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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 450

Offered February 16, 2009

Celebrating the life of Thomas A. Colley.

Patrons—Puckett; Delegates: Bowling and Crockett-Stark

WHEREAS, Thomas A. Colley of Bluefield, the executive editor of the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* and respected community volunteer, died on January 10, 2009; and

WHEREAS, a native of Garden, Virginia, Thomas Colley was born on May 18, 1941, to Leona Fletcher Colley and Thomas J. Colley; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Colley attended Garden High School and then proudly served in the United States Air Force for several years before attending San Antonio Junior College and the University of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Colley began his newspaper career with the *Auburn Evening Star* in Auburn, Indiana, before returning home to work at the *Sunset News-Observer* in Bluefield and the *Tazewell Free Press* in Richlands; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Colley then accepted a job as a copy editor with the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* in 1974 and became managing editor before he went to the *Charleston News & Courier* in South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, known for his journalistic integrity, Thomas Colley returned to the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* in 1985 as the executive editor, a position he held until his death; and

WHEREAS, an exemplary leader, Thomas Colley loved his community and region and worked diligently to bring improvements to Southwest Virginia; and

WHEREAS, believing that children were the future of the region, Thomas Colley was a member of the original Southern Coalfields Delegation of America's Promise that laid the groundwork for the region receiving the Top 100 Communities for Youth Designation; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Colley generously gave of his time and talents as chairman of the Community Christmas Tree, which provided Christmas gifts to children in need, and of the Literacy Committee of the Greater Bluefield Chamber of Commerce, which instituted a program known as the Reading Bee to encourage children and youth to read; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Colley also served as the organizer of the Chicory Square Concert Series, as a member of the Bluefield Rotary Club, and as the chairman of the board of directors of the Center for International Understanding; and

WHEREAS, an award-winning journalist, Thomas Colley won many awards of excellence from the West Virginia Press Association, the Adam R. Kelly Premier Journalist Award from the Press Association, the Distinguished Citizen Award from Bluefield's Riley-Vest Post No. 9 of the American Legion, and the Distinguished West Virginian Award from Governor Joe Manchin; and

WHEREAS, while Thomas Colley will be sorely missed by his loving wife of 39 years, Frances; their two sons Kevin and Eric and their families; and his numerous friends and admirers; he leaves behind not only a legacy of service but a brighter future for Bluefield and Southwest Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of a fine journalist, public servant, and outstanding Virginian, Thomas A. Colley; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Thomas A. Colley as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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