

Former Mayor Quigg Newton Dies

Young Denver native and Yale University graduate joined city as mayor in late 40s and modernized city affairs.



APRIL 04, 2003 -- Former Denver Mayor Quigg Newton passed away Friday morning at Denver Health Medical Center, where he had been admitted Wednesday after falling and then suffering cardiac arrest. He was 91.

Mayor Wellington Webb and First Lady Wilma Webb expressed their deepest sympathy to the Newton family. "I know Wilma and I speak on behalf of all of Denver in offering our deepest sympathy to Quigg Newton's family and in letting them know we have lost a great friend," Mayor Webb said.

"Quigg Newton's vision, dedication and compassion, grounded in values of excellence and fairness, helped shape Denver into the great city we have today," Mayor Webb said. "Quigg's gentle and self-deprecating manner made him a delight to be with. He was always more interested in hearing what others had to say than to talk about himself."

"Quigg made things easier for the people...from Denver's innovative pedestrian crossing system to the Agency for Human Rights," Mayor Webb noted. "He was devoted to his family, his friendships and to the city of Denver. We will miss his leadership, his wisdom and his wonderful sense of humor. Rest in peace, Quigg."

Mayor Webb ordered city flags lowered to half-mast to honor Newton who was Denver's youngest mayor, serving from 1947 to 1955.

During his tenure, Mayor Newton modernized the city by creating a planning office along with the city's first budget office. He opened the city's purchases and contracts for competitive bids and instituted the Career Service Authority to de-politicize the city's hiring practices.

In 1947, Mayor Newton commissioned a report on race relations in Denver that recommended the creation of a Mayor's Committee on Human Relations, later re-named the Agency for Human Rights and Community Relations.

Mayor Newton built a new library, a new coliseum for the National Western Stock Show, additions to the sewage disposal plant, and the Museum of Natural History, now named the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. He also expanded Stapleton Airport and added a sports arena to the Auditorium Theatre. He split the Department of Health and Charities into two new agencies: Denver Health and Hospitals (now called Denver Health Medical Center) and Welfare (now called the Denver Human Services Department.) He also helped construct 2,300 public housing units.

After two terms as mayor, he served as president of the University of Colorado from from 1956 to 1963.

Last year, Denver City Council approved Mayor Webb's request to re-name Denver's

Auditorium Theatre as the Quigg Newton Municipal Auditorium.

“I’m just so pleased he lived to see the Auditorium named in his honor,” Mayor Webb said.

A private family service will be held. The family prefers that, instead of flowers, memorial contributions be made to the University of Colorado Foundation for the Quigg and Virginia Newton Endowed Chair in Leadership, the University of Denver Graduate School of International Studies, or a charity of your choice.

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