WHEREAS**, The history of this area can be traced in a number of other communities as well; Edgewood, settled in the 1840s, boasts the Edgewood Heritage Park Museum, a facility dedicated to the preservation of the rural culture and architectural history of our state; and

**WHEREAS**, Edom, established in 1856, is one of the oldest towns in the county, and its past is highlighted by 10 state historical markers, many of them researched by members of the Edom Historical Society; the residents of this small community give vital support to an active civic theater; and

**WHEREAS**, Fruit cultivation prompted the naming of Fruitvale, where a nursery operated as early as the 1870s; several generations in this century-old town have treasured the Randall Store, a local institution since 1910; and

**WHEREAS**, Grand Saline, originally called Jordan's Saline, the first Van Zandt County seat, takes its name from an immense dome of pure salt lying beneath the city; more than a mile and a half wide and 20,000 feet thick, the deposit is presently mined by Morton Salt Company; the city celebrates salt with an annual Salt Festival; those exploring this 2004 Main Street City can tour the Salt Palace Museum, a unique structure built with rock salt crystal, stop by the historical marker that commemorates native son Wiley Post, the renowned pioneer aviator, and visit the new Veterans Memorial Wall Park, featuring a genuine United States Army tank; and

**WHEREAS**, Van, established in 1891, remained a quiet farming community until 1929, when the discovery of oil nearby transformed the village into a boomtown; the Van Area Oil and Historical Museum recaptures the excitement of that frenetic time and commemorates the discovery with an annual Oil Festival; and

**WHEREAS**, Wills Point, settled in 1873 and originally known as Iola, was renamed for William Wills, whose cabin served as a stopping place for those traveling between Shreveport and Dallas; the Wills cabin still stands, as does the old Texas and Pacific Railroad depot, which houses the Historical Society Museum; Wills Point, which is officially the Bluebird Capital of Texas, hosts the annual Bluebird Festival; and

**WHEREAS**, Ben Wheeler, surrounded by natural springs and rich farmland, was named for Van Zandt County's first mail carrier, Benjamin R. Wheeler, in 1876; and

**WHEREAS**, Martins Mill, named for Dan R. Martin's gristmill, was established in 1880 and is home to one of the largest dairies in East Texas; the community survived destruction by tornadoes and fires and today boasts a first-rate school district; and

**WHEREAS**, Major events in Van Zandt County include the Texas State Bluegrass Festival, the Edom Arts Fair, and the Van Zandt County Relay for Life; for the outdoor enthusiast, the Neches and Sabine Rivers, Purtis Creek State Park, and Lake Tawakoni State Park offer opportunities for fishing, boating, swimming, and camping; and

**WHEREAS**, Home to nearly 50,000 people, Van Zandt County relies on tourism, oil, and agribusiness; the area is a major producer of hay, blueberries, sweet potatoes, and nursery crops and is known for its cattle, horses, hogs, and dairy products; and

**WHEREAS**, The citizens of Van Zandt County take justifiable pride in their hard work and in the community endeavors that have made their county strong, and it is a pleasure to join them in honoring the county they call home; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 80th Legislature, hereby recognize March 13 and 14, 2007, as Van Zandt County Days at the State Capitol and extend sincere best wishes to the Van Zandt County residents for an informative and memorable visit.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 14, 2007.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate