

Memorial Resolution

THE HONORABLE DONN ALAN SOUTHERN

JUNE 14, 2023

Judge Donn Alan Southern, retired Probate Court Judge for the 30th Judicial District, passed away peacefully on Thursday, November 9, 2021 at the age of 87. Donn was born in Knoxville, Tennessee on February 4, 1934, to the late Mary Lee Bowling Southern and Martin Holmes Southern and was the second of six children. He was in the last graduating class from Knoxville High School. Following high school, he attended the University of Tennessee which he kept in his heart all his life. He became a member of the Kappa Sigma fraternity before graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1955 and his Doctor of Jurisprudence in 1957. He graduated from law school first in his class and was selected to the Order of the Coif upon graduation.

He moved to Memphis and began the practice of law from 1958 until 1989 when he was appointed a judge in the Probate Court of Shelby County. He served as the judge of that court for 17 ½ years during which time he served two terms as the Presiding Judge and was a recipient of the Outstanding Jurist Award by the Young Lawyers Association. Judge Southern was consistently ranked among the best judges in a poll of Memphis lawyers. He was a frequent speaker to legal and community groups on probate matters. He continued his practice of law after leaving the bench.

He practiced law in Memphis with the firms of Buchignani, Greener, and Southern and with Bruce, Southern, Brandon, and Regan. He was active in the Memphis Bar Association, serving two terms on the board of directors and serving on its board of delegates. Judge Southern held every office in the Memphis Bar Association

including president in 1982, and was part of a group that began offering legal services to those in need. That effort later resulted in the formation of Memphis Area Legal Services, which currently still serves the citizens of Memphis and Shelby County. His Honor received the Sam A. Myar Jr. Memorial Award in 1975 "In recognition of outstanding personal service to the Memphis and Shelby County legal profession and community".

Judge Southern was also a member of the American Bar Foundation, the Tennessee Bar Foundation and the Memphis Bar Foundation. He was one of the original members of a group in 1968 that offered legal services to the poor that evolved into Memphis Area Legal Services, Inc.

As a U.S. Army veteran, he attained the rank of Major before retiring after 20 years of active and reserve service. He was a member of Idlewild Presbyterian Church for 26 years and a long-time Shady Grove Presbyterian Church member, both of which he served as an elder. He served his fellow citizens in a variety of organizations including English-Speaking Union serving as president, Memphis Rotary Club, The Salvation Army, Dismas House, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and was chosen as a Pillar of Excellence by the University of Memphis. He was instrumental in bringing a copy of the Magna Carta to Memphis where it was displayed at the Pink Palace Museum.

He was an avid tennis player, playing weekly with a group who later in life met regularly to discuss the good old days.

Judge Southern is survived by his wife of 59 ½ years, Faye MacGregor Southern, his daughter Pamela Gaye Southern MacNair (Kevin) and son Todd Fuller Southern (Lori) and his beloved grandchildren, Parke Alan MacNair and Elisabeth Cecile Southern. He is also survived by his best friend and brother Robert Neil

Southern (Arlene). He is predeceased by sisters Nancy Greene and Mary Ann Webb and ,brother, Thomas Martin Southern ,and many nieces and nephews.

He was a respected husband, father, grandfather and friend throughout his life.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we honor the life, work, and legacy of our dearly departed colleague, JUDGE DONN ALAN SOUTHERN, by the Tennessee Judicial Conference that this Memorial Resolution be entered on the minutes of this conference, that a copy be furnished to West Publishing Company for publication in Tennessee Decisions, and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this tribute and resolution be furnished to his family.