


# PROCLAMATION



City and County of Denver

## Proclamation No. 20-1408 Honoring Lee Goodfriend and David Racine For Feeding Denver for 40 Years

**WHEREAS:** Lee Goodfriend and David Racine met while working together – she as a server and he as a bartender - at Zach’s, the quintessential 1970’s-era fern bar at E. Colfax Ave. and Humboldt St.; and

**WHEREAS:** The pair partnered with Dixon Staples, a chef at Apple Tree Shanty, and good friend David McCormick, beginning what was to be a lengthy career as restaurant owners by opening Goodfriends Restaurant, at E. Colfax Ave. and St. Paul St., on November 30, 1979; and

**WHEREAS:** The group extended their reach into Denver’s burgeoning restaurant scene by opening Racines Restaurant on December 27, 1983 at Speer Blvd. and Bannock St., followed by Dixons Downtown Grill, at 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Wazee St. in Lower Downtown, on February 27, 1997; and

**WHEREAS:** Racines was forced to close in June 2003 after the landlord exercised a demolition clause in the lease and the owners decided to never give that power to a landlord again, purchasing a site at 650 Sherman St.; and

**WHEREAS:** Joined by 80% of their kitchen staff, 30% of their servers and half the bar staff, though the restaurant was closed for a year, the “new” Racines opened in May 2004 as a 9200-sq.ft. haven with 275 indoor seats, a massive rectangular bar, 80-seat covered patio and an adjacent parking garage with 80 spaces, becoming one of Denver’s go-to locales for first dates, coming-out discussions, business deals large and small, after-theater parties, endless political confabs for high-level politicians and wanna-be candidates, family dinners and more; and

**WHEREAS:** The group made the difficult decision to close Goodfriends in May 2008 (turning the space over to local favorite Annie’s Café, who had lost their lease at 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Colorado Blvd.) and closed Dixons Downtown Grill when its lease expired in 2011 (Mr. Staples had passed away in September 2004); and

**WHEREAS:** Over 100 staff and management continued to work at Racines every day until the city-ordered closure of Denver’s restaurants on March 17 because of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS:** The tradition of hanging local art on the walls of all three restaurants began with the opening of Goodfriends and continued through to the closing of Racines; and

**WHEREAS:** The original Racines gave Project Angelheart its first dinner for delivery to those with chronic illness – a pan of lasagna, salad, bread and a brownie, and participated in that organization’s Dining Out for Life fundraiser each year until closing; and

**WHEREAS:** The Colorado Restaurant Association inducted the Lee Goodfriend and David Racine into the Colorado Foodservice Hall of Fame in 2016; and

**WHEREAS:** Lee Goodfriend and David Racine decided that after 40 years of feeding over 30-million meals to several generations of Denver families at Goodfriends, Racines and Dixons, they were ready to head off to new adventures and sold the Racines property earlier this year.

### **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY & COUNTY OF DENVER:**

**SECTION 1.** The Council of the City and County of Denver honor’s Lee Goodfriend and David Racine for their contribution to creating the feeling of community that makes our city such a special place to live, providing jobs for thousands of Denver residents and meals for millions over the last four decades.

**SECTION 2.** That the Clerk of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that copies be delivered to Lee Goodfriend and David Racine.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL November 23, 2020



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PRESIDENT