

Memorial Resolution

Honorable William (“Bill”) Pierce Newkirk June 2021

William (“Bill”) Pierce Newkirk was born in Chicago, Illinois, as the son of William Jennings and Myrtle Zinschlag Newkirk. Upon his high school graduation in 1949, Newkirk accepted a position as a night ticket agent for B&O Railroad in Athens, Ohio, while simultaneously attending Ohio University. Following his college graduation, Newkirk served in the United States Army from 1953 to 1955. Upon being honorably discharged from military service in 1955, Newkirk married Sally Lewis and entered law school at the University of Cincinnati, subsequently transferring to the University of Tennessee College of Law where he earned his doctor of jurisprudence in 1957.

As an attorney, Newkirk began the practice of law in Knoxville. He was later appointed chancellor of the Knox County Chancery Court in 1969. Chancellor Newkirk served with distinction until his retirement. Chancellor Newkirk subsequently re-entered private practice and during the remainder of his legal career served as a specially appointed judge for the Tennessee Court of Appeals, as well as an Administrative Law Judge for the United States Department of the Interior and the Social Security Administration.

By reason of his employment with B&O Railroad, Chancellor Newkirk developed and maintained a lifelong interest in railway transportation. This was evidenced by his complete refurbishing of an old caboose, which he maintained on his family farm. Later, Newkirk’s interests expanded to air transportation. When the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority was founded, he was appointed to and served on the initial board, eventually in the capacity as its chairman. He became a widely known and admired “good-will ambassador” for Knoxville and its airports, attending meetings of international airport executives and commissioners throughout North America and beyond. By virtue of his experience and skill as a lawyer, he understood well the problems facing the airport authority. Another of his keen interests was cattle. During the early 1990s, he became enamored with Angus cattle and raised breeder and beef stock with the assistance of his family. A gentleman farmer, lawyer, judge, pilot and converted East Tennessean, Chancellor Newkirk enjoyed a full and diverse life.

Chancellor Newkirk’s professional and civic accomplishments were surpassed only by his faithful devotion as husband, father, and grandfather. He is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Sally L. Newkirk; sons, Brian (Margie) Newkirk and Timothy Newkirk;

daughter Sarah (Glenn) Ireland; and two granddaughters, Anna Pierce and Margaret Ireland.

Adored by family, befriended by colleagues, and respected by all those who knew him, Chancellor William (“Bill”) Pierce Newkirk established an enduring legacy by leaving his profession, his community, and our great State remarkably better places.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tennessee Judicial Conference that the foregoing Memorial Resolution in honor of our departed colleague, William (“Bill”) Pierce Newkirk, be entered on the minutes of this conference, that a copy be furnished to West Publishing Company for publication in Tennessee Decisions, and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this tribute and resolution be furnished to his family.

Respectfully submitted this 16th day of June, 2021.

Thomas R. Frierson, II, Judge
Tennessee Court of Appeals