

Memorial Resolution

HONORABLE WILLIAM MADISON DENDER, SR.

1929 - 2017

Judge William Madison Dender Sr. was an accomplished attorney from Etowah, McMinn County, Tennessee. He received his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Tennessee and for sixty-five years, he represented the interests of the citizens of the town he loved. Later in his career, he served as a Circuit Court Judge for one term, traveling a four-county circuit. He was described as “always cooperative” by the Clerk’s Office. He was appointed by the Chief Justice of Tennessee as Senior Judge, the third ever. In that capacity, he heard cases on all judicial levels. Judge Dender was very proud of his position and loved to be called “Judge.” He accepted that title with honor and stood for fairness and integrity in all that he did.

He met his dear wife Nancy Cantrell Dender in kindergarten. They remained inseparable until her passing in 2013. He was a devoted father of five sons and grandfather to nine grandchildren. He highly valued his family life and enjoyed the moments be they grand or simple. From fresh tomato sandwiches at the river to touring the United States in a Winnebago, he loved it all. He and the boys were always involved in something and everything.

Bill Dender was a warm friend to all that knew him, a trusted confidant, a supporter, a mentor, and an inspirer. He was a visionary and always interested in tomorrow. He touched many lives because of his genuine nature and the support

and encouragement he gave to others. He was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church and numerous professional, civic and charitable organizations.

Judge Dender appreciated the progress and precision of Ferraris and Lear Jets. The running joke was that after all the boys graduated college, he was going to buy a Ferrari. About that time, he and Nancy were in Atlanta admiring Ferraris and all the way home he told her why he did not need one. Nancy lovingly told him “Bill, if you don’t buy that Ferrari right now, I will never speak to you again.” He quickly acquiesced and always enjoyed that car. As recently as one month before his death he said “You know if I ever hit another good lick I’d have to think hard about a Lear.”

Judge Dender was a colorful and respected judge. He was a father to his boys, like no other. He was a dedicated husband that God paired to his true sweetheart. He believed in success and worked to achieve it.

Judge Dender passed away December 5, 2017 at the age of 88. He is survived by his sons, four daughter-in-laws, and nine grandchildren.

Judge Dender served McMinn, Monroe, Bradley and Polk Counties, and the State of Tennessee with honor and distinction. He is fondly remembered. He presided over thousands of cases including some which gained national attention. Throughout all, he was respected as one who carefully considered both sides of an issue, displayed fairness, and acted with integrity.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tennessee Judicial Conference that by these proceedings we recognize and memorialize the life and service of our departed friend and colleague;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Tennessee Judicial Conference that the foregoing Memorial Resolution be entered on the minutes of this conference, that a copy be furnished to West for publication in Tennessee Decisions and that copies of this tribute and resolution be furnished to his family.

Respectfully submitted this 13th day of June, 2018.

Sandra N. C. Donaghy
Criminal Court Judge, 10th Judicial District