



In Memoriam

AVRUSKIN, Stanley James (1936 - 2006) Age: 70

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Stanley James AvRuskin, died suddenly on October 1, 2006 in his 71st year. He leaves his wife of 40 wonderful years, Bernice Krafchik. Caring father to Hayley (Phil), Adam, Vanessa, and Gillian (Giorgos). Papa to Jake and Harry. Brother to twin Ted (Marilyn) and Arlene Soles. Recognized in courtrooms and jails across Ontario by his long silver hair, beard, and big black hat, Stan passionately championed the rights of young offenders. Respected by his peers and lauded by his clients, he creatively defended people since graduating from Osgoode Hall over forty years ago. The self-proclaimed "Willie Nelson of the defense bar", Stan

approached life with a twinkle in his eyes, a good-hearted nature and quirky humour. He socialized with judges, cowboys and street buskers - befriending people from all walks of life. A "western" scholar, influenced by Jesse James, Johnny Cash and the Highway Men, Stan always walked the line. He was a devoted husband and a caring father who will be deeply missed. The service and celebration of his life will be held on Wednesday, October 4th at 11:00 clock in YORK RECEPTION CENTRE, 160 Beecroft Rd. (Yonge Street, North of Shepherd, west on North York Blvd. 416 221-3404). Friends and family are welcome at 162 Beechwood Avenue following the service on Wednesday and anytime on Thursday. In memory of Stan, please say 'Howdy' and give a little something (food, coffee, a little money) to a person living on the streets of downtown Toronto. Say it's from the man with the big black hat.

Saying Farewell to Stanley "I was reading the paper this morning when I came across an article about a man named Stanley AvRuskin, a lawyer who cared enough about the youth in this city to do anything to represent them when they could not do so themselves. I found his obituary/article so interesting, I could not help myself...I had to write about his passing. I'm sure that Toronto youth, at least those lost in their ways, will miss this man dearly. - Amy"

As reported in this Wednesday's edition of The Toronto Star, it seems as though the courts have lost a dear friend and pioneer of youth law in the city. On October 1, 2006, the "cowboy of the courts" passed away. He was seventy years of age and only days away from his fortieth wedding anniversary to his wife, a dermatologist at Sick Kids Hospital. A native of Ontario, he grew up on a farm outside of the town in Elora. His understanding of the land and simpler way of life is perhaps what led him to his love of all things Western...namely Johnny Cash and Willie Nelson. The high value of a true cowboy's word, as seen and read about in so many Western movies and novels, was carried through into his daily life and actions in the courtroom. He passionately pursued a career in defending youth offenders. After graduating from Toronto's Osgoode Hall Law School, he set up his own practice which, even after his death, is still called at all hours of the day and night. People trusted him because they always knew where he stood. Right was right, wrong was wrong, and the innocent were innocent until proven guilty. His daughter, Hayley, stated to The Toronto Star: "He loved defending young offenders. He did tons of legal aid work and we would get collect calls at all hours of the night from jails everywhere." This ongoing desire for justice combined with his pleasure and humor of life was even conveyed by his office answering machine: "I'm back in the saddle and riding the trail of tears for justice. This is S. J. AvRuskin, criminal defence lawyer, the old desperado in the big, black cowboy hat, the Willie Nelson of the defence bar." AvRuskin's impact in the justice community was felt so strongly that the Jarvis St. provincial youth court is closed today until 2pm so that all can wish Stanley a final farewell. As per the family's wishes, do what Stanley J. AvRuskin would do: Say "Howdy" and give some food, coffee or money to someone less fortunate on the streets of Toronto... ..but please, mention that it's from the "man in the big, black hat."