



William C. Martin III

JUL 15, 1938 - JUL 14, 2019



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FUNERAL HOMES
OF LONGVIEW AND HENDERSON

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Senior District Judge William C. Martin, III, died on Sunday, July 14th, 2019, eager for the resurrection and his life and work in the world to come. A worship service will be held in celebration of his life at 11:00 o'clock A.M., on Thursday, July 25th, 2019 at Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church in Longview in lieu of a traditional funeral. Cremation of his remains will be under the direction of Rader Funeral Home with a cenotaph at Memory Park Cemetery. Memorials instead of flowers are solicited by the family for Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church or Grace Presbytery, Presbyterian Church (USA) or the Texas Center for the Judiciary or the Scottish Rite Hospital or the East Texas Rifle and Pistol Club or Heart to Heart Hospice. The family is particularly grateful to the staff of Heart to Heart Hospice and Stay Kare Solutions for their care of William.

Judge Martin was born July 15, 1938, only child of Wm. C. Martin, Jr., and Frankie Judith Farmer Martin, who predeceased him. He was a native of Longview with deep roots in this country. His avid interest in his and his wife's family histories led him to a nationwide acquaintance and correspondence with their cousins. He knew of his descent from many European nations over a four hundred year period and his families' connections with many tribes of Native Americans. He was deeply sympathetic to anyone wishing to immigrate here seeking citizenship.

He was the first National Merit Scholar to graduate from Longview High School (1957) and a George F. Baker Scholar to Davidson College in North Carolina. He graduated with honors cum laude in American and English Constitutional History in Davidson's class of 1961 and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He and Janet Marie Geist of Cleveland and Piqua, Ohio, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, married on June 3, 1961, and she supported him through law school in twenty-seven months.

After obtaining his LL.B. (Juris. Doctor) degree from the University of Texas at Austin, William fulfilled his Army of the United States commission as an Infantry



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officer, qualifying as a parachutist and receiving the Army Commendation Medal. The couple returned to Longview, where he practiced law solo and with Tom DeWitt and with Ewing Adams and Gillett Sheppard. During this period, he continued to serve in the Texas National Guard. He participated in forming the 71st Infantry Brigade (ABN), serving as a battalion staff officer and one of the unit's first static line jumpmasters until his discharge in May of 1971.

In 1970, William announced for nomination as judge of the Court of Domestic Relations for Gregg County by the Republican Party. With a great deal of help from his friends and family, he won the November election and was the first Gregg County official ever elected on the Republican ticket, taking office as judge of the Court of Domestic Relations for Gregg County on January 1, 1971, and serving continuously in that office and as judge of the Family District Court for the 307th Judicial District through five elections until he retired from office on December 31, 1990.

He was particularly proud of his service in the Court of Domestic Relations before the Court conversion statute, during which he and his secretary, Margaret Kuhn (who became his court reporter), handled all of the Gregg County litigation under the Texas Family Code and the laws it replaced, only a fraction of which, including jury trials involving children, could be statistically reported in the state system. During that time, the Court did not have a court reporter, and much of the time court room space had to be borrowed from the other courts or arranged in the Presbyterian Church or the bank across the street from the Courthouse. A bailiff was hired only after his handgun was discovered hanging under the usual bench he used. The work of that Court is now spread among three fully staffed and funded courts and a state funded hearing officer.

William helped establish the state bar specialty in family law as a grader for the first examination, then helped construct the second exam, then took the third exam himself. He served on the Council of the Family Law Section during the time when Texas family law was being codified and its practice standardized, drafting legislation and producing forms in committee. He was a part of the Juvenile Court Judges Committee working toward establishment of the Texas Juvenile Probation



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Commission and served as one of the first board of commissioners. When he took office, child offenders were still being detained in the county jail. He continually confronted the community with the shame of this situation and the first modern detention facility opened in 1979.

Following retirement, William continued to sit on assignment as a visiting judge specializing in Family Law through the First Administrative Judicial Region for nine years in the family courts in Dallas. After 2000, he served in the several counties of the North East Texas Foster Care Docket, hearing cases filed for Child Protective Services division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services in order to meet federal time standards without interfering with civil and criminal dockets. William left the judiciary at the end of 2010 with forty years of service and practiced family law for the remainder of his fifty years as an attorney at law.

William served his congregation and presbytery as an elder and commissioner to church courts. He was a member of Masonic Lodge 404, the Gregg County Scottish Rite Club and the Waco Scottish Rite bodies. He loved to make and repair fire arms, participated in hunting and the shooting sports and made Damascus steel cutlery at the various forge facilities he set up.

Judge Martin is survived by his wife Janet, their daughter Melissa Marie Martin of Redmond, Washington, with her children Alexander William and Sydney Grace, and their son Charles William Martin of Hill County, his Wife Christial with his children Charles Garrett and Charla Richelle (Mrs. Jordan T. Brown), Philip Blake Johnson, and two great-grandchildren Colt and Nash Brown.

“... what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

A memorial guestbook may be signed online at www.raderfh.com.





Events

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Memorial Service

 **Thursday**, July 25, 2019

 11:00 AM CT

 **St. Andrew Presbyterian Church**
121 Hampton Court, Longview TX





Tribute Wall

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SM

Shirley Mills posted:

Janet and children, I am so sorry for your loss. I'm just now becoming aware of this. Seems like only yesterday we were neighbors and Melissa and Charles were children. Time flies by so fast. I learned things in his obituary I never knew. What a wonderful legacy he has left. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

July 25 at 11:50 AM

KK

Kathryn Kaplan posted:

Dear Martin family, I was saddened to learn of Judge Martin's passing. Clearly, he was a true pioneer and leaves a brilliant legacy. May God's peace comfort you all at this time. Kathryn Kaplan
The Woodlands, TX

July 25 at 6:56 AM

PD

Polly Dunlap posted:

Dear Janet and Family, David and I, as classmates of Bill's, are saddened by his death. We remember him as an outstanding student but also as a regular guy who loved humor and laughter and fun. We were proud of the work he did, and we are sure he took it to heart. In his retirement and ours it was fun to get together at Class of '57 luncheons and gatherings. He had so many talents, skills and abilities which he shared willingly with others. We are proud to have known him. Our community will miss him very much. Sincerely, Polly and David

July 23 at 6:08 PM

SK

Samuel M. Khoury posted:

Mrs. Martin, Melissa and Charles, I was sorry to learn of Judge Martin's passing and I wish you peace and comfort. Judge Martin's very admirable, influential legal career and long record of community involvement set a high standard for others to follow. I personally will miss seeing him every year at the Northeast Texas Bar meetings and occasionally around town. And while he surely will be missed by many others in his church, the legal community and in Longview, his legacy in the region will be long-lasting. Samuel M. Khoury
Longview

July 22 at 6:48 PM



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TT

Todd Tefteller posted:

Judge Martin ran a good court.He was a good man devoted to his family,his church,and his family.Todd Tefteller

July 21 at 6:21 PM

BH

Betty Heim posted:

Janet and Family, Having known Bill through many years of school was a pleasure. We always respected his extreme intelligence and appreciated his kindness and friendliness. It was always a pleasure to visit with you and Bill at our Class of '57 lunches. We've had a lot of laughs in our "golden years." I am proud to say that he was a friend and will miss his smiling face. I pray that God's Grace will help you and your family make it through the coming days ahead. Betty Heim - LHS Class of '57

July 21 at 9:36 AM

PL

Patt Lindsey posted:

Janet,My sincere sympathy & solace to you and your family during this time! I will always have a place in my heart for you and Bill!

July 20 at 3:28 PM

PL

Patt Lindset posted:

I cherish the memories & support i received from Judge Martin while serving as his Court Administrator from 1980-84. His support & encouragement enabled me to achieve a rich and succesful professional career. I will forever be grateful to him!Patt LindseyGalveston, Tx

July 20 at 3:23 PM

VV

Vik Verma posted:

I am so sorry to hear of Judge Martin's passing. I was proud to call him my friend and always appreciated his wisdomJanet — my condolences to you and your family with loveThanks Vik Verma

July 20 at 3:21 PM



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RM

Randy Morton posted:

Janet,I just heard about the death of your husband . I am very sorry to learn about it after the fact, but I wanted to let you know how sorry I am.I didn't know him nearly as well as I know you, but any man you stay with must be a good man. I hope you find comfort in your memories and please know you are in my thoughts .Very sincerely, your friend,Dr Randy Morton

July 19 at 8:14 AM

BB

Brenda Day-Bevis posted:

I'm so sorry to hear if Judge Martin's passing. I met him through D.O.R.S. Youth Transition Center and he captivated my heart. I loved every minute with him and every conversation we had!

July 19 at 4:25 AM

AD

Alice Day posted:

What a fine man William was. His dedication to the welfare of families was matched only by his love of the church. One of my favorite memories is of William singing the hymns with gusto, always off key.Amy and I will always be grateful for his wisdom and kindness as he helped us deal with CPS. And I cherish the memory of how he and Mike enjoyed each other.Well done, good and faithful servant.Alice Day

July 19 at 1:50 AM

ME

Mike Edmonds posted:

Last September Wm, Pat Mikelson, and myself spent a wonderful week together in Nashville pursuing our genealogical 'Holy Grail' of tracking down our ancestor Henry J Martin's father. We surprised even ourselves and made several discoveries that got us closer to an answer and also more fully illuminated the Martin trail back thru Tenn and North Carolina to the Revolutionary War era. Will was struggling with his stamina and breathing all week yet he insisted on putting in a full day, every day. He was stubborn, dogged and sunshine bright when on any mission he pursued. He was also the epitome of a Renaissance man ... educated, generous and always a gentleman.I'll miss him ... his wonderful laugh and his great sense of humor and mostly his love of his family, God, and country. Janet, you and your children were blessed to have him in your lives as were all of us who knew him.Mike Neal Edmonds

July 18 at 3:30 PM



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JK

Judy Knox posted:

Janet, my prayers go out to you and your family. I know your pain and loss as I work all the arrangements for Sam. May God be with and comfort you. Judy Knox

July 18 at 11:19 AM

CP

Cheryl Parr posted:

Janet and family, My thoughts and prayers are with you. Cheryl Walters Parr

July 18 at 7:35 AM

PE

Patricia Roberts Edmondson posted:

Dear Janet and children, My junior high and high school memories of Bill are good ones. We were in the Fandango Club, a ballroom dance club where we, as 13 year olds, were taught how to dance with a partner. It was a lot of fun. We had to dress nicely and practice our manners. In high school, I got to know Bill much better. He was always nice and pleasant. He always had my respect because his manner and the way he was as nice to everyone sort of demanded respect. I always enjoyed talking to Janet and Bill at our LHS 1957 class reunions. I know that he was a good husband, father and judge. I plan on seeing him in Heaven. May God give each of you His Comfort and Peace about your loss. Pat Roberts Edmondson, LHS Class of '57

July 16 at 11:25 AM

LT

Linda Tucker posted:

Bill's was a life well lived. I remember how smart he was in high school and I am so glad he was able to use his intelligence and talent in his profession. As a member of the LHS class of '57, I always felt proud of him. My deepest sympathy to his family. Linda Ellis Tucker

July 15 at 2:30 PM

AP

Ashlie Peyton lit a candle in honor of William.

July 15 at 10:33 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring William by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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