

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 492

By Vital

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Nelson Bennett for his contributions to outdoorsmanship education.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Nelson Bennett, a highly respected member of his community who has dedicated himself to improving the quality of life for his fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, a native of Ooltewah, Mr. Bennett was born in a log cabin in 1936 and graduated from Soddy Daisy High School in 1954, where he played baseball and basketball and made the all-city team in 1954; and

WHEREAS, desiring to serve his country, Mr. Bennett enlisted in the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1954 and served until 1962; and

WHEREAS, he graduated from Tennessee Technological University in 1963 with a degree in biology and physical education and earned a graduate degree in administration, supervision, and principalship in K-12 in 1972; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bennett dedicated his life to the education of Tennessee's youth, spending thirty years in the Hamilton County public school system; he taught biology, served as an administrative assistant, and held principalships at both middle and high schools; and

WHEREAS, he was also an adjunct professor for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga for twenty years, primarily teaching health education, and he taught at Southern Adventist University for nearly fifteen years in the Outdoor Leadership graduate program; and

WHEREAS, an outdoorsman of immense passion, Mr. Bennett played a vital role in the design and implementation of the new masters program and outdoor teacher education at Southern Adventist University in 1995, and he participated in the program full time from 1996 until 2002, then shifting to part time so he could spend more time with his family and pursue his hobbies; and

WHEREAS, he continued to contribute to the program until 2005, making presentations and joining the class for several days on the ten-day intensive course; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bennett had a particular affinity for the Boundary Waters canoe area in Northern Minnesota, which he first visited in 1964 and returned to yearly until 2018, and he volunteered there at Camp Widjieagan as camp director twice, in addition to bringing his Southern Adventist University students to experience the area; and

WHEREAS, he observed student teachers from Southern Adventist University's School of Education and was dedicated to the furthering of education both in and outside the traditional classroom, and he assisted at-risk high school students in Hamilton County, exhibiting his complete dedication to education for individuals from all backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, in line with his great love of nature, Mr. Bennett worked at Camp Ocoee for twelve years as the waterfront director, trip director, and program director, and he also took middle schoolers to Camp Wesley woods for twelve years; and

WHEREAS, not only committing his public life to service, Mr. Bennett gave his private time and talents to volunteer with Neighborhood Helpers, building ramps for those in need; Campers on a Mission; the Southern Baptist Association, providing disaster relief for five years; and the International Mission Conference in Italy; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bennett is a man of refined leisure, enjoying bird watching, woodworking, carving, fishing, fly-tying, canoeing, camping, wooden boat building, sailing, and traveling at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, devoted to his family, Nelson Bennett enjoys the love and support of his wife, Geraldine "Jerri" Bennett, their three daughters and five grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Bennett epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this General Assembly acknowledge and applaud Nelson Bennett for his dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Nelson Bennett for his lifetime of contributions to his community and the State of Tennessee through outdoorsmanship education and extend to him our best wishes for much continued success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.