

Memorial Resolution

Honorable Harold M. Wimberly, Jr.
January 7, 1943 – January 24, 2020

June 2021

Knox County Circuit Judge Harold Wimberly, Jr. died on January 24, 2020. He is survived by his loving wife, Sarah, and their wonderful son, Chris Wimberly, who is a lawyer in Knoxville.

Judge Wimberly was a graduate of West High School in Knoxville and a proud graduate of the University of Tennessee and the University of Tennessee College of Law. In May of 1963, as a sophomore physics major, he was one of four UT students who appeared on the popular television quiz show, the GE College Bowl which was broadcast from the Ed Sullivan Theatre in New York City. The UT team won four consecutive matches before losing on the last televised episode of the program.

In addition to being known as a scholar, Judge Wimberly was a lover of music and played the piano and the organ. He was a world traveler and an accomplished photographer. He particularly loved unusual photo opportunities such as taking photos while “standing on a street corner in Winslow Arizona”. He loved using traditional film and wet process photo paper. His photos have been featured at Thompson Photo Products, The District Gallery and Litton’s Restaurant. He was a regular attendee of the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas and became life-long friends with many of the rodeo participants. Judge Wimberly was a long-time member of a bowling league and enjoyed late afternoon walks on the trails at Lakeshore Park with friends. He was a passionate Elvis fan and would proudly display his collection of Elvis paraphernalia in his office during the Christmas holiday season.

Judge Wimberly had a long history of service to his community. Five years after graduating from law school, he was first elected to serve as a General Sessions Judge in Knox County. He served in that capacity from 1974-1987. In

1987, he was appointed by Gov. Ned McWherter to the Knox County Circuit Court. Judge Wimberly served as a circuit court judge until 2014, serving a total of forty years on the bench in Knox County. In November of 2013, he received the Bill Williams service Award for outstanding achievement in the area of adoption services. Judge Wimberly presided over 584 adoptions which led to more than 1000 children being placed in their forever homes. He also served as a board member for the Tennessee Valley Fair; a past chair of the Knoxville Opera Board and, he delighted in serving as a “judge” for the Knoxville Area Transit System bus ROADeo competition.

Judge Wimberly was known for his intellect and his unusual sense of humor. He treated lawyers and litigants with dignity and respect. When asked what he liked most about being a judge, Wimberly never hesitated to say that “it is all about the people” and there was never any question that he enjoyed being on the bench, because it gave him the opportunity to help people.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tennessee Judicial Conference that the foregoing memorial resolution in honor of our friend and colleague, HAROLD M. WIMBERLY, JR. be entered on the minutes of the Conference and published accordingly; and **BE IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that** a copy of this memorial resolution be furnished to his family.

Respectfully submitted this 16th day of June 2021 in Memphis, Tennessee at the Annual Meeting of the Tennessee Judicial Conference.

Deborah C. Stevens
Circuit Court Judge
Sixth Judicial District for the
State of Tennessee