

Committee: Rules

Date: 4-11-13

Committee Date: 4-25-13

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**RESOLUTION NO. 43-13**

**COUNCIL OF THE CHEROKEE NATION**

**A RESOLUTION HONORING JEFF STANCIL FOR HIS WORK AND DEDICATION TO PRESERVE CHEROKEE HISTORY AND CULTURE**

**WHEREAS**, the Cherokee Nation since time immemorial has exercised the sovereign rights of self-government in behalf of the Cherokee people; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Cherokee Nation is a federally recognized Indian Nation with a historic and continual government to government relationship with the United States of America; and,

**WHEREAS**, it is always important to recognize those who honor, preserve and promote our Cherokee history and culture; and,

**WHEREAS**, Jeff Stancil has worked for years to honor, preserve and promote Cherokee history and culture; and,

**WHEREAS**, part of Stancil's accomplishments include continuing to preserve and seek funding for the Vann House historical site where he added a museum, log cabins and was able to recover 85 acres of the original plantation land for the historic site along with several exhibits and pieces of furniture as well as restoring the Springplace cemetery (the Moravian's God's Acre) which was the first mission to the Cherokees and where our early chief, Charles Renatus Hicks is buried; and,

**WHEREAS**, Stancil is known as a great historian and mentor and a keeper of stories having a deep personal commitment in preserving Cherokee History at the Vann House and New Echota, where Stancil began his career in 1980 as a summer intern; and,

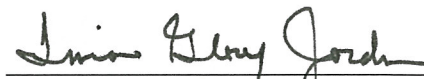
**WHEREAS**, Stancil recently retired and the Cherokee Nation should honor him for his great work in honoring, preserving, and promoting Cherokee history; and,

**WHEREAS**, Jeff Stancil should be declared a Friend of the Cherokee Nation; and, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHEROKEE NATION**, that the Cherokee Nation hereby honors Jeff Stancil for all the work he has done for twenty years in honoring, preserving and promoting Cherokee history and be declared a Friend of the Cherokee Nation.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Council of the Cherokee Nation at a duly called meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2013, having 16 members present, constituting a quorum, by the vote of 16 yea; 0 nay; 0 abstaining.



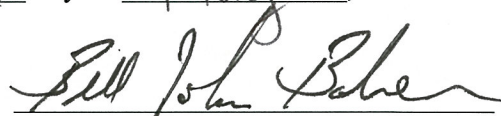
Tina Glory Jordan, Speaker  
Council of the Cherokee Nation

**ATTEST:**



Jodie Fishinhawk, Secretary  
Council of the Cherokee Nation

Approved and signed by the Principal Chief this 10 day of May, 2013.



Bill John Baker, Principal Chief  
Cherokee Nation

**ATTEST:**



S. Joe Crittenden, Deputy Principal Chief  
Cherokee Nation

## Related Photos

Carolyn Luffman, chairwoman of the Friends of the Vann House, hugs Jeff Stancil, who retired as site manager there Friday, after recognizing him for his years of work at a retirement reception on Sunday. (Misty Watson/The Daily Citizen)



People clap as Jeff Stancil enters his retirement party on Sunday at the Old Spring Place Methodist Church. Stancil retired Friday as site manager of the Chief Vann House. (Misty Watson/The Daily Citizen)



March 4, 2013

Retiring site manager Stancil says Vann House in good hands

Misty Watson [mistywatson@daltoncitizen.com](mailto:mistywatson@daltoncitizen.com) The Dalton Daily Citizen Mon Mar 04, 2013, 06:04 AM EST

SPRING PLACE — Jeff Stancil watched four years ago as state budget cuts left him with essentially no staff and very little resources to run the Chief Vann House, but he found ways to keep moving ahead.

“Everything was fine until what I call ‘black Wednesday’ in 2009,” said Stancil, who retired Friday as site manager of the property. “The state devastated us with cuts.”

Before that, things seemed promising for the state historic site. Under Stancil, the Vann House added a museum, log cabins, 85 acres of original plantation land, several exhibits and pieces of furniture and God’s Acre, a Moravian Mission cemetery. The Vann House is a two-story brick house built in 1804 by Cherokee Chief James Vann. The plantation once stretched over approximately 1,000 acres in what is now Murray County.

“It seemed like things were on a roll, then we hit a cliff,” Stancil said. “I had 11 good years, spectacular years, then four dark years at the Vann House.”

Even during the bleakest times, Stancil used resources to keep the Vann House open for tours four days a week and worked to acquire 24 more acres of land to the east of the house.

Sunday the Friends of the Vann House threw Stancil a surprise retirement reception where he was praised for his years of dedication to preserving Cherokee history at the Vann House and New Echota, where Stancil began his career in 1980 as a summer intern. State Rep. Rick Jasperse read a resolution recognizing Stancil for his “deep personal commitment” and for making the Vann House a “jewel of the state park system.”

“His entire career has been spent preserving our culture,” said Jack Baker, a member of the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council in Oklahoma. “The Cherokee Nation is appreciative of what Jeff’s done to preserve our history.”

The Moravians were missionaries who ran a school on the plantation before the Trail of Tears, the forced removal of the Cherokee in the mid-1830s. Stancil was also praised Sunday for helping preserve Moravian culture.

“There’s a lot to be said about a place,” said Anna Smith, a Moravian and Cherokee from North Carolina. “There’s no Indians living here anymore, but it has been a place for the Eastern Band and the Oklahoma Cherokees to come home to, and Moravians, too. I’ve been back here many times. Jeff’s such an ambassador to all those people.”

The Vann House, which was part of Fort Mountain State Park following the state cuts in 2009, is now a satellite site of New Echota. Julia Autry, who was a site interpreter for the Vann House until those cuts, will return as the site’s only full-time employee.

David Gomez, site manager of New Echota in Gordon County and now the Vann House as well, said Stancil is a “great historian and mentor.”

“When I need information, it’s not ‘go to the library,’” Gomez said. “It’s go to Jeff.”

Autry, who has worked with Stancil at both sites, joked Stancil has forgotten more Cherokee history than she has had the opportunity to learn.

“He’s definitely one of a kind,” she said. “He’s a keeper of stories and knows a great deal.”

Stancil said because of the way his retirement was set up, if he didn’t leave, he would have lost some of his retirement. He is moving back to his hometown of Jasper.

He said he feels better about his retirement knowing the site is in good hands.

“I didn’t want anything to happen to that house on my watch,” Stancil said. “I want the house to be there 1,000 years from now. It’s such a special house.”

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Local News

## **Longtime Vann House Superintendent Retires**



*(From left, Trail of Tears Association President Jack Baker, retiring Vann House Superintendent Jeff Stancil, and Alva Crowe of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians)*

A surprise reception was held Sunday, March 3 to recognize Jeff Stancil, who is retiring after years of managing one of Georgia's most important state historic sites, the Chief Vann House in Chatsworth.

"On behalf of the National Park Service National Trails office, I'm proud to have this opportunity to congratulate Jeff Stancil on his retirement and thank him for the years of service he has dedicated to the Chief Vann House Historic Site and other sites along the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail in Georgia," said Aaron Mahr, superintendent of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.

"Jeff has been there from the beginning of the development of the National Historic Trail and saw the Chief Vann House and the New Echota State Historic Site become some of the first certified sites on the trail back in the late 1990s. He's worked tirelessly to preserve these invaluable sites and has developed innovative and exciting ways to tell the cherished history they protect. We as Americans are better off for what he has done, and we in the trails community are grateful for his leadership and dedication. The last few decades have been difficult times for historic preservation and commemoration of our shared American history, particularly for those episodes in our history that are difficult for us to reconcile. It is perhaps Jeff's greatest legacy that through years of severe budget difficulties, when funding was scarce, when historic sites were prioritized low in state parks systems, and when limits were imposed on staffing to serve these sites and the public who came to visit them, Jeff was able to maintain an active program of preservation and education, and that the landscape surrounding the Vann House was preserved for this and future generations. Jeff, congratulations as you head into this new and exciting chapter in your life. Thanks for all your great work and good luck!"

The Stancils posted this on their Facebook page today: "The Stancils would like to send a big thank you to The Friends for putting on such a fantastic reception today. We were blown away and humbled by the food, cake, cards, gifts, and kind words. Thank you again for your continuous support and encouragement. We are so excited about the bright future ahead for The Chief Vann House!"

We at the Trail of Tears Association also thank Jeff for his years of service and wish him a very happy retirement.

Posted 4th March by [W. Jeff Bishop](#)

Labels: [NPS Vann House Friends of the Vann House](#)