

By: Flynn

H.R. No. 181

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Many proud citizens of Van Zandt County have come to
2 the State Capitol on February 4, 2009, to celebrate the significant
3 part they and their forebears have played in the development of the
4 Lone Star State; and

5 WHEREAS, Created by an Act of the Texas Legislature on March
6 20, 1847, this Northeast Texas county was named for Isaac Van Zandt,
7 a Republic of Texas lawyer, legislator, and diplomat; and

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

14 WHEREAS, The development of this fascinating area can be
15 traced in a number of other communities as well; Edgewood, settled
16 in the 1840s, boasts the Edgewood Heritage Park Museum, a facility
17 dedicated to the preservation of rural cultural and architectural
18 history; and

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

24 WHEREAS, Fruit cultivation prompted the naming of Fruitvale,

1 where a nursery operated as early as the 1870s; several generations
2 in this century-old town have treasured the Randall Store, a local
3 institution since 1910; and

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

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

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

26 WHEREAS, Ben Wheeler, surrounded by natural springs and rich
27 farmland, was named for Van Zandt County's first mail carrier,

1 Benjamin R. Wheeler, in 1876; and

2 WHEREAS, Martins Mill, which got its name from Dan R.
3 Martin's gristmill, was established in 1880 and is home to one of
4 the largest dairies in East Texas; the community survived
5 destruction by tornadoes and fires and today boasts a successful
6 school district; and

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

13 WHEREAS, The home of nearly 50,000 people, Van Zandt County
14 relies on tourism, oil, and agribusiness; the area is a major
15 producer of hay, blueberries, sweet potatoes, and nursery crops, in
16 addition to cattle, horses, hogs, and dairy products; and

17 WHEREAS, Present with us today in the Capitol are numerous
18 residents of Van Zandt County, including the Van Zandt County
19 Choir, city and county officials, members of Vision 2009, and
20 members of the board of the Council of Van Zandt County Communities,
21 the sponsors of the biennial visit to the state legislature that
22 provides an occasion for focusing on legislation affecting Van
23 Zandt County citizens; and

24 WHEREAS, The citizens of Van Zandt County take justifiable
25 pride in the hard work and ready cooperation that have made their
26 county strong, and it is a pleasure to join them in honoring the
27 county they are proud to call home; now, therefore, be it

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1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
2 Legislature hereby recognize February 4, 2009, as Van Zandt County
3 Day at the State Capitol and extend sincere best wishes to the
4 visiting Van Zandt residents for an informative and memorable day.