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By:  Harris of Anderson H.C.R. No. 105

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Beloved for its profusion of blossoms, the dogwood tree provides one of the most spectacular highlights of springtime in the Lone Star State, and the city of Palestine has long been renowned for its abundance of these beautiful trees and for its famous Texas Dogwood Trails Celebration; and

WHEREAS, Dogwoods, which are native to the Palestine area, can grow to a height of 30 feet and feature a broad canopy of branches that burst into bloom in March and April in East Texas; the result is a dazzling floral display of majestic white and rosy pink petals; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Dogwood Trails Celebration traces its origins to 1938, when local residents Charles W. Woodbridge and Eugene Fish discussed their shared appreciation of the trees and hatched the idea of creating an event to showcase the many dogwoods in and around Palestine; their plan became a reality in 1939, when more than 20,000 people took part in the inaugural Dogwood Trails gathering; and

WHEREAS, In the early years, visitors had to drive rough and often muddy roads and trudge through densely wooded areas to get a glimpse of the loveliest blooms; to make the trees more accessible, organizers sought permission to use a plot of land north of the city owned by E. W. and H. R. Link; it contained several groves of dogwood trees, and with the help of volunteers, a formal trail system was completed there in 1941; it became a permanent attraction after M. A. Davey purchased the central portion of the tract and gifted it to Anderson County; the 254-acre Davey Dogwood Park was named in his honor and today features miles of roads and hike-and-bike trails; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, the dogwood trails have remained a source of great pride to the people of Palestine, who have contributed time and labor to maintain the trees and trails for the enjoyment of locals and visitors alike; their efforts have helped make their city an extremely popular springtime destination, with thousands of people flocking to Davey Dogwood Park and other area locations for the trails and celebration; and

WHEREAS, There is an intrinsic and undeniable joy in witnessing the delicate splendor of a dogwood tree in bloom, and through the efforts of several generations of citizens, the trails have become an essential part of the identity and character of Palestine; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 88th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate Palestine as the official Dogwood Trails Capital of Texas; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.003(e), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally passed by the legislature.