

## HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 6015

A RESOLUTION honoring Mary Spurgeon for her contribution to art in Kansas.

WHEREAS, Mary Spurgeon was born of pioneer parents on February 15, 1918, and she grew up breaking horses and working as a cattle hand near Dodge City; and

WHEREAS, Spurgeon was raised in a family of horse lovers, and she was really in her element while outdoors, learning to tell the time by the sun, riding horses bareback and practicing throwing a rope while herding cattle; and

WHEREAS, Spurgeon was the youngest of five girls, but grew up being a real tomboy and lived up to the nickname Bill Charley, which was affectionately given to her by her father, and early on, Spurgeon's mother gave up trying to keep a sunbonnet on her, as she preferred the sun on her face and ragged overalls to the pale delicate skin that was so valued by the proper girls at that time; and

WHEREAS, Spurgeon's work with cattle and horses has been ongoing throughout her life and, after earning her teaching certificate from Dodge City Junior College in 1938, she always rode horseback to and from the one room schoolhouses in Meade and Gray counties where she taught; and

WHEREAS, Spurgeon always had an affinity for cowboys, and after she married her husband, "Wild" Bill Spurgeon, they lived on various remote ranches; through the years Spurgeon somehow found time to do some painting and wood carvings along with raising four children — Linda, Del Roy, Shannon and James — and cooking for roundup crews and anyone else who dropped by; and

WHEREAS, Spurgeon always had an interest in art, but did not take up sculpting until age 72, and has since won renown for her bronze renditions of horses, cattle, cowboys and American Indians; and

WHEREAS, Due to Spurgeon's lifetime of experience with horses and cattle, her art work is noted for being genuine and uniquely capable of accurately capturing the spirit and life of the animals and people portrayed; and

WHEREAS, Spurgeon has received extensive recognition for her artwork, including being nominated to the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame, which also contains one of her paintings in its art collection, being selected as the 1997 Dodge City Community College Distinguished Alumnus, and being selected to receive a Special Recognition Award at the 2006 Governor's Arts Awards in Oklahoma City; and

WHEREAS, Spurgeon's paintings and sculptures have been exhibited at: The Oklahoma State Capital; the Western Spirit Show in the Cheyenne Frontier Days Museum; the American Quarter Horse Congress, the Barrel Racing Futurity and the National Reining Finals in Oklahoma City; the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas; the National Cattlemen's Beef Association in Kansas City; the Texas Stockgrowers Association in Fort Worth; and the Festival of the West in Scottsdale; and

WHEREAS, Several of Spurgeon's sculptures are prominently displayed in Dodge City, including a large-scale Wyatt Earp statue on the downtown Trail of Fame, a large walnut relief, "Legacy of Learning", at the public library and a 7½-foot wooden cross at Grace Community Church; and

WHEREAS, Spurgeon exemplifies the spirit of lifelong learning by believing there are always new things to learn and new ways of expressing her artistic vision: Now, therefore,

*Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas:* That we honor Mary Spurgeon for her artistic accomplishments and her dedication to lifelong learning, thank her for her contribution to art in Kansas and wish her continued success in all her future endeavors.

House Resolution No. 6015 was sponsored by Committee on Arts and Cultural Resources.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the HOUSE, and was adopted by that body

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*Speaker of the House.*

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*Chief Clerk of the House.*