



Proclamation No. 19-0810
Honoring the Memory of Colorado Journalist John Ensslin

WHEREAS, John Ensslin was an exemplary journalist whose long career centered on Colorado's people and politicians; and,

WHEREAS, John's passion for storytelling was fueled by his love for such classic and gritty figures as Damon Runyon and Jimmy Breslin, bringing him from the streets of New York to Denver where he became a quintessential part of the fabric that is Colorado journalism; and,

WHEREAS, John was a graduate of Columbia University in 1976, and in 1984 joined the reporting staff of the Rocky Mountain News to become a soldier in the city's Great Newspaper War between the News and The Denver Post, during which time his friendliness and soft-spoken manner endeared him to colleague and competitor alike; and,

WHEREAS, his numerous associates universally remember John Ensslin as an unfailingly persuasive advocate for excellence in their craft, as exhibited by his willingness to mentor and assist others, his lengthy resumé of professional activities promoting journalism well beyond his work in the newsroom, and his compassionate and friendly manner too often in short supply in a profession easily susceptible to cynicism; and,

WHEREAS, John and his wife, Denise, were together for 44 years and were known to spend every Christmas Eve having dinner at the Imperial Chinese Restaurant on South Broadway.

WHEREAS, John's associates are forever grateful for his energy and dedication to the Denver Press Club, of which he served twice as president, in 1995-96 and 2003-05, and where he was inducted into the club's Hall of Fame in 2007, and for which he was a co-founder of the club's nationally recognized annual Damon Runyon Award in 1994, which for a quarter century has honored some of the nation's best storytelling journalists including Jimmy Breslin, Mike Royko, Molly Ivins, Ed Bradley, Katie Couric and Bob Woodward; and,

WHEREAS, John's dedication to the practice of journalism included longtime involvement with the Society of Professional Journalists, for which he was elected national president in 2011-12; and,

WHEREAS, following the closure of the Rocky Mountain News in 2009, John remained a journalist, first at the Colorado Springs Gazette from 2009 to 2011, when he returned east to The Record of Bergen County, N.J., where from 1,700 miles away he remained an integral member of the Denver Press Club and frequently returned for the Damon Runyon Dinners, Hall of Fame banquets and other events; and,

WHEREAS, John returned to Denver early in 2019 to report for Colorado Politics, and remained a journalist until the day he passed away, Aug. 5, 2019, at the age of 65, leaving a gaping hole in the hearts of his many friends.

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 expresses its admiration for the life and career of John Ensslin, as an example of the best of this city's long tradition of great journalism.

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 a copy be transmitted to Denise Ensslin and to the Denver Press Club.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL AUGUST 12, 2019

PRESIDENT