

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE
ALLEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

RONALD E. JAMES

WHEREAS, we are here to pay our respects to the memory of our deceased colleague and friend, Ronald James, who died on September 3, 2012 at the age of 58 after a valiant and inspiring struggle with prostate cancer.

Ron was a longtime resident of Northeast Indiana having graduated from Columbia City Joint High School in 1972. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Indiana University, Bloomington, in 1976. He obtained a Juris Doctor degree from Indiana University School of Law in Bloomington in 1979, earning an American Jurisprudence Award for his study of Contracts.

Upon graduation from Indiana University School of Law Ron served as a law clerk for the Allen County Superior Court. After his clerkship Ron joined the law firm of Sowers and Benson as an Associate Attorney. In 1983 he was one of the founding partners of the law firm Benson, Pantello, Morris and James later changed to Benson, Pantello, Morris, James and Logan. Ron remained a partner until his death, a period of 29 years.

Ron's commitment to the law was evident as was known for his ability to research and draft effective legal arguments, particularly appellate matters. On several occasions Ron accomplished change in Indiana and Federal laws which are still used regarding those particular points, an accomplishment few lawyers achieve even once.

Ron's research and writing abilities were often outdone only by his desire to wait until the last minute to complete them. All of the attorneys and staff who served with him over the years can tell stories of everyone working late into the night in order to timely file one of his well-written briefs. During these times, and occasionally others, Ron would put on display a short and

explosive temper momentarily forgetting who it was that had waited for the last minute. However, following his tirades Ron was always repentant.

Ron's law partners, Bob Benson, Mark Pantello, Jack Morris and Tim Logan and really, all who knew Ron, knew him to be a man of his convictions whether it was with regard to the law; the environment; his friends; and, most importantly, his commitment to his faith and his wife and children.

Ron was not just vocal about causes but was a man who lived out his convictions. Ron was committed to saving our environment but was never a person to just give it lip service. Ron lived what he believed. His in-ground home was specially designed by him to be environmentally friendly. He established a multi-acre wetland on his property because he believed in the need for the establishment of wetlands. He served the State of Indiana for many years as the Executive Director of the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission. He was a founding member of The Little River Wetlands Project and participated in numerous other organizations with the goal of promoting the preservation of the environment. Ron knew we are to be good stewards of God's creation and he did his part.

Ron also lived out his commitments in his personal life. Upon proposing to and then marrying his wife, MaryAnn, Ron became dedicated to being the best husband he could be; and, as sons Nate and Luke joined their family, he committed to being the best father he could be. During his relationship with his wife, MaryAnn, Ron also grew in the depth of and commitment to his faith.

Unknown to most, Ron served as a tutor in the Fort Wayne Community Schools at Lakeside Middle School for 24 years. The fact most did not know of this commitment demonstrates Ron did not do it for the attention; Ron did it because he wanted to help others.

Ron's partners also express their awe at the way in which Ron managed to stay upbeat and positive during his fight with his

final illness. Although the statistical odds were not in his favor Ron chose to live with hope and faith. He inspired all who knew him with the fullness of his faith. Ron was content with God's will and never waivered in that faith even when he came to know it was not God's will for him to stay in this life any longer. Ron knew this world was not his eternal home and he was at peace in the belief that he and MaryAnn were equal in this belief. They both knew they had been joined together by God for eternity. At no time during his illness including his final days did Ron express any self pity or anger at God. We can all wish we could handle our daily struggles as well as Ron handled the circumstances of his final illness.

Overall, it can be said Ron lived his life as he believed he was supposed to live. He was consistent in his words and actions. He was a good friend, a good lawyer and law partner; a good steward of the Earth God gave him; a great husband and father; and, a firm believer in God. Therefore, we who remain on this Earth will suffer because we must continue to live in this world without Ron; however, it is certain Ron would want us to commit to follow his example and do our best to make sure our lives equal or exceed our words. Finally, we affirm that although we who are left behind suffer for this loss we also know it is a time of celebration because Ron has truly gone home. So we say, well done Ron, you lived a life that left its mark on all of us. We thank you as we also say goodbye for now.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Allen County Bar Association gives public expression of sorrow upon this, the occasion of the remembrance of the life of Ronald James.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be unanimously adopted by these present upon this occasion; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be transmitted by the Allen County Bar Association to the members of the Ronald James family; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be spread of Record in the permanent records of the Federal and State courts of Allen County, Indiana, to evidence the respect and admiration of the members of the Bench and Bar for their departed friend and colleague, Ronald James.

Dated this 18th day of January, 2012

THE ALLEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

By: Stephen P. Rademaker
Stephen P. Rademaker, President

By: Stanley A. Levine
The Honorable Stanley A. Levine
Judge, Allen Superior Court

