

By: Guillen

H.C.R. No. 70

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The vaquero is one of the iconic figures of the Lone
2 Star State, and today that heritage remains especially strong in
3 Jim Hogg County, where vaqueros have played a fundamental role in
4 that region's economy and culture since the arrival of the earliest
5 settlers; and

6 WHEREAS, Renowned for their horsemanship and stock-handling
7 abilities, vaqueros were crucial to the advance of Spanish ranching
8 into South Texas; their skills and fortitude contributed to the
9 development of large, open-range cattle ranches in the area south
10 of the Nueces River during the Spanish colonial era; these ranches
11 left an imprint on the landscape that is still visible today in
12 fortified stone blockhouses and ranch outbuildings, in historic
13 chapels and cemeteries, and in hand-dug wells and reservoirs that
14 were used to water enormous herds of livestock; and

15 WHEREAS, With the expansion of the Texas cattle industry in
16 the 1800s, the vaquero's traditions came to shape ranching
17 practices far beyond the Nueces; much of the equipment used by the
18 vaqueros, including the bandana, hat, chaps, lasso, spurs, and
19 saddle, were adopted by all Texas cowboys, as were the vaquero
20 techniques employed in mounted herding and roping; moreover, the
21 system of range and cattle management that evolved in Texas
22 subsequently spread across the High Plains and throughout the
23 American West; and

24 WHEREAS, Endowed with soils better suited to livestock

1 production than farming, the area of present-day Jim Hogg County
2 has beckoned ranchers for the past two centuries; the first known
3 grant within the borders of today's county was made to Xavier Vela
4 in 1805 and encompassed nearly 18,000 acres; between 1805 and 1836,
5 approximately 25 grants were conferred within the area; and

6 WHEREAS, Among the first ranches were Las Noriacitas, Las
7 Animas, San Antonio Viejo, Las Enramadas, Las Viboritas, El
8 Baluarte, and San Javier; another of the early operations, Randado,
9 was originally founded in 1830 by Hipolito Garcia and ultimately
10 became the most famous holding in the county; encompassing more
11 than 100,000 acres, it was renowned for its vast herd of Spanish
12 ponies, which by the 1870s numbered some 3,000 head, and for the
13 fine leather and horsehair accoutrements fashioned by its vaqueros;
14 the name of the ranch, in fact, refers to the production there of an
15 elaborate style of lasso, the *randa*; Robert E. Lee, who spent time
16 in Texas before the Civil War, wrote about his visit to Randado, and
17 the ranch figures in literary works by John Houghton Allen, Tom Lea,
18 and J. Frank Dobie; and

19 WHEREAS, Ranching remains one of the chief pillars of the
20 economy in Jim Hogg County, and most communities in the area have
21 ranching roots or associations; Agua Nueva, Cuevitas, Guerra, and
22 Randado all originated as ranching settlements; Hebbronville, the
23 county seat, is located on land that once formed part of Las
24 Noriacitas; the town's namesake, W. R. Hebbron, acquired the site
25 from descendants of the original grantee about 1880, and in 1883 he
26 established Hebbronville along the route of the Texas Mexican
27 Railway; for a time, the town ranked as the largest cattle shipping

1 center in the country, and it remains a hub of ranching activity
2 today; and

3 WHEREAS, Over the course of more than two centuries, the
4 vaquero has contributed immeasurably to the rich ranching heritage
5 of South Texas and of the Lone Star State as a whole, and it is
6 indeed fitting that the county where vaqueros have played such an
7 influential role be appropriately recognized; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the 89th Legislature of the State of Texas
9 hereby redesignate Jim Hogg County as the official Vaquero Capital
10 of Texas; and, be it further

11 RESOLVED, That, in accordance with the provisions of Section
12 391.003(e), Government Code, this designation remain in effect
13 until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally
14 passed by the legislature.