

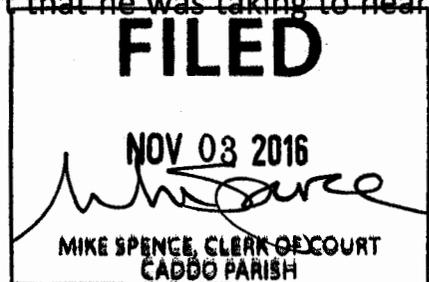
MEMORIAL FOR
HONORABLE JOHN RICHARD BALLARD
PRESENTED AT THE MEMORIAL AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY
HELD IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
NOVEMBER 3, 2016
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION
BY Justice Jeffrey P. Victory

Judge John Richard Ballard was born in Shreveport, LA on Oct. 9, 1939 and died Oct. 10, 2015. He is survived by his wife of fifty-three years, Sue Willis Ballard, his son, David, and David's wife, Aimee. He leaves three grandchildren, Will, Cole, and Annie Ballard; a brother, Peter Ballard and his wife Linda; his sister-in-law, Karen Durham and her husband, Ed; his brother-in-law Tom Willis and his wife Wendy.

John grew up in the North Caddo area and graduated from North Caddo High School, LSU, and LSU Law School. He served as an officer in the U.S. Army in the Vietnam War. Later, he moved to Shreveport and opened his law practice. He was first elected to the judiciary as a Shreveport City Judge and later was elected to the First Judicial District Court. John served as a district judge until 1991, when he retired from office and began mediating and chairing medical review panels.

John and I attended Broadmoor Baptist Church together, where he was a deacon. He also endeared himself to my wife's family. He taught her father's Sunday School class for many years, and her father, Bill Clark, also an attorney, had great respect and affection for him. Even after Mr. Clark's death, John and Sue made sure that my mother-in-law was picked up and brought to the annual Christmas parties held at their home.

John and I first became friends while serving together on the First Judicial District Court along with Charles Lindsay, Gene Bryson, and others. One of my favorite memories has to do with a survey of lawyers conducted by the Shreveport *Journal*, the afternoon paper of the day, concerning their evaluations of the sitting district court judges. It was called "Judging the Judges" and was published with great fanfare. John ranked high in the estimation of the local attorneys who practiced before him for fairness and integrity and was awarded an excellent score. In the comments section, however, one attorney noted that John occasionally got a little preachy when sentencing and should avoid being so religious. The next morning, John informed the court that he was taking to heart

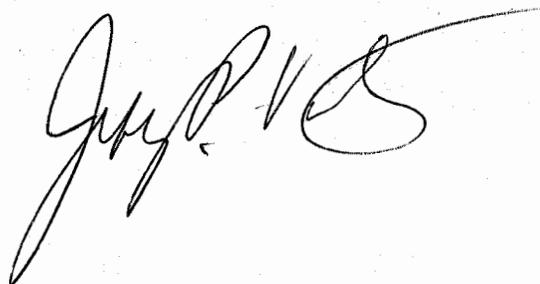


the admonition, and the next time court opened he would be seated with "a six-pack on one side and a broad on the other."

In addition to serving the judiciary with honor, John was a dependable friend to me and many others. I remember one instance in particular. I had been presiding over a particularly contentious and public criminal trial which ran late one afternoon. I called home to let my wife know that I would be delayed, but was leaving the courthouse and should be home right away. I don't remember the details—I'm sure it was something very important!—but I stopped at my desk and lost track of the time. After a couple of hours, Nancy began to wonder and then worry. She couldn't get me on the phone—this was in the days before everyone had a cell—and began to imagine that I might have been waylaid coming out of the courthouse by angry members of the defendant's family. She didn't hesitate to call two of my best friends, John Ballard and Wayne Curtis, to see if they could go downtown and find me. And so, as I was actually leaving the courthouse after 9:00 at night, I looked up and there was John heading up the sidewalk to the sheriff's entrance. I probably said, "John, what are you doing here so late?" I wish I could remember what he said—I'm sure it was priceless—but it certainly warms your heart to know you have a friend like that.

John was not only dependable, he truly enjoyed time spent with others. I benefited from his friendship by being included in hunting trips from time to time in North Caddo. On my first deer hunting trip with him, I was placed in a stand close to a feeding dispenser. Shortly after I climbed up, an old mule ambled into the clearing and began eating from the food intended for the deer. Three hours later when the time came for us to leave, he was still there, still eating. As the hunters regrouped, John stood talking to a farmer who was a friend of his father's when the mule wandered up. We laughed about his taste for deer feed and the fact that no one had had any luck that day. The landowner unexpectedly said to John, "Please, just shoot him! All he does is damage, and he gets into trouble all day!" John, ever the obliging friend, thereby bagged the only trophy that day.

John brought honor to the practice of law and the judiciary. He was traditional without being stuffy and balanced his strong work ethic with a healthy love of friends and family. He was a mentor and friend to me and many others. As the Scripture John loved so much states, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor than silver and gold." (Proverbs 22:1-2). John Ballard leaves behind a good name.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Ballard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.