



A RESOLUTION memorializing the late Arthur Edward Smith.

WHEREAS Arthur Edward (Nurmi) Smith passed away at age 93 in Roanoke on March 22, 2005; and

WHEREAS the said Arthur Smith was a resident of Roanoke since the age of 4, having been born in Red Jacket, West Virginia and was the son of the late Benjamin S. Smith and Virginia Lanter Smith; Arthur graduated from Jefferson High School in Roanoke, Virginia, in 1930, where he was the captain of the track team (and received his nickname) and a member of the football and basketball teams; he attended Roanoke College where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in English in 1934 and was a member of Pi Kappi Phi Fraternity, and during his summers, while attending Roanoke College, he worked as a counselor at Camp Roanoke (then called Camp Johnson) in Salem and was a proof reader at the Times World Corporation; and

WHEREAS Arthur Smith then attended the University of Virginia Law School at Charlottesville where he was on the Law Review and received his L.L.B degree in 1937; he was selected to write the Class Poem for his graduating class at UVA and he had many requests over the years for a copy of that poem, along with many other poems that he wrote; and

WHEREAS after passing the Virginia Bar Exam, Arthur began his practice of law in downtown Roanoke on Franklin Road in 1937; World War II interrupted his practice and in 1940 he began work with the Office of Price Administration where he held the position of District Enforcement Attorney for Durable Goods and Fuel and later became the Chief Investigator for the Roanoke District; in 1946 the Roanoke office of the OPA was disbanded and after turning down an invitation to work in their Richmond office, Arthur Smith took up his law practice again in the Shenandoah Building, where he practiced criminal law, later specializing in divorce and family law; he practiced law in the Roanoke area for over 50 years until his retirement in December 1998; and

WHEREAS Arthur Smith was a member of the American Bar Association, the Virginia Bar Association, the Virginia State Bar, the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association and the Roanoke Bar Association; he was President of the Roanoke Bar Association in 1960; he was very active in the area of family law throughout Virginia for many years; he was a member of the Board of Governors of the Family Law Section of the Virginia State Bar, serving from the late 1970's through June of 1984, and served as the Chairman of the Board of Governors from 1981-82; while serving on the Board of Governors, he was instrumental in bringing about the passage of Virginia's equitable distribution law, frequently being called upon to testify before the Virginia legislature; he was involved in more than 6,000 domestic relations cases throughout his career; he was co-author of the Equitable Distribution Statute and was generally acknowledged as "the granddaddy of divorce law in Virginia"; Arthur was a member of the Domestic Relations Legislative Committee for the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association, and was also a member of the Roanoke Bar Association's Domestic Relations Committee; and

WHEREAS during his active practice, Arthur Smith was a highly sought after lecturer and wrote several articles relating to domestic relations law in Virginia. Many of his peers sought out his advice and opinions and constantly tried to emulate his high ethical standards and his knowledge of

domestic relations in Virginia; he was a mentor to many young attorneys who now have successful practices of their own in Roanoke and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia; he was honored to be chosen as the initial recipient of the Virginia State Bar Family Law Award in 1993; the award was established by the Board of Governors of the Family Law Section of the Virginia State Bar to honor persons who have made outstanding contributions to the area of family law in Virginia, who demonstrated dedication, contributed significantly to the education of others, demonstrated exceptionally high standards of competency and integrity, and promoted civility in family law in Virginia by consistently demonstrating exemplary fairness and courtesy and showing respect for the rights and feelings of his clients and others affected by family law; and

WHEREAS Arthur Smith was highly respected by his peers in the Roanoke Bar Association, being described by one as “the best versed divorce attorney I ever had the pleasure to work with” and considered to be one of the “Deans” of the Association; and

Whereas Arthus Smith was a golfer who loved to brag about shooting his age in his 70’s and 80’s; an accomplished pool player and motorcyclist, riding his motorcycle until he was in his 70’s; a wonderful teacher and mentor, a captivating storyteller, and a good friend to many people in the Roanoke Valley, throughout the Commonwealth, and beyond; and

WHEREAS Arthur Smith was predeceased by his wife, Frances Meador Smith, and survived by his daughter Susan Allison Smith; son and daughter-in-law, David Ring Smith and Barbara Philpott Smith; daughter and son-in-law, Deborah (Debbie) Spencer and William R. Spencer, Jr.; and he is also survived by three grandchildren, Matthew William Spencer (Matt), Stephanie Lynn Spencer and Daniel Arthur Smith, all of Roanoke;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Roanoke Bar Association laments the passing of Arthur Edward Smith, and holds his memory and his contributions to this Association, to this community, and to the cause of justice in high regard; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be furnished to the Circuit Courts of the City and County of Roanoke and the City of Salem and the United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia, Roanoke Division, with motions that the resolution be spread upon the permanent common law order books of those courts; and that copies of this resolution be furnished to Arthur Smith’s family to communicate the esteem in which the Roanoke Bar Association holds Arthur and his memory and the Association’s sorrow at his passing.

GIVEN under the hands of the President and Secretary of the Roanoke Bar Association and the seal of the Association this 11th day of October, 2005.

President, Roanoke Bar Association

TESTE:

Secretary, Roanoke Bar Association