

ENROLLED SENATE  
CONCURRENT  
RESOLUTION NO. 23

By: Branam of the Senate

and

McDaniel (Randy) and  
McMullen of the House

A Concurrent Resolution praising the life of the late John W. Nichols; recognizing his integrity; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, John Whiteman Nichols was born in Ardmore, Oklahoma, on November 6, 1914, the only son of Mary Whiteman and John Tutt Nichols. John grew up in Ardmore where he graduated from high school in 1932 and attained the rank of Eagle Scout. After working on Wall Street he returned to Oklahoma to attend the University of Oklahoma. In 1936, he was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols, while attending the University of Oklahoma, met Mary Davis of McAlester, Oklahoma. The couple was married in August of 1937 and their partnership prospered for seventy years. They were blessed with three children and eight grandchildren. John and Mary were world travelers and enjoyed visiting nations all over the globe. John especially enjoyed attending major golf tournaments; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols practiced as a Certified Public Accountant after graduation from college where he audited local oil companies, including Kerr-Lynn, the predecessor of Kerr-McGee. John entered the oil and gas business, co-founding Blackwood & Nichols,

Ltd. in 1946. In 1950, John W. Nichols registered the first public oil and gas drilling fund with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The fund raised \$1.4 billion from some of the country's wealthiest citizens and most prominent celebrities. His innovations in financing oil and gas ventures brought permanent changes to the industry; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols, with his son J. Larry, founded Devon Energy Corporation in 1971 with four employees and no oil and gas assets. The company went public in 1988. Today, it is the nation's largest independent oil and natural gas producer, with operations from Mexico to the Arctic and in China, Brazil, and Azerbaijan. As of December 31, 2007, Devon Energy had proven reserves of 2.5 billion barrels of oil equivalent and an enterprise value of nearly \$60 billion; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols, besides being a co-founder of Blackwood & Nichols and founding Devon Energy, was one of the founders of the Petroleum Club and the Economics Club of Oklahoma. As President of the Oklahoma Heritage Association he established the President's Circle to recognize individuals who had made major contributions to the organization. With his wife Mary he was a founding member of the Bizzell Library Society of the University of Oklahoma and established the first endowed professorship in the School of Dance at the University of Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, Mary Nichols was a member of the first Board of Visitors for the University of Oklahoma's "World Literature Today" and an active member of the OU Associates Council; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols was a civic leader, serving as National President of the Delta Tau Delta Fraternity, President of the Oklahoma Heritage Association, President of the Young Men's Dinner Club of Oklahoma City, President of the Economics Club of Oklahoma, President of the Bizzell Library's Board of Visitors, Treasurer and Director of the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club, and a Director of the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols was an active member of the Beacon Club, the Embassy Club, the Mayfair Club, and the Rotary Club. He was also a member of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce and the Oklahoma City Chapter of Certified Public Accountants. On the state

level, he was a member of the Oklahoma Society of Certified Public Accountants and the Oklahoma Independent Petroleum Association; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols was a major contributor to many organizations. With his wife Mary, he established the John and Mary Nichols Rare Books Collection in the Bizzell Library at the University of Oklahoma. John and Mary also served as lifetime members of the Oklahoma Philharmonic Society Board. He provided financial support to the Oklahoma Heritage Association; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols was honored and recognized by many organizations. In 1980, he was honored with a Doctor of Humanities degree from Bethany College in West Virginia. In 1987, he was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. In 1993, he was the first to receive the Arthur Barto Adams Alumni Fellows Award bestowed by the Price College of Business at the University of Oklahoma and in 2003, the first to receive the University of Oklahoma's Trailblazer award. John and Mary received the Governor's Arts Award in 2000. In 2001, John W. Nichols was named one of the 100 Most Influential People of the Petroleum Industry in the Twentieth Century by the "Oil and Gas Investor". John received an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Oklahoma in 2002. In 2004, Oklahoma City University inducted John into the Oklahoma Commerce and Industry Hall of Honor; and

WHEREAS, John W. Nichols demonstrated his support for education by serving as a trustee of Randolph-Macon Woman's College, the University of the Ozarks, the University of Oklahoma's Price College of Business at the University of Oklahoma, and Casady School. He also provided scholarships to the University of Oklahoma, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, and University of the Ozarks; and

WHEREAS, John Nichols was an active Christian, serving as a Deacon, Trustee, and Elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Oklahoma City. John served on the Development Board of the Princeton Theological Seminary. He also provided scholarships to Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and established the John Nichols Memorial at the First Presbyterian Church of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. A believer in tithing, he gave the first ten percent of his earnings to his church; and

WHEREAS, John Nichols' life has been chronicled in the book, "Deals, Deals, and More Deals: The Life of John W. Nichols", written by Bob Burke as part of the Oklahoma Trackmaker Series for the Oklahoma Heritage Association; and

WHEREAS, John Whiteman Nichols, Co-Founder and Chair Emeritus of Devon Energy, died on Sunday, August 3, 2008, at the age of 93 years; and

WHEREAS, Devon Energy Corporation is building a new corporate headquarters located in downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. When completed, the \$350 million, one million square foot structure will be at least 37 stories high, the tallest building in Oklahoma City. Housing some 2,000 Devon employees it will be a fitting monument to Devon Energy's Co-Founder, John W. Nichols.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 52ND OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature praises the life of the late John W. Nichols not only for his lasting contributions to the energy industry in this state, nation and the world, but also for his civic leadership, community spirit, and generosity which has benefited so many.

THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature recognizes the integrity, innovation, and entrepreneurship which were a reflection of John Nichols' character and joins with his family, friends, co-workers, and those whom he has touched in mourning the loss of this Oklahoma pioneer.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to John W. Nichols' wife, Mary; two sons, J. Larry and Kent; and his daughter, Betty Street.

Adopted by the Senate the 30th day of April, 2009.

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Presiding Officer of the Senate

Adopted by the House of Representatives the 6th day of May,  
2009.

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Presiding Officer of the House  
of Representatives