

By: Smith

H.R. No. 192

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Willis Thomas Jones Jr. of Baytown is deserving
2 of highest commendation for the valiant service he rendered to his
3 state and his nation during World War II; and

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Jones enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces in
5 November 1941, just one month prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl
6 Harbor; he attended flight school and graduated from Armor School
7 in April 1942, at which time he was commissioned a second
8 lieutenant; shortly thereafter, he was assigned to one of the first
9 B-17 bomber groups to head to England for the war; in the fall of
10 1942, his unit was detached from the VIII Bomber Command in England
11 and sent to serve in the North African campaign, which culminated in
12 the surrender of the Axis forces under General Erwin Rommel in May
13 1943; Dr. Jones was subsequently assigned to the 15th Air Force and
14 based in Italy, where he arrived on December 25, 1943; after flying
15 numerous missions as a gunner, he assumed the role of bombardier;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, On July 26, 1944, while Dr. Jones was flying his
18 45th combat mission of the war, his bomber squadron was attacked by
19 a group of German fighters over Vienna, Austria; the assault
20 destroyed his plane and killed the crew's pilot, copilot, and
21 engineer, but Dr. Jones was able to bail out of the aircraft at
22 22,000 feet, after all remaining crew members had ejected; although
23 miraculously unharmed, he was quickly captured by enemy forces and
24 taken to the Stalag Luft I prisoner of war camp near Barth, Germany;

1 there, he endured several months of imprisonment, until the camp
2 was liberated by Russian forces in May 1945; Dr. Jones was
3 discharged from the military with the rank of major in 1946; and

4 WHEREAS, Following his return home to the Lone Star State,
5 W. T. Jones married his wife, Ada Mae, on August 25, 1945, and the
6 couple has since shared nearly seven rewarding decades together;
7 Dr. Jones went on to attend medical school from 1946 to 1950, and he
8 enjoyed a long and successful career in Baytown until his
9 retirement in 1985; and

10 WHEREAS, Dr. W. T. Jones embodies the highest ideals of the
11 U.S. armed forces and deserves the lasting respect and gratitude of
12 all Americans, and it is a privilege to commend him for his
13 outstanding contributions to his country and his community; now,
14 therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas
16 Legislature hereby honor Dr. Willis Thomas Jones Jr. for his brave
17 and steadfast service in this nation's behalf; and, be it further

18 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
19 prepared for Dr. Jones as an expression of high regard by the Texas
20 House of Representatives.