**REMEMBERING**

# Michael Coleman

March 23, 1943 - June 29, 2021

Michael was born in Vancouver on March 23, 1943 to parents the Reverend Michael and Mrs. Mary (King) Coleman. He was the second of four siblings. The family moved to Victoria and then to Quamichan until, in 1950, his father was elected Bishop and they moved to Regina, Saskatchewan for ten years. During that time Michael attended Strathcona School locally and then went as a boarder to Upper Canada College in Toronto for four years. He often stayed with Uncle Charlie King in Ottawa on his school breaks where he was introduced to Prime Ministers John Diefenbaker and Lester Pearson. In 1960 the family moved to North Pender Island, where they had spent summers throughout the 50s. Mike attended UBC, earning his undergraduate degree and then his law degree. While at UBC he was also the University Student AMS President, and active with the Young Liberals on campus. In that time he met the love of his life Barbara who hailed from Hazelton, B.C. That geographical connection proved to be of importance as, through her, he made lifelong Hazelton friends.

Mike, Barb and their first son Charlie, moved to the City of Duncan in 1969, where Mike began his career as a lawyer. He practiced law in Duncan for the next 46 years, retiring December 2015. He was also honoured with the Queen's Counsel designation in 2010 - Michael Coleman Q.C. Mike and Barb had their second son, Ted, in 1970 and their youngest son, Jamie, in 1978. While building a full-time law practice with various partners over the years, Mike got very involved in community service. He was first elected to City Council as an Alderman (City Councillor) in 1973. He was first elected Mayor in 1979 and served as the Mayor of Duncan for 22 years, with a short hiatus in the early 80's, until 2004. He was named a Freeman of the City. "Mayor Mike" is Duncan's longest-serving Mayor.

During these years, Mike played an integral role in the founding of many community

service organizations including: Family Life, Big Brothers, Cowichan United Way, Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship), Community Futures, Legal Aid, the Cowichan Foundation, the Cowichan Valley Bar Association and the Cowichan District Hospital Foundation. During his time in civic government he helped develop VIU's Cowichan Campus, revamped City Square, boosted relations with Cowichan Tribes, brought the 2008 North American Indigenous Games to Duncan and forged links with Duncan's sister cities Meru, Kenya and Montmagny, Quebec. Mike was also on the boards of the BC Municipal Finance Committee and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, culminating as FCM President. Active in the Anglican Church, he was made a Lay Canon. For all of this, the Duncan Cowichan Chamber of Commerce honoured Mike in 2014 as the recipient of the Black Tie Lifetime Achievement Award. Mike was also active in Federal Liberal politics, introducing family members to Prime Ministers Pierre Trudeau, John Turner, Jean Chretien, Paul Martin and Justin Trudeau.

In addition to being busy as a lawyer, mayor and community leader, Mike was always a family man. Despite all of his meetings and commitments, he and Barb made a point of having family dinner at the table almost every night, at 6:00 sharp. Mike instilled a love of literature in the boys, reading them poetry and novels most nights. He also published several books of his own poetry. The family watched hockey, the news and talked politics regularly. These often ended in heated debates. Mike and Barb chose to raise their family in the small town of Duncan, but they made a point of showing them the world. Family vacations every summer included places like England, Greece, Egypt, Tahiti, Mexico and Morocco, to name a few. Mike also made a point of going to almost all of the kids' sports, especially soccer games. He did this for sons Charlie, Ted and Jamie. He also did this for his grandkids, Michael and Ryan (sons of Charlie and Deanie) and Grace and Blake (twins of Jamie and Pam).

Mike leaves us with a legacy of family commitment and community service. He is survived by his wife Barb and their boys, Charlie, Ted and Jamie (Pam), his grandchildren, Michael, Ryan, Grace and Blake, his sisters Rosemary (Bob) and Sally (Dick), his brother Chris (Judith), and countless cousins and friends.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Cowichan Foundation, or a charity of your choice.

Public Memorial will be held at Mellor Hall at 2:00 PM on Sunday August 29th, 2021. A livestream for those unable to attend will be available at https://www.distantlink.com/Wallace.html