

Gary Becker

LOUISVILLE - Gary Becker, the founder of the Becker Law Office, was a caring and compassionate man, not just to his family and friends, but to the many people his law firm represented. Gary was a driven and determined attorney and an energetic advocate for those less fortunate than him. He was curious and complicated and uniquely fashionable. He loved good food, parties, arts and culture. And he lived a radically examined life, increasingly devoted to the spirit.

Gary was born on May 8, 1939, in Tell City, Indiana. He attended Indiana University, where he earned both a bachelors and a law degree. He was a distinguished trial lawyer for 20 years in Tell City. In 1985 he founded the Becker Law Office in Kentucky and grew it into a successful plaintiffs' advocacy practice that continues to this day. After his retirement from active engagement in the Becker Law Office, he moved to Santa Barbara, California, where his mission became totally focused on his charitable and philanthropic work. He died peacefully at home on June 21, 2018.

Gary was drawn to those in need and he promoted and supported many social justice organizations. He was particularly passionate about JustFaith Ministries based in Louisville, which transformed him; Fonkoze USA, which brought him into solidarity with the poor; and La Casa de Maria Retreat Center in Santa Barbara, which became his spiritual home. He served as a Deacon at the Catholic Church of the Epiphany in Louisville, before retiring to California to be near his children and grandchildren.

Most people remember Gary for his pioneering advocacy for injury victims when he became one of the first lawyers to start advertising for his legal services on television in 1985. Met with criticism, Gary raised awareness about the common man's ability to make claims to seek fair compensation against insurance companies and powerful corporations. When he started the Becker Law Office in Louisville, Gary already was a successful trial lawyer in Southern Indiana and was remembered as such



for decades after he left Tell City Indiana, making Louisville his home. He obtained a successful acquittal for a man accused of murder and represented dozens of local farmers against the government's condemnation of their farms for the construction of Highway 64 and for the Hoosier National Forest lakes, which affirmed his calling for justice by representing the common man.

Like Abraham Lincoln, and all lawyers prior to the creation of large, corporate law firms in the early 1900's, lawyers engaged in commercially protected free speech by advertising their services until these powerful corporate firms had the practice banned. The US Supreme Court overturned that ban in the late 1970's. Afterwards, lawyer advertising became commonplace.

Gary will be very greatly missed by Mary, his wife of 54 years, and by his daughters, Holly (married to Dermott Downs,) and Candice (married to Curt Schwarm,) and his son, Jeremy Becker, as well as by his granddaughters, Tallulah Downs and Ava Schwarm. He will live on in the memories of his sister, Meredith Oberhausen, his mother-in-law, and his many sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nieces, nephews, and friends. And he will be missed by his colleagues and former employees at Becker Law Office.

His family gives thanks for the fine caregivers who tended Gary at home during his last years. And the family is grateful for the support of the members of Social Venture Partners, the Catholic Church of the Beatitudes, and the Immaculate Heart Community.

Gary was always grateful for the many gifts in his life and he sometimes expressed this in poetry.

In this world of too much pain
Love has broken through again.
I want to celebrate -
Break out the champagne!

There will be a memorial celebration of Gary's wonderful life at a church service to be held at the Catholic Church of the Beatitudes in Santa Barbara, California, at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 1st, followed by lunch. A dinner and wake will be held on the evening of Friday, August 31st .