

By: Manuel

H.C.R. No. 61

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The City of Port Arthur has been steeped in Cajun
2 culture for nearly a century; and

3 WHEREAS, Located in the southeastern corner of Texas, Port
4 Arthur is a close neighbor to the Louisiana bayou region where the
5 Acadians, or Cajuns, settled in the mid-1700s after being forced
6 out of Nova Scotia; in 1927, the Great Mississippi Flood drove tens
7 of thousands from their homes in the Acadiana parishes of
8 Louisiana, and many of those displaced made their way to Port
9 Arthur, drawn by the ample employment opportunities in the
10 burgeoning petroleum industry and other sectors of the coastal
11 economy; and

12 WHEREAS, Louisiana Cajuns brought their distinctive culture,
13 which took root and flourished in their adopted city; local cuisine
14 acquired a Cajun flavor, with a boost from the family that opened
15 Judice's French Market in 1927; the restaurant helped popularize
16 such delicacies as crawfish, gumbo, and hot boudin, and its
17 longtime spokesman, A. J. Judice, "the Crazy Frenchman," became a
18 beloved ambassador of Cajun heritage; among other achievements, he
19 served as the impresario of the improbable pastime of crawfish
20 racing, which led to his tongue-in-cheek appointment as the sport's
21 commissioner by Texas governor Preston Smith in the early 1960s;
22 Port Arthur's Cajun community was also home to whiskey distiller
23 and entrepreneur Jack LaBove, who helped the city survive the dark
24 days of Prohibition; and

1 WHEREAS, Renowned for their love of music, Port Arthur
2 residents danced to such artists as Harry Choates, the "Godfather
3 of Cajun Music" and the "Fiddle King of Cajun Swing," whose 1946
4 recording of "Jole Blon" is considered iconic; favorite venues
5 included the Rodair Club, which showcased the music and nurtured
6 aspiring musicians such as accordionist Jude Moreau; today, younger
7 players like Donovan Bourque continue the tradition, keeping the
8 infectious Cajun rhythm part of the city's soundtrack; and

9 WHEREAS, Warm and friendly Cajun hospitality thrives
10 everywhere in Port Arthur, from fais-dodo house parties to major
11 events, among them the annual Cajun Heritage Fest; moreover, the
12 Museum of the Gulf Coast does its part to preserve and focus
13 attention on Cajun history and traditions; and

14 WHEREAS, Port Arthur takes great pride in the Cajun influence
15 that pervades so many aspects of life in the city, and residents of
16 all backgrounds enjoy celebrating these distinctive elements of
17 their culture; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, That the 88th Legislature of the State of Texas
19 hereby designate Port Arthur as the official Cajun Capital of
20 Texas; and, be it further

21 RESOLVED, That, in accordance with the provisions of Section
22 [391.003\(e\)](#), Government Code, this designation remain in effect
23 until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally
24 passed by the legislature.