

RESOLUTION NO.: R08-60

IN RECOGNITION OF RORY ROOT

WHEREAS, Rory Root, the owner of Berkeley book store, *Comic Relief*, died on Monday, May 19, 2008 at the age of 50; and

WHEREAS, Rory, as a child, read his way through all of the then-tiny Rockridge (Oakland Public Library) branch collection, beginning with the children's books and through his adulthood into the adult books; and

WHEREAS, Rory widely discussed his devotion to public libraries and often expressed his appreciation for the branch librarian at Rockridge who steered his reading and sent him discarded science-fiction titles when he moved to the rural Sierras (he discovered interlibrary loaning at an age when most kids don't appreciate it); and

WHEREAS, over the past 20 years Rory conducted business with public and school libraries in terms of comics and graphic novels, along with stocking and selling professional library science books relevant to the format and its genres at this store; and

WHEREAS, Rory demonstrated his commitment to diversity by providing speakers, programs, stock selections and promoting new talent that included LGBT, African-American, Asian and Asian-American, European, and religious creators and books for all ages; and

WHEREAS, Rory always supported local talent, such as Jason Shiga and Ariel Schrag, whose comics are now published by a mainstream publisher that is gracing her with a 10-year anniversary republication of her comics first stocked by Rory when Ariel was only a student at Berkeley High School; and

WHEREAS, Rory hired locally and diversely, including the children of at least three Berkeley Public Library staff members and former Berkeley Public Library student workers; and

WHEREAS, Rory was a mentor to many, a model business owner, a community member, an asset to the booksellers' community, and an active member of the Downtown Berkeley Association and the downtown Berkeley community; and

WHEREAS, Rory always saw the library as the place where readers are created and as a way to ensure that booksellers will have new generations of customers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Library Trustees of the City of Berkeley to recognize Rory Root for his contributions to the Berkeley Public Library and the Berkeley community.