

Broker Words

By Sharon A. Chace, Editor

Colonel J. William “Bill” Felton, III was posthumously awarded the 2011 Douglas Mooers Award for Excellence at the 30th Annual National Association of Independent Life Brokerage Agencies conference. John W. Felton, IV, Tennessee Brokerage Agency, Knoxville, TN, a former NAILBA chairman, accepted the award on behalf of his father.

In presenting the award, Mark Rosen, NAILBA immediate past chairman, acknowledged Bill Felton as a “humble leader whose extensive efforts improved the lives of everyone he knew. His contributions to NAILBA, the brokerage community and many other organizations are well deserving of recognition.”

Until his passing in June 2011 (after a courageous 19-year battle with cancer), Felton was the chairman emeritus of NAILBA’s Charitable Foundation. He lived in Knoxville for most of his 78 years. He raised a family of three children and supported each through his career in the life insurance business. Two of his three children joined him in his agency.

He began his insurance career with John Hancock Life in 1960 and took over the East Tennessee division of a Manhattan Life of New York office in 1965. He remained with Manhattan Life and eventually opened Tennessee Brokerage Agency in 1976.

In 2002, Felton spearheaded the founding of NAILBA’s Charitable Foundation. In 2008 the NAILBA Charitable Foundation honored Felton for his contributions to the foundation’s success and named a foundation grant in his honor. The Felton Grant will always be the largest of the foundation’s grants, recognizing his tireless efforts to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate.



Colonel William Felton

Mark Rosen and John Felton

speaker at industry and company meetings.

In addition to his activities in the life insurance community, Felton was also an active volunteer in his community. He served as chairman and board member of the Dogwood Arts Festival in Knoxville, was voted Rotarian of the Year by the Rotary Club of Knoxville in both 2005 and 2006, and was founder of the East Tennessee Veterans Memorial. In addition, he was Knox County chairman of the Reagan–Bush campaign in the early 1980s, and was a member of the board of directors of the Army Transportation Museum Foundation. In Knoxville, Felton served in leadership roles for the Presidents Club of the Chamber of Commerce, the Girls’ Club, the Beautification Board, and the Civitan Club. He was also a very active member of the Episcopal Church community in Knoxville and served on various civic, social and church boards.

“Colonel Felton’s accomplishments were widespread, and he was both a personal and professional inspiration to many of us,” said Rosen. His legacy remains strong through the continued success of his friends and family—and the independent brokerage community.

Melinda Meyer, vice president, member office development, ValMark Securities, was the recipient of NAILBA’s 2011 Chairman’s Award.

The award, created in 2009, was developed to recognize the efforts of a NAILBA volunteer who has performed “over and above” normal expectations during the Chairman’s term.

In presenting the award to Meyer, Christi Daughenbaugh, 2011 NAILBA chair, observed, “Melinda is an active member of the government affairs committee, an active PAC con-



Melinda Meyer

tributor, and an active member of the editorial advisory panel.” Daughenbaugh also recognized Meyer as the “driving force” behind the development and launch of NAILBA’s agency successor networking group.

In addition to her other volunteer commitments with NAILBA, Meyer served as the 2011 chair of the professional development committee, which is responsible for the program development for the annual meeting.

Daughenbaugh continued, “I am grateful for Melinda’s tremendous efforts on NAILBA’s behalf and for our industry.”