

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1833

A RESOLUTION proclaiming and celebrating the sesquicentennial of Baxter Springs, Kansas.

WHEREAS, Baxter Springs once was a rest stop for the Osage Indians as they traveled toward their summer hunting grounds. Members of this tribe paused at the mineral springs that once flowed near the town. They believed that the water had miraculous healing properties, and they routed their trek purposely to partake of the flowing springs; and

WHEREAS, In the spring of 1849 John J. Baxter, his wife and eight children moved from Missouri to 160 acres of land near Spring River. His land included the one of the mineral springs that the Osage Indians would visit. John Baxter set up and operated an inn and general store which came to be known as "Baxter's Place". "Baxter's Place" was incorporated in 1868 and was renamed Baxter Springs in honor of its early settlement; and

WHEREAS, Baxter Springs was the site of a frontier military fort called Fort Blair. The fort was located on Military Road. On October 6, 1863, guerilla forces under the command of William Quantrill, carried out a surprise attack on the fort. Members of the Second Kansas Colored Infantry, under the command of Lt. James Pond, were able to repel the attack, in spite of being greatly outnumbered. Subsequently, that same day, a military wagon train was approaching Fort Blair, when Quantrill, in another surprise attack, nearly annihilated the entire military contingent under the command of General James Blunt. This tragic event is known as the Baxter Springs Massacre. Baxter Springs is one of only three sites of military engagement during the Civil War in Kansas.

WHEREAS, Following the Civil War, Baxter Springs became known far and wide as one of the wildest cowtowns of the West. Drovers, bringing herds of cattle northward from Texas to Missouri, found the town a welcome respite after three or four months on the dusty trail. Leaving the longhorn cattle to feed on the lush grasses of the prairie in Indian Territory, the drovers made the most of the numerous saloons and other attractions of what is now known as the "First Cowtown in Kansas"; and

WHEREAS, In an effort to boost the economy, the city government issued \$150,000 in bonds to entice the Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad to extend its line into Southeastern Kansas. More bonds financed a new school, a courthouse (now the Johnston Public Library), and street improvements. The bonded indebtedness was more than they assessed of the city, however, and when the railroad moved to Texas, so did the cattle drives, leaving the city deeply depressed; and

WHEREAS, During the period of hard times, it was discovered that the mineral springs had wonderful health-giving properties and Baxter Springs became a famous health spa. Spring Park was a popular gathering spot; and

WHEREAS, The Old Soldiers and Sailors Reunions, which followed the Civil War and continued until 1914, also brought fame to the city and hordes of veterans, their families and the businesses needed to sustain them through the weeks of oratory and other pleasures; and

WHEREAS, With the discovery of lead and zinc in the Tri-State district, Baxter Springs became a prosperous business center. The demise of mining left its mark, but unlike many other less fortunate communities, the city recovered through the diversification of business, agriculture and industry to become one of the most attractive and progressive cities in the area; and

WHEREAS, Baxter Springs is located on Historic Route 66, one of three communities on the 13.6 miles of the Route in Kansas. The famous road has had a significant impact on the city since it was completed in 1926 - bringing transport vehicles, troop carriers and millions of travelers from throughout the world - through Baxter Springs. American's Main Street is also Baxter Springs' Main Street: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That we do hereby proclaim the week of June 28 through July 5, 2008, as the sesquicentennial anniversary of Baxter Springs, Kansas; that we celebrate the rich legacy, progress and achievements of Baxter Springs; and that we honor those who helped shape the direction and future of the community; and

Be it further resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate provide 10 enrolled copies of this resolution to Senator Dwayne Umbarger for presentation to representatives of Baxter Springs, Kansas.

Senate Resolution No. 1833 was sponsored by Senator Dwayne Umbarger.

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

President of the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate.