

PROCLAMATION



City and County of Denver

Proclamation No. 22-1616 Recognizing The Extraordinary Career of Jeff Shoemaker

WHEREAS Jeff Shoemaker grew up in southeast Denver, attended Slavens Elementary School, and graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School; and

WHEREAS Jeff sang with TJ's famous MacGregor's Beggars, was the lead in two TJ theater productions and is an accomplished pianist and trumpet player, earning two degrees in music from the University of Colorado; and

WHEREAS In 1982, Jeff took over the reins of The Greenway Foundation as Executive Director; and

WHEREAS Jeff was elected by the neighborhoods where he grew up to subsequently serve in the Colorado State House of Representatives from 1987-1992; and

WHEREAS Jeff shepherded the launch of an environmental education program at The Greenway Foundation, now known as SPREE (South Platte River Environmental Education) in partnership with Denver Public Schools, creating a river-focused curriculum for students of all ages; and

WHEREAS The SPREE program has won more Excellence in Environmental Education Awards than any other environmental education program, and has served tens of thousands of Denver Public School kids; and

WHEREAS in 1995, against all odds, Jeff opened a one-of-a-kind gondola style boating operation known as Punt the Creek and later as Venice on the Creek that helped to bring positive activity and fun to a neglected industrial area on the Cherry Creek in an active flood channel; and

WHEREAS Jeff helped to reopen Slavens School - his alma mater - in 1996, generously volunteered to be the band teacher for five years in the mornings before he went to work at The Greenway Foundation, and was instrumental in raising private dollars to landscape the school's playfield; and

WHEREAS Jeff organized a cooperative effort between the City & County of Denver and the surrounding suburbs and water providers to increase the stream flow along the South Platte River below Chatfield Reservoir through the creation of an Environmental Pool; and

WHEREAS Jeff has recently been instrumental in bringing Federal funding to the South Platte River resulting in over \$350 million of federal funds from the United States Army Corps of Engineers; and

WHEREAS Jeff led the fight against adding orthophosphates to drinking water in Denver ultimately resulting in the creation of Denver Water's Lead Pipe Replacement Program; and

WHEREAS in November 2018, Jeff served on the Executive Committee of Denver's successful Ballot Measure 2A which secured a new permanent funding stream of over \$40 million a year for Denver's Parks and Waterways and, at the same time, led Ballot Measure 7G to eliminate the TABOR restrictions negatively affecting the now Mile High Flood District, resulting in an immediate \$40 Million increase in related funding for the District; and

WHEREAS during his 40 years as Executive Director at the Greenway Foundation, Jeff has partnered with countless public and private organizations to collectively create over \$500 million of environmental and recreational improvements along the South Platte River and its numerous tributaries throughout the Metro Denver Area; and

WHEREAS this collective investment over the last four decades is directly connected to the creation of over \$20 Billion of additional economic development and related benefit to the City and County of Denver; and

WHEREAS because of Jeff's leadership, Metro Denver's waterways are now home to over 100 miles of multi-use recreational trails, over 100 acres of parks and natural areas and over 100,000 Acre Feet of water quality improvements for our rivers, creeks and streams; and

WHEREAS this month marks the close to Jeff Shoemaker's inspiring 40-year career with The Greenway Foundation; and

WHEREAS from his first day as Executive Director in 1982 to his last, Jeff committed himself to the revitalization of the South Platte River Watershed and allow Denver's greatest natural resource to become, once again, its greatest amenity; and

WHEREAS Jeff continues to serve as the Executive Director of the Colorado Parks Foundation supporting the improvement and enhancement of "Parks across the State of Colorado", ensuring full access for all; and

WHEREAS now that his commitment to The Greenway Foundation will no longer require long nights and weekends, Jeff will be able to enjoy more time with his beautiful family – wife and best friend Nancy, daughters Courtney, Camille, Elise and Aimee along with granddaughters Esther, Prudence and Willa; and

WHEREAS Jeff will always be the tireless, relentless, passionate voice of the City's waterways and although stepping away from The Greenway Foundation there will always be an echo of Jeff's voice when we visit OUR River, reminding us to do no small things and always MSH

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

Sect. 1: That the Council of the City and County of Denver honors and thanks Jeff Shoemaker for his remarkable service to the City of Denver.

Sect 2: That the Secretary of Council shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation, and copies be delivered to Jeff Shoemaker.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL December 5, 2022

_____ PRESIDENT