

MEMORIAL TO  
NOLAN HARPER

July 18, 1939 - June 23, 1980

Presented to the First Judicial District Court of Louisiana for Caddo Parish by the undersigned Committee designated by the President of the Shreveport Bar Association to prepare and submit a resolution in memory of the late Nolan Harper, a member of Shreveport City Court and a member of this Association.

\* \* \* \* \*

On June 23, 1980, Judge Nolan Harper, Judge of Shreveport City Court and our good friend, died following an extended illness with cancer -- just short of his 41st birthday. He is survived by his widow, Marcia Harris Harper, three daughters, Tammy, Laurie and Amy, his mother and four brothers.

Nolan Harper was born July 18, 1939, in Gonzalas, Louisiana. During his youth, Nolan's family lived in various towns and cities throughout Louisiana, his father moving to follow the oil field business which supported the family. Nolan was educated in the public schools of our state, attending Fair Park here in Shreveport and graduating from Istrouma High School in Baton Rouge.

Nolan entered L.S.U. but soon transferred to Northwestern in Natchitoches where he met Marcia Harris. Between their junior and senior years, they were married.

Following his Spring, 1961 graduation from Northwestern with a major in History and a minor in Government, Nolan and Marcia moved to Westlake, Louisiana, where Nolan taught history and government at the local high school for three years. As was true of many students entering law school during those years, Nolan had always had in the back of his mind that he wanted to be a lawyer. With this thought he entered L.S.U. Law School in the fall of 1964.

Shreveport attorneys Bobby Sutton, John Harrison, Merritt Chastain and myself remember Nolan as one of the better students in our class. Always prepared, friendly and likable, Nolan became our good friend. Nolan's class, graduating in the Spring of 1967, was the first to be awarded the Juris Doctor degree by L.S.U.

Following graduation and the bar exam, Nolan, Marcia and their daughter moved to Shreveport where Nolan began the practice of law with Harry Nelson. Soon, Nolan felt the urge to do what so many of us have done -- namely, to be on his own. He did that and was associated with various members of our bar association on an office sharing basis.

In 1976, a vacancy was created at Shreveport City Court with the election of Judge John Ballard to a judgeship on this First Judicial District Court. Nolan was urged to run for the City Court vacancy by several of his close friends and did so in the summer of 1976. He defeated three

other candidates for the position and was sworn in in the Fall of that year. He served in City Court with distinction until his death June 23, 1980. Nolan's reputation among the city court personnel, the police officers with whom he dealt, the lawyers who appeared before him and the citizens whose civil and criminal problems he adjudicated was one of integrity, honor, excellence and fairness. If order in the administration of justice is the hallmark of a judge, then it was epitomized by Judge Harper.

Judge Harper's reputation was not restricted to his acts as a judge. For as you would expect of a person of his caliber, he involved himself in other endeavors and shared his abilities with others.

Nolan was first of all a teacher -- and always a very well prepared one. For years, he taught a Notary Public class in the parish, first at the trade school and later, under the auspices of the Legal Secretaries, at L.S.U.-S. As this speaker can attest, he taught an excellent men's Sunday School class at Broadmoor Baptist Church. In addition to his teaching duties at his church, Nolan also actively served as a Deacon and on the Budget Committee. He was a member of the special committee that sought out and called the present pastor to our church.

Civic duties were not ignored by Judge Harper either, serving both through his Optimist Club and as an active worker and supporter of the Boy Scouts.

Nolan gave himself unselfishly to the public good and countless citizens benefited from this gift. True to his character though, one could learn of these good works only from others, never from Nolan. Significantly, even though he was a candidate for political office, he remained universally admired.

A person is known not only by what he leaves in this world but by how those who survive him speak of him. As for the latter, Nolan Harper leaves a legacy to be desired. We simply say to Marcia and his daughters, and acknowledge to each other that our lives were better having known Nolan Harper. We will all miss him.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the members of the Shreveport Bar Association, hereby affirm the respect, the admiration and the regard in which we hold Nolan Harper for his character and ability, his industry, skill and learning, and his example of the lawyer and judge, the son and brother, and the husband and father at his best; and we extend to his widow, daughters, mother and brothers our sincere sympathy in their loss.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this memorial and resolution be made a part of the records of this Court and

that copies of this record be delivered to the members of the family of our departed brother and friend.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JUDGE JOHN R. BALLARD

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
EDMUND M. THOMAS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JAMES A. BURNETT, Chairman

Shreveport, Louisiana

October 20, 1980