

Retired Chancellor Ray H. Montgomery died Dec. 14, 2014

December 15, 2014

Retired Chancery Judge Ray H. Montgomery, 79, of Canton, died Sunday, Dec. 14, 2014, after a brief illness.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 17, at First Baptist Church in Canton. Visitation will be 5 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 16, at Breeland Funeral Home in Canton. Graveside service and burial will be at 2 p.m. Dec. 17 in Cato Cemetery, Johns, Mississippi.

Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. said, "I last saw Judge Montgomery in late October at the Trial and Appellate Judges Conference in Jackson. He retired from the bench 20 years ago, but kept abreast of the law and was active among his colleagues. He continued to hear cases as a senior status judge until a few years ago. He was among 11 senior status judges whom the Supreme Court called upon to hear cases on the Gulf Coast related to Hurricane Katrina. The courts could not operate efficiently without the assistance of our senior status judges.

"I appreciate Judge Montgomery's willingness to assist the court long after he retired. I commend his distinguished career of public service," Chief Justice Waller said.

Judge Montgomery began his public service as Madison County tax assessor, serving 1964 to 1971. He served in the Mississippi Senate 1972 to 1978. He took the bench as chancellor of the 11th Chancery District on Jan. 1, 1979, serving until he retired Dec. 31, 1994.

Ray Hilman Montgomery was born Jan. 18, 1935, in Forest Grove. He was the son of Alvin Douglas Montgomery Sr. and Otice Ozella Bilbro Montgomery.

He graduated from Canton High School, Hinds Junior College and Millsaps College. He earned a law degree from Jackson School of Law, now Mississippi College School of Law, in 1969, and was admitted to the practice of law in 1970. He began practicing law in Canton in 1971.

Judge Montgomery, who contracted polio at the age of 15, was a longtime volunteer and supporter of the March of Dimes, and former president of the Mississippi Easter Seal Society Board of Directors.

He was a member of the Mississippi Bar, a Mason, Wahabi Shriner, and lifelong member of Canton First Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife of 41 years, Dorothy Gill Montgomery, brother Alvin Douglas Montgomery Jr., and many nieces, nephews and friends.

####