

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.C.R. 6
By: Hall
Administration
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Designating Rockwall County as the official Marriage Capital of Texas for a 10-year period ending in 2035.

For more than 90 years, Rockwall County has been a sought-after destination for brides- and grooms-to-be, and its popularity as a marriage location is known throughout the Lone Star State.

Couples have flocked to Rockwall County to tie the knot since the early decades of the 20th century, and the area gained further acclaim during the 1940s and 1950s, when the county took a unique approach to administering marriages; a night watchman at the courthouse, Gene Payne, filled in as the deputy county clerk, which allowed marriage licenses to be issued at all hours; in addition, a local doctor kept his office open late to provide the blood tests that were required before a license could be issued; the popularity of Rockwall County as a place to say "I do" was such that justice of the peace Mildred Barnes, one of only a few women in the state to serve in that role at the time, officiated the weddings of more than 6,000 couples from 1952 to 1957.

The practice of issuing marriage licenses around the clock ended in the 1950s, when the county was required by law to provide this service during regular business hours; nevertheless, the county has remained a top choice for prospective newlyweds drawn by the uncommon beauty and elegance of its marriage certificates, which have long been among the most coveted in the state; the county is further admired for its wide selection of wedding venues that suit a variety of tastes and styles, ranging from luxurious manors to scenic gardens and pastoral ranch venues.

Rockwall County has long served as the setting where couples have shared their vows and embarked upon a momentous journey together, and it is indeed fitting that the county be formally recognized for its special connection to the institution of marriage, both historically and in the present day.

RESOLVED

That the 89th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate Rockwall County as the official Marriage Capital of Texas.

That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.003(e) (relating to providing that a place designation expires on the 10th anniversary of its designation), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally passed by the legislature.