

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 52nd Legislature (2009)

3 SENATE CONCURRENT
4 RESOLUTION 23

By: Branan

5
6 AS INTRODUCED

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

10
11 WHEREAS, John Whiteman Nichols was born in Ardmore, Oklahoma, on
12 November 6, 1914, the only son of Mary Whiteman and John Tutt
13 Nichols. John grew up in Ardmore where he graduated from high
14 school in 1932 and attained the rank of Eagle Scout. After working
15 on Wall Street he returned to Oklahoma to attend the University of
16 Oklahoma. In 1936, he was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in
17 Accounting; and

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

1 WHEREAS, John W. Nichols practiced as a Certified Public
2 Accountant after graduation from college where he audited local oil
3 companies, including Kerr-Lynn, the predecessor of Kerr-McGee. John
4 entered the oil and gas business, co-founding Blackwood & Nichols,
5 Ltd. in 1946. In 1950, John W. Nichols registered the first public
6 oil and gas drilling fund with the Securities and Exchange
7 Commission. The fund raised \$1.4 billion from some of the country's
8 wealthiest citizens and most prominent celebrities. His innovations
9 in financing oil and gas ventures brought permanent changes to the
10 industry; and

11 WHEREAS, John W. Nichols, with his son J. Larry, founded Devon
12 Energy Corporation in 1971 with four employees and no oil and gas
13 assets. The company went public in 1988. Today, it is the nation's
14 largest independent oil and natural gas producer, with operations
15 from Mexico to the Arctic and in China, Brazil, and Azerbaijan. As
16 of December 31, 2007, Devon Energy had proven reserves of 2.5
17 billion barrels of oil equivalent and an enterprise value of nearly
18 \$60 billion; and

19 WHEREAS, John W. Nichols, besides being a co-founder of
20 Blackwood & Nichols and founding Devon Energy, was one of the
21 founders of the Petroleum Club and the Economics Club of Oklahoma.
22 As President of the Oklahoma Heritage Association he established the
23 President's Circle to recognize individuals who had made major
24 contributions to the organization. With his wife Mary he was a

1 founding member of the Bizzell Library Society of the University of
2 Oklahoma and established the first endowed professorship in the
3 School of Dance at the University of Oklahoma; and

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

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

14 WHEREAS, John W. Nichols was an active member of the Beacon
15 Club, the Embassy Club, the Mayfair Club, and the Rotary Club. He
16 was also a member of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce and the
17 Oklahoma City Chapter of Certified Public Accountants. On the state
18 level, he was a member of the Oklahoma Society of Certified Public
19 Accountants and the Oklahoma Independent Petroleum Association; and

20 WHEREAS, John W. Nichols was a major contributor to many
21 organizations. With his wife Mary, he established the John and Mary
22 Nichols Rare Books Collection in the Bizzell Library at the
23 University of Oklahoma. John and Mary also served as lifetime
24

1 members of the Oklahoma Philharmonic Society Board. He provided
2 financial support to the Oklahoma Heritage Association; and

3 WHEREAS, John W. Nichols was honored and recognized by many
4 organizations. In 1980, he was honored with a Doctor of Humanities
5 degree from Bethany College in West Virginia. In 1987, he was
6 inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. In 1993, he was the first
7 to receive the Arthur Barto Adams Alumni Fellows Award bestowed by
8 the Price College of Business at the University of Oklahoma and in
9 2003, the first to receive the University of Oklahoma's Trailblazer
10 award. John and Mary received the Governor's Arts Award in 2000.
11 In 2001, John W. Nichols was named one of the 100 Most Influential
12 People of the Petroleum Industry in the Twentieth Century by the
13 "Oil and Gas Investor". John received an honorary doctorate degree
14 from the University of Oklahoma in 2002. In 2004, Oklahoma City
15 University inducted John into the Oklahoma Commerce and Industry
16 Hall of Honor; and

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

23 WHEREAS, John Nichols was an active Christian, serving as a
24 Deacon, Trustee, and Elder of the First Presbyterian Church of

1 Oklahoma City. John served on the Development Board of the
2 Princeton Theological Seminary. He also provided scholarships to
3 Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and established the John
4 Nichols Memorial at the First Presbyterian Church of Oklahoma City,
5 Oklahoma. A believer in tithing, he gave the first ten percent of
6 his earnings to his church; and

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

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

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

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

23 THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature praises the life of the late
24 John W. Nichols not only for his lasting contributions to the energy

1 industry in this state, nation and the world, but also for his civic
2 leadership, community spirit, and generosity which has benefited so
3 many.

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

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

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