

*MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE  
ALLEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION*

*J. MICHAEL O'HARA*

*We gather today to honor our friend, colleague, grandfather and father, J. Michael O'Hara, who passed on December 2, 2018. Given his long-term affiliation with what is now known as Barrett McNagny, which has included for many years his son, Michael P. O'Hara, Mike was affectionately known as "Big Mike" around the office. Big Mike was born October 25, 1928 in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Mike was the son of the late Dr. Martin Patrick and Fern O'Hara. He married Sally Ann Berghoff on November 5, 1955. Mike received his undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame in 1950 and his law degree from the University of Michigan in 1953. Mike then joined what was then known as Barrett, Barrett & McNagny in 1955. After a number of years, Mike was elected to the prestigious American College of Trial Lawyers. Mike mentored several associates over the years, including myself. Ultimately, Mike retired from the practice of law in 1998.*

*Mike was a U.S. Army veteran of the Korean War.*

*Mike and Sally enjoyed their time with their family. Mike and Sally had five children, 15 grandchildren, and 9 great grandchildren at the time of Mike's passing. Mike's children are Kathleen Kunkle, married to Sandy; Kevin O'Hara, married to Sue; Michael O'Hara, married to Debbie; Molly Niezer, married to Ted; and Megan Fetter, married to Tim.*

*Mike and Sally enjoyed their time in family gatherings, not the least of which were Thanksgivings in Carmel and winters in Vero Beach, Florida.*

*Mike was an avid golfer and Notre Dame football fan. Mike was a member at Sycamore Hills Golf Club for many, many, years and was a single digit handicap. I did not come to learn until many years after Mike had mentored me, just what a saint Mike was. For those of you who do not know, I'm not much of a golfer. Nonetheless, when Mike was mentoring me, he would take me out to Sycamore to help entertain clients. Mike, of course was a single digit handicap which meant he was a really good golfer. I, on the other hand, was a 32 handicap who couldn't play to a 32 handicap. Nonetheless, Mike was quite gracious and dare I say patient in allowing me to participate in his golf marketing events. I always thought Mike was also quite gracious in keeping track of my score as well. I remember one time when I sliced a ball out of bounds at Sycamore almost hitting a house, I thought I had to re-tee and hit another one. I suggested as much to Mike and, at the time, thinking he was being quite gracious, he said absolutely not, certainly we will find that one. I have now come to learn that Mike simply didn't want me to hit a house with my next swing.*

*Mike served as the managing partner of the firm for several years as well. As most of you probably know, Mike was a pretty straight forward and blunt individual, something I have taken to heart as I worked with him -- and since. As my colleagues at Barrett McNagny will tell you, if Mike told you something, you could take it to the bank. You didn't have to agree with him, but you knew he believed what he said and he said it for the greater good. Mike practiced for many years in litigation (thus his American Trial Academy award) and also in the labor and employment arena. Mike handled many of the high profile strikes that took place in the 60's and 70's within the Northeast Indiana region. In addition, he was never too busy to take an associate like myself under his wing and show him the ropes. It is because of those efforts that I myself have been able to flourish in the same practice areas even after Mike had retired. I believe most of the firm considered Mike more than a partner, manager, or mentor. He was a friend as well. His interest in the firm and his clients didn't stop on the day he retired. Mike would continuously seek updates on how clients were doing. I don't just mean how the client's business was doing, but*

*how the client, the executive, the owners themselves were doing over the years. It's that level of interest in a lawyer's clients that has become the staple of Barrett McNagny because of Mike and others like him. Mike's legal practice emphasized caring for each and every employee who was a part of the client's organization. He was clear as to the ethical straight-forward interaction that was needed with the lawyers they chose to partner with. Mike emphasized that every client was important and responding to them in a prompt, complete manner was not just expected -- it was required.*

*Mike also was a big proponent in the legal profession of communicating with clients, judges and other attorneys in a professional, straight-forward manner. He was not big on legalese. I heard Mike say more than once "oh shit" when someone was babbling on, trying to pontificate or bluster their way through a situation. Mike believed in calling it like it was, whether it was in the courtroom or in the office.*

*Mike was a pillar of the Barrett McNagny law firm and is missed dearly by all those who had the good fortune of practicing with him. Mike was trusted by his partners. He was a fixture on the compensation committee. Mike genuinely loved the practice of law and interacting with the lawyers and staff at Barrett. Fortunately, for those who had the good fortune of practicing with Mike, they were able to see and learn how a group of lawyers with strong opinions can have those opinions yet still treat each other respectfully and work together for the greater good of the firm.*

*To Mike's family, I thank you for attending and allowing us to have this day to honor Mike. I know that each and every one of you misses him dearly. I want you to know that all of us in this room also knew what a great man Mike was and we too, miss him dearly.*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Allen County Bar Association gives public expression of its sorrow upon this, the occasion to remember and pay respect to J. Michael O'Hara.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be unanimously adopted by those present for this occasion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be transmitted by the Allen County Bar Association to the members of the J. Michael O'Hara family.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be spread of record in the permanent records of the Federal and State Courts in Allen County to evidence the respect and admiration the members of the Bench and Bar had for their departed friend, mentor and colleague, J. Michael O'Hara.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> Day of September 2019, at Fort Wayne, Indiana.

THE ALLEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION



By: Andrew S. Williams  
Andrew S. Williams, President

By: [Signature]  
The Honorable Nancy E. Boyer

Resolution prepared and presented by  
Anthony M. Stites