

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 230

BY REPRESENTATIVE WILLARD

A RESOLUTION

To commend author Wiletta Ferdinand for her authorship of *Jack Conrad and the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre: Enslaved Man, Union Soldier, Voice, and Survivor of the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre*.

WHEREAS, it is most fitting to recognize Wiletta Ferdinand for her incredible writing career and commend her for her new book, *Jack Conrad and the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre: Enslaved Man, Union Soldier, Voice, and Survivor of the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre*; and

WHEREAS, Wiletta is a retired high school English teacher, mother of four, and grandmother of five who was born, raised, and educated in New Orleans; she attended Xavier University, Howard University, and the University of New Orleans; she recently received a master's degree in museum studies from Southern University at New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Wiletta possesses an affinity for the history and culture of New Orleans, and her books and blog reflect this passion; she also serves as her family's historian and organizes the family trees on both the maternal and paternal sides of her family; and

WHEREAS, though Wiletta grew up in New Orleans, she spent every summer with her grandmother in Thibodaux, Louisiana; her most recent historical work delves into the experience of her ancestor from Thibodaux, her great-great-grandfather Jack Conrad; and

WHEREAS, Jack Conrad was born into slavery in 1834 and won his freedom fighting as a soldier in the Union Army during the Civil War; he returned to his home in Thibodaux after the war to work as a sharecropper at a sugar cane plantation; Wiletta picks up his story as he is caught in the midst of the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Ferdinand's retelling of Jack Conrad's story reveals that his son, Grant Conrad, and brother-in-law were killed when white vigilante mobs stormed the black neighborhood of Back-a-town to end the resident sharecropper's strike for fair wages; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Ferdinand hopes to continue to shed light on a once forgotten act of viciousness that took place in Thibodaux, Louisiana; she is most deserving of the highest recognition for her pursuit of objective truth and the preservation of all history in her new book, *Jack Conrad and the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre: Enslaved Man, Union Soldier, Voice, and Survivor of the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre*.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend author Wiletta Ferdinand for her authorship of *Jack Conrad and the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre: Enslaved Man, Union Soldier, Voice, and Survivor of the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre*; does hereby further recognize her for preserving a tragic, but crucially relevant moment in Louisiana history; and does hereby extend sincere hopes that she continue her inspiring work so that the history of Louisiana can be preserved for the education of future generations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Wiletta Ferdinand.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES