

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION FOR WILLIAM BILLINGTON BRUCE

William Billington Bruce (Bill), 75, passed away on October 12, 2018. He was born in Nashville on June 23, 1943, to Harry and Henrietta Bruce. He was the beloved husband of Lois Helms Bruce, and the adored father of William Bruce Jr.

Bill enjoyed practicing law in Nashville for thirty-nine years. He had a genuine interest in and compassion for those who were poor or disadvantaged. He was a tireless advocate for his clients, whom he treated with respect. Many clients became his friends. Bill sometimes represented multiple members of the same family, and when one of them would come in to see him, he would ask about their parents, children, or brothers and sisters if he knew them.

Bill also admired and respected the numerous attorneys he met and befriended during his career. At the courthouse, he was known for his friendly disposition. He always had a smile and went out of his way to speak to people.

Bill attended grade school at Christ the King. In 1961, he graduated from Father Ryan High School where he gained many lifelong friends. In 1966, he graduated from Vanderbilt University. He then entered the United States Air Force to serve his country during the Vietnam War. He was stationed at Westover Air Force Base in Massachusetts and honorably discharged. In 1973, Bill graduated in the top third of his class at The University of Tennessee College of Law.

Through hard work and an uncommon drive, Bill earned all that he was able to accomplish in his life. After his father Harry passed away when Bill was nine years old, he began delivering newspapers in Green Hills. He held that job throughout college to help pay for expenses at home and for his education. When Bill enrolled at Vanderbilt, he took on the additional jobs of student manager of the varsity football and baseball teams so that he would have enough money to pay for his tuition and school expenses. He also played on the Vanderbilt baseball team.

A 1965 article in the *Nashville Banner* celebrated Bill's achievement of working his way through Vanderbilt to earn a degree. The article outlined a typical day for him: deliver newspapers between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m.; study between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m.; attend classes between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m.; deliver newspapers between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.; attend football practice between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.; and study between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. The article noted that Bill averaged about five hours of sleep each night.

After graduating from law school, Bill returned to Nashville where he successfully built his own law practice that included criminal defense and civil litigation. He had many colleagues over the course of his career who became his good friends, including Cleve Weathers, Mark Baugh, and Branch Henard. Cleve and Bill were colleagues for nearly four decades.

Five years after law school, Bill was appointed to represent a defendant in a capital case, and he took pride in saving his client from the death penalty. As a member of the Criminal Justice Act Panel, Bill often represented indigent defendants in federal court and was once named the Panel Lawyer of the Year. He was an original board member of Oasis House in Nashville, an

organization established to serve troubled and runaway youths. He served on the board for fourteen years. Bill was an elected member of the Davidson County Democratic Executive Committee from 1982 to 1990. He served as its chairman from 1986 to 1988.

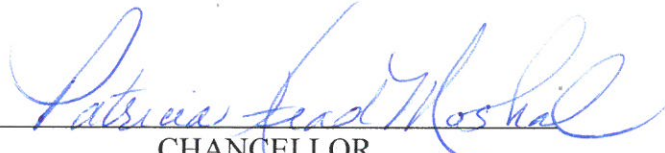
Bill was an avid fan of the Nashville Predators and of the Vanderbilt Commodores, especially the football and baseball teams. He was intellectually curious, had an impressive understanding of world affairs, and was a voracious reader with a penchant for William Faulkner and U.S. History.

Bill was a kind and compassionate man who cared about others. More than anything, he loved his family. He will be dearly missed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Nashville Bar Association, that we honor the life and work of Bill Bruce and mourn his passing. We express our profound appreciation for his friendship and for his contributions to his clients and the legal profession.

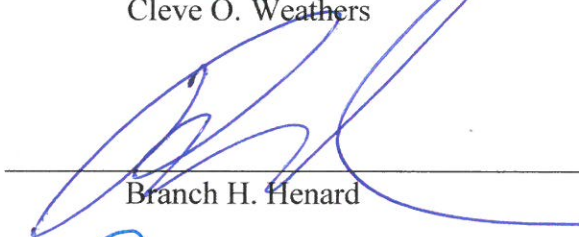
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Memorial Resolutions be placed in the permanent records of the Chancery Court of Davidson County, Tennessee, and that copies be furnished to his wife, Lois Bruce, and to his son, William Bruce.


This 23rd day of May, 2019.


CHANCELLOR

Approved for Entry:


Cleve O. Weathers


Branch H. Henard


Mark A. Baugh