

## A MEMORIAL RESOLUTION HONORING CHARLES BENTON

Whereas American publishing lost a pioneer of educational media distribution;

Whereas American libraries lost an outstanding champion with the death of Charles Benton on April 29, 2015;

Whereas in 1953, upon his graduation from Yale University, he began his career in the Chicago office of the Encyclopedia Britannica, as production assistant in the educational films division, as a sales representative to schools and libraries in Illinois, and as President of Encyclopedia Britannica Films (1964-1966);

Whereas in 1966 he formed the nonprofit Fund for Media Research to study the educational uses of media; in 1967 he purchased the film distribution company Films Inc. from Encyclopedia Britannica, and served as its president from 1968 to 1997, overseeing the distribution of 16mm films of Hollywood cinema to schools, libraries, and other institutions; and he created Public Media Inc., including Films Inc., the Home Vision video label to distribute classic and independent films on VHS and DVD; and other units to sell and distribute video recordings for business management and training, fine and performing arts, and special interest;

Whereas in 1978 President Jimmy Carter appointed him Chairman of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science and as Chairman of the first White House Conference on Library and Information Services in 1979, to which he brought his perspective on media and networked communications;

Whereas, he created the Benton Foundation in 1981 to foster civic engagement so that people can improve their lives and the lives of their families and ultimately improve their communities;

Whereas in 1997 President Bill Clinton appointed him as a member of the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Public Interest Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters;

Whereas, he was an instrumental advisor on the E-rate program (Universal Service) to help schools and libraries connect to the Internet, improve broadband access, and provide telecommunications at affordable rates; and

Whereas in 2012 President Barack Obama appointed him to serve on the National Museum and Library Services Board; now, therefore, be it

## A MEMORIAL RESOLUTION HONORING CHARLES BENTON/2

*Resolved*, that the American Library Association, on behalf of its members:

1. recognizes the contribution of Charles Benton to the public forum, to libraries, to networked communications, and to American society; and
2. extends its condolences to his family.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association  
Tuesday, June 30, 2015, in San Francisco, California



Keith Michael Fiels  
Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council