

To: Mayor and City Council Members

Date: July 6, 2009

Re: ADA Tribute — JULY 27, 2010 — UNVEILING  
20TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF ADA

Proposal for ADA Tribute:



To serve as an inspiration and provide a visual reflection, not only for persons with disabilities, but also to the general community as a whole. Serves as an awareness that “everyone” can be a contributing member to their community no matter what circumstances and challenges individuals face on a daily basis.

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Scotty Backens was chosen for this project as an example of what ADA celebrates. Scotty was an individual with a deteriorating disability; however that did not stop his desire to live each day to the fullest. He had a positive attitude, saw the best in people, and was an active and integral part of the Rapid City area for his entire life. Citizens who knew Scotty would often see him navigating his wheelchair on the city streets throughout the day and evening hours. Scotty faced daily challenges many of us can only imagine, however his daily routine always involved “reaching out” to the community. He remained focused on his “Abilities” and his enthusiasm and optimistic attitude would serve as an inspiration to others.

Scotty Backens was active in the following areas:

- Board Member-Rapid City Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities with numerous mayors to improve accessibility and inclusion,
- enjoyed working out and visiting community members at the YMCA,
- visiting the Club for Boys exchanging stories and creating an awareness for youth not to be afraid of a person with a disability,
- participating in Hills Alive Festival, (one of the key factors in determining the Memorial location),
- Board Member for Western Resources for dis-ABLED Independence (currently there is an annual golf tournament in his memory),
- Participant-Meeting the Need -camping for people with special needs,
- Participant-Ski for Light-providing winter and summer recreational opportunities for persons with visual, mental, and physical disabilities.

We all need a portion of Scotty's inspiration and optimism to continue our zest for life. Take each new day as a unique challenge and create more opportunities.