

# Retired Judge Bennett dies

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Cancer kills former lawmaker, band leader at 72

By MIKE PATTY

Rocky Mountain News Staff Writer

**CHARLES E. "CHUCK" BENNETT**, retired Denver Superior Court judge and a former Colorado legislator and band leader, died Tuesday night of cancer in University Hospital. He was 72.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. tomorrow in Fairmount Mortuary, 430 S. Quebec St. Burial will be in Fort Logan National Cemetery.

"He always thought of others before himself," said Patsy Hunzicker, one of his daughters. "He would help anybody, rich or poor. He had many, many friends."

He was born Nov. 14, 1914, in Memphis, Tenn., and moved to Denver with his family in 1917. He attended Denver public schools and graduated from East High School in 1933.

Judge Bennett attended the University of Denver for two years and then transferred to the University of Colorado, where he graduated in 1941. He married Sylvia Patricia "Patty" Mason on Oct. 20, 1940, in Denver.

He taught in Denver public schools while attending Westminster Law School at night. His studies were suspended during World War II when he served as a Naval gun crew commander in the North Atlantic, Mediterranean and Persian Gulf.



Charles E. Bennett

After the war he returned to law school, graduating in January 1947. He was admitted to the Colorado Bar Association and began his private law practice.

Judge Bennett performed with the "big bands" of Al Kavelin and Carmen Cavellero in addition to leading his own orchestra, the Chuck Bennett Band, in the Denver area in the 1940s and 1950s.

In 1948, Bennett, a Democrat, was elected to the Colorado House. After one term in the House, he was elected to the Colorado Senate, where he served for the next 14 years.

In 1964, he was elected to Denver Superior Court bench, where he handled civil suits and appeals from the Denver County Court. He served for 22 years, retiring last November when the position of Superior Court judge was abolished.

He was a past president of the Retired Officers Association of Colorado and served six years on the board of directors of the National Retired Officers Association. He was a board member of the Salvation Army for 25 years.

Judge Bennett was a member of the Sojourners Club, American Legion, and Masonic Palestine Lodge. He was past president and secretary of El Jebel Shrine Jewel of Honor and was a member of the Shriner's Clowns.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by three daughters, Karen Hudson of Denver, Patsy Hunzicker of Oklahoma City, and Barbara Bennett of Boston; a son, Steven Bennett of Denver; and five grandchildren.

Contributions may be made to the El Jebel Shrine Temple, 4625 W. 50th Ave., Denver 80212; or a charity of choice.

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