

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 28—Senators Raggio, Amodei, Care, Carlton, Cegavske, Coffin, Hardy, Mathews, McGinness, Neal, Nolan, O’Connell, Rawson, Rhoads, Schneider, Shaffer, Tiffany, Titus, Townsend, Washington and Wiener

Joint Sponsors: Assemblymen Gibbons, Anderson, Andonov, Angle, Arberry, Atkinson, Beers, Brown, Buckley, Carpenter, Chowning, Christensen, Claborn, Collins, Conklin, Geddes, Giunchigliani, Goicoechea, Goldwater, Grady, Griffin, Gustavson, Hardy, Hettrick, Horne, Knecht, Koivisto, Leslie, Mabey, Manendo, Marvel, McClain, McCleary, Mortenson, Ocegüera, Ohrenschall, Parks, Perkins, Pierce, Sherer, Weber and Williams

FILE NUMBER.....

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION—Memorializing journalist, distinguished writer and newspaper executive, Rollan Melton.

WHEREAS, The members of the Nevada Legislature join the family and friends of Rollan Melton in mourning the passing and remembering the life of the man who believed that the chief mission of any good newspaper should be to provide readers with the information necessary to understand their community’s past and present; and

WHEREAS, Born in Boise, Idaho, on July 24, 1931, Rollan Melton moved with his family from town to town and attended 18 different elementary schools by the time his mother settled in Fallon, Nevada, where Rollan attended high school, played high school football and got a job as an apprentice printer at the Fallon Standard; and

WHEREAS, The Fallon High School faculty voted to award Rollan a Harold’s Club college scholarship which gave him the opportunity to attend the University of Nevada, Reno, where he continued the dual disciplines of football and journalism that would set him on a course for the remainder of his life; and

WHEREAS, After his graduation from the University of Nevada, Reno, in 1955, Rollan spent 2 years in the United States Army, during which he was appointed Public Information Officer of the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, and was asked to coach the Fort’s football team; and

WHEREAS, Following his discharge from the Army, Rollan Melton joined the *Reno Evening Gazette* and became its Sports Editor in 1957, its Promotion Leader following an attempted work stoppage at the newspaper, its Editor by the age of 32 and, with just

9 years in the company, the Publisher of both the *Reno Evening Gazette* and the *Nevada State Journal* in 1966; and

WHEREAS, Rollan's seemingly insatiable appetite for knowledge and his ability to learn from everyone with whom he worked spurred his career in the world of journalism which continued when Rollan became Vice President of the Speidel Newspaper Group in 1969, was chosen its President just 3 years later, and after Speidel merged with the Gannett newspaper chain in 1977, was named Senior Vice President of Gannett's Western Division and a Gannett board member; and

WHEREAS, After only 2 years, Rollan resigned his vice-presidency and returned to Reno to write his popular column in the *Reno Gazette-Journal* because, as he expressed it in the preface to his book *Nevadans*, he "yearned to go back to the people and the telling of their stories"; and

WHEREAS, During his 24 years as a columnist for the *Reno-Gazette Journal*, Rollan Melton used his wit and love of the people of Nevada to paint story pictures which Robert Laxalt called "a mosaic of the personality, character and attitudes of the true Nevadan" that could only be written by someone "with sensitivity to the state's people"; and

WHEREAS, Some of Rollan Melton's nearly 4,000 newspaper columns are presented again in his books, *Nevadans*, and *101 Nevada Columns*, and these books, along with his autobiographical *Sonny's Story: A Journalist's Memoir*, that relates an American success story of almost mythic proportions, validate his membership in the Nevada Writers' Hall of Fame, which named him a 2001 Honoree; and

WHEREAS, Named Distinguished Nevadan in 1979 and inducted into the Nevada Newspaper Hall of Fame in 1998, Rollan Melton will also be remembered for his involvement in philanthropic organizations, which included his generous support of and deep interest in the University of Nevada Oral History Program; and

WHEREAS, Rollan Melton is survived by his wife Marilyn, his sons, Royle, Wayne and Kevin, his daughter, Emelie Williams, and his grandchildren; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, THE ASSEMBLY CONCURRING, That the members of the 72nd Session of the Nevada Legislature extend their heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of Rollan Melton; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Rollan Melton Elementary School, which opened in northwest Reno in the fall of 2002, and the Rollan D. Melton Post Office Building, which was named by Public Law 107-267, passed on October 30, 2002, will remind Nevadans of the man who enriched lives with his compassionate and humorous

stories of the legends and the unknowns of this state; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Rollan Melton's life, in his own words "an against-all-odds trip, from ragamuffin little kid to director on the governing board of one of the premier media corporations of all time," will encourage everyone who knew him, personally or through his writing, to grow continually toward the potential that is available through preparation and hard work; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to his loving wife, Marilyn Melton.