



**Proclamation No. 23-0741**

**A Proclamation Recognizing James Knapp upon his retirement from the Denver Gay Men’s Chorus**

**WHEREAS**, James Knapp is an international choral conductor, music educator and master vocal technician with a unique approach to activist choral singing who has taught choral workshops throughout the United States, Europe, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Singapore, and Thailand; and

**WHEREAS**, James has been a passionate campaigner for stylistic diversity within choral singing and comes with 20 years of experience with the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses; and

**WHEREAS**, through his work as the Artistic Director of the 100-voiced Gay Men’s Chorus of Houston, the founding director of the 60-voiced Bayou City Women’s Chorus, the director of Out Loud, the Colorado Springs Men’s Chorus, and the 120-voiced Denver Gay Men’s Chorus, and has led university, church and community choruses for over 41 years; and

**WHEREAS**, James is the recipient of a Certificate of Congressional Recognition from the United States House of Representatives for artistic excellence to further the cause of social justice and was most recently awarded the Denver Mayor’s Arts and Culture Impact Award; and

**WHEREAS**, his choruses have appeared at Carnegie Hall, regional conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, and performed concert tours throughout Britain, Europe and Russia and have performed with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, the Houston Symphony and Colorado Symphony; and

**WHEREAS**, he has been named Conductor Laureate of the Denver Gay Men’s Chorus and will be upon his retirement the Artistic Director Emeritus; and

**WHEREAS**, James’ first program with the Denver Gay Men’s Chorus included Miss Twinkleton’s School of Sensitive Boys and his last program included Lady Gaga, Beyonce and Denver’s own 11<sup>th</sup> season winner of RuPaul’s Drag Race, Yvie Oddly, with programs in between that included Motown, Queen, Abba, the Beatles and more; and

**WHEREAS** James deserves a wonderful retirement with his partner, Jesse Field, a lifetime of cooking for friends and family, attending musicals and concerts, as well as extravagant sailing trips off his beloved coast of Maine: and

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

Section 1. That the Council of the City and County of Denver honors James Knapp for his many contributions to the LGBTQ+ community and the entire city over his past ten years with the Denver Gay Men’s Chorus upon his retirement in July of 2023.

Section 2. That the Secretary of Council shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be transmitted to James Knapp.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL June 5, 2023

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT