



**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION MEMORIALIZING
THE LIFE OF THE LATE WALTER H. PEAKE, III**

WHEREAS, Walter H. Peake, III, suddenly and tragically departed this life on Wednesday, April 3, 2019, at age 60;

WHEREAS, Walt, as he was known to his many friends and colleagues, was born in Charlotte, North Carolina on September 14, 1958, to the late Walter H. Peake, II and Joann Beatty Peake and moved with his family to Roanoke in 1968;

WHEREAS, Walt was a product of Roanoke City schools where he made many lifelong friends whose adventures, exploits, and boyhood mischief made great fodder for Walt's stories and the outline for what might have been the next great coming-of-age novel. Some of the stories, if true, would have made Mark Twain, Martin Clark, and other great novelists green with envy for their own lack of creativity, and fortunately did not deter or derail what would prove to be an outstanding legal career;

WHEREAS, Walt was a proud graduate of Patrick Henry High School, and an even prouder graduate of Virginia Tech, where he graduated with a B.A. in English in 1980. After a brief stint in the insurance industry, Walt attended law school at the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University, graduating in 1986;

WHEREAS, Walt began his legal career with Gentry Locke Rakes and Moore in September 1986, where he rose to partner before joining two of his partners and friends on August 1, 1997, in the founding of the firm Frith Anderson + Peake, PC, where he practiced until his untimely death;

WHEREAS, early on, Walt had a diverse trial practice, handling trucking and auto accident cases, premises liability cases, insurance coverage matters, and construction defect and product liability cases. Ultimately, he found his calling in defending doctors and health care providers in medical negligence cases;

WHEREAS, Walt's keen intellect and precise analytical legal skills, coupled with his unyielding concern and devotion to his clients, enabled him to distill complex factual, legal, and medical concepts into digestible trial themes. He frequently tested his themes on Nancy, his children, and, yes, even his partners, and then masterfully and persuasively would convey them to a jury of strangers from diverse educational, socio-economic, and vocational backgrounds with great success;

WHEREAS, Walt was an avid reader, student of history, and possessor of an almost encyclopedic knowledge of useless sports trivia, Bob Dylan song lyrics, literary quotes, historical events, and lines from old movies, which Walt frequently used to drive his points home, even if the application to a particular case's facts might appear to his private mock jurors to be a bit strained. Walt, undeterred, would find a way to incorporate the "steely eyed missile man" and "if they can make a washing machine fly, my Jimmy can land it," his favorite quotes from Apollo 13, into his many closings arguments;

WHEREAS, Walt was a tenacious advocate for his clients, never shying from a hard-fought battle, making his client's cause his very own cause, and giving them his very all. While tenacious, Walt had a wonderful sense of humor and could bring levity and a smile to the tensest of situations. His immense ability, successes, and wonderful personality earned him the respect and admiration of his peers, his clients, and the tribunals before whom he appeared as evidenced by the Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys presenting its highest award, the VADA Award for Excellence in Civil Litigation, to Walt posthumously in 2019;

WHEREAS, Walt was a member of the Virginia State Bar, the Roanoke Bar Association, the Roanoke Bar Foundation, and the Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys, where he served several terms on the Board of Directors, as well as a Master of the Bench of the Ted Dalton American Inn of Court;

WHEREAS, Walt's interests and passions went far beyond the law, as he was a devoted and loyal Hokie, holding season tickets to Virginia Tech football and basketball games for over 30 years, where he was never content to observe but to analyze and critique, leading one friend to comment that Walt was the best Hokie sports color commentator who never got paid;

WHEREAS, Walt's passion for life extended beyond Hokie sports to his love of all games, especially golf, which he pursued with the same diligence and devotion as he did his legal career, which prompted his frequent golf partner Bill Hopkins, Jr. to observe that Walt was an above average player and that criticisms of his play by his friends and colleagues were way overblown;

WHEREAS, Walt's oral advocacy skills lead him to explore a passion for musical performance which would sometimes cause him to accidentally, but always enthusiastically, find his way to a stage to join a band in renditions of his favorite songs, which performances were always well received, not necessarily due to their superb quality but more for the pure joy that it evidently brought him and those around him;

WHEREAS, Walt was a devoted and loving father to Meredith, Kathleen, and John, ever present in their lives, encouraging them, loving them, and being a constant source of guidance and support, and an adoring and devoted husband to Nancy, who he met and fell in love with while they were students at Virginia Tech, and with whom he journeyed through life's adventures for over 37 years;

WHEREAS, in addition to his loving and adoring family, Walt is survived by his brother Senator Mark Peake and his wife Lila of Lynchburg, nieces and nephews, partners and colleagues at Frith Anderson & Peake, who continue to miss his effervescent personality, his wit, and who will always cherish his memory;

WHEREAS, Walt's willingness to mentor young attorneys has helped maintain the skill and civility that has been a hallmark of the Roanoke Bar Association. He invested his time and energy over many years to teach more junior lawyers valuable lessons on the practice of law, the art of persuasion, and how important it is to contribute to our local community as a citizen. While he was passionate in his client's defense, he demonstrated how important it is to have empathy and an understanding for the persons who had been injured in his cases. His mentorship will be missed;

WHEREAS, Walt's life and zest for living may be summed up in his pursuit of excellence in all that he undertook, his devotion and commitment to those he loved and cherished and his passion to live each day as though it was his last; and

Now therefore be it resolved that the Roanoke Bar Association does hereby express its deepest sympathies to the family of Walter H. Peake, III and does hereby recognize his distinguished career and service to the public and to the Bar; 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 common law books of those courts and that copies of the Resolution be furnished to the family of Walter H. Peake, III, to communicate the esteem with which the Roanoke Bar Association holds Walt 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 14th day of December 2021.

Macel H. Janoschka, Esq.

President Roanoke Bar Association

TESTE:

Christen C. Church, Esq.

Secretary, Roanoke Bar Association