

James Bracken Lee

April 28, 1930 ~ December 26, 2021

Dearest Evelyn: I want to tell you how much I have appreciated the support and many personal kindnesses over many years from Mr. Lee and you. I would like to share two memories of Mr. Lee that impacted my life and my legal career with you. As you may recall, Mr. Lee was on the Board at Legal Aid Society of Salt Lake when I first started there in 1991. When AJFA honored me (a surprise) on my 25 years at Legal Aid, Mr. Lee "confessed" to me that when I applied to be the director, he voted for my competition - who happened to be a more senior attorney at Legal Aid at the time. Although Mr. Lee said something to the effect of "I underestimated your potential", I replied that "the jury is still out on that assessment." Although he may have had his doubts about my role at Legal Aid, he has been nothing but an unrelenting supporter of Legal Aid Society as a long-standing institution in Salt Lake County (we celebrate our centennial in 2022!) and to me as its Director and on a personal level. The second memory is the advice he gave me as the new Director of Legal Aid when he left the Board. Even though Mr. Lee was one of the founders of Utah Legal Services, he warned me not to "get in bed with ULS" because if they got defunded from the federal government, he didn't want Legal Aid to be dragged down with them. When the agencies (Utah Legal Services, Disability Law Center and Legal Aid) were contemplating forming "and Justice for all" we did a feasibility study with the "powers that be" in the legal community. Of course, Mr. Lee was on the list, but because of the conversation above, I insisted that we meet with him LAST - hoping that we could use positive input from others to counter his prior admonition. When we did meet with him and explain the mission, he said "I fully support this and think it is an idea whose time has come." I was stunned - and for the first - and only - time in our relationship, I questioned him to the effect of "What the hell? What about your prior advice not to get in bed with government funded legal non-profits?!" He laughed and shrugged and said, "Times and circumstances change - this is the right thing to do and the legal community will support what you are doing." And to back up his prediction, he made sure Parsons Behle & Latimer was the first firm to make a pledge to the annual campaign and made sure it was the largest supporting donation - to set an example for the rest of the firms to follow. In both public forums and in person, Mr. Lee has been our "champion for justice" at "and Justice for all" and our joint efforts to make justice a reality for those most in need throughout Utah. You two have been so very generous with your advice, leadership, service and "purse." We simply would not be WHO we are and WHERE we are without the likes of Mr. Lee. I wanted to share this with you as you mourn, but celebrate Mr. Lee's life. I hope that sweet memories of a life shared together will - in time - be more prominent in your waking hours than the grief that you feel at his passing. All my best to you and your family. Stewart

- Stewart P Ralphs

Evelyn - my condolences. A life so welled lived and cherished. I

- Sarah Behrens

Dear Evelyn and Family, We were saddened to learn of James' passing. We became acquainted, of course, through you, Evelyn, and your incredible work on behalf of what is now The Road Home. James, too, supported the work of the shelter and through him, so did Parsons Behle and Latimer for which the agency was always very appreciative. In later years, it was our pleasure to have occasional contact with you and James at the annual Chili Affair and at the Utah Symphony. Evelyn, please know that we are thinking of you and your family at this time. Warm regards, Maun and David Alston

- David and Maun Alston

I served with James on the Governor's Tax Reform Commission. He was a very careful thinker and was motivated to find reasonable solutions to complex tax and economic questions. He made Utah a better place and his wisdom and insight will be missed. There are few members of the Utah Bar that make contributions like James Lee did. Gary Cornia Emeritus Dean Marriott School of Business Brigham Young University

- Gary Cornia

James was my friend. Our friendship began over 50 years ago when I served as a lowly cook in XI Corps Artillery, of which he was commander. That our friendship began in that context is a testament to James's good treatment of all, irrespective of station. Our friendship continued without interruption after I, too, became a lawyer. James thereafter continued to serve as my informal mentor and colleague. We both served long terms on the Utah Supreme Court's lawyer Disciplinary Committee. Since his involvement preceded mine, he was again my mentor and still my friend. Our regular lunches continued until COVID prevented them. He always carried a funny little notebook that recorded whose turn it was to pay. He was a dry, charmingly fastidious fellow. James was an uncommonly intelligent, kind, able man of stellar integrity. He improved everyone and everything he touched. He so loved and was proud of his wife Evelyn and his family. I send them all my condolences. Goodbye, my friend. I will miss you.

- Bruce A. Maak

Evelyn and Family, Please accept my deep condolences for Jim's passing. I knew and admired Jim from my earliest legal days in the 1970's, and always admired his great professionalism and heart. Evelyn, we have known each other through mutual community and public services. I wish you well in difficult times. Please let me know if I can ever be of assistance, Ralph

- Ralph Becker

Our hearts go out to you, Evelyn, at this time. What a great man and a great lady. What a comfort it always was to Margaret to know that when the school trust was in danger, wise counsel was always just a call away. James once said that serving on the Board of Trustees for the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration was amoung his most rewarding assignments. He will be fondly remembered and appreciated amoung those he impacted there.

- Howard and Margaret Bird