

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 64

BY SENATOR PERRY AND REPRESENTATIVE ORTEGO

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To designate the city of Scott, Louisiana, as the Cajun Art Capital of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the preservation of Cajun art, language, cuisine, literature, architecture and culture, in general, is an important priority for the residents of South Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the story that is told is that at the age of three, a little French-speaking tot sat near where his mother was making soap in a big black pot over a fire, quickly burning down to charcoal and ash; and

WHEREAS, the child gathered the pieces of charcoal, the ones that had cooled enough to touch, and placed them in a small wooden box, later to be used to make the first charcoal drawings of the now much acclaimed Cajun illustrator and artist, Floyd Sonnier; and

WHEREAS, Floyd, born in a small sharecropper's house in an area called *La Pointe Noire* near Church Point in Acadia Parish in South Louisiana and educated in Church Point schools, eventually obtained a Bachelor of Arts in commercial art from Southwestern Louisiana Institute, now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; and

WHEREAS, Floyd spent his life illustrating and capturing Cajun life in Acadiana, launching his career with a successful exhibit of his pen-and-ink drawings in Lafayette in 1975, became a full-time artist in 1978, and opened Floyd Sonnier's Beau Cajun Art Gallery and studio in Scott, outside Lafayette; and

WHEREAS, Sonnier not only continued his career as an artist, but through his pen-and-ink drawings of Cajun culture he brought that culture to audiences across the United States of America and to devotees of his work in France and French Canada, to whom he spoke primarily in French; and

WHEREAS, Floyd Sonnier is one of the most celebrated of Cajun artists and illustrators and he opened his studio in a historic building in Scott, from where he brought the Cajun culture to people around the world and reminded the residents of Acadiana of the richness and strength of their own culture; and

WHEREAS, today the original location of Sonnier's gallery exists as the Gallery Acadie owned by two Scott natives who earn their living as artists and Sonnier's works remain on display at the Beau Cajun Gallery nearby; and

WHEREAS, Scott is also home to the Society of Acadian Illustrators, an art guild that is dedicated to preserving the arts of the Acadian people and Sonnier was declared the first honorary member of the guild; and

WHEREAS, the guild is open only to artists of Acadian ancestry but hopes to enlist the support and appreciation of people around the world in maintaining the Cajun culture and bringing the richness of Cajun culture to new audiences everywhere; and

WHEREAS, these activities centered in Scott have made Scott the centerpiece of preserving Cajun art, illustration, and culture and bringing to the attention of the world the efforts of new Acadian artists who honor and revere the contributions of their ancestors.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate the city of Scott as the Cajun Art Capital of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Purvis J. Morrison, the mayor of Scott, with special thanks to the people of Scott for supporting and encouraging the retention and celebration of Cajun art in Louisiana.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES