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Tribute to James E. Beaver

Mark Reutlinger

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I was here in New Zealand where I've been teaching when I got the news of Jim Beaver's death, and it came as more of a shock than had I been on the scene. I know the full impact of Jim's death will not hit me until I return and find him conspicuously absent. Jim was more than just one of the faculty, or one of the three of us who taught Evidence regularly. He was an institution in his own right, a part of our identity as a school and our personality as a faculty.

Jim Beaver had many sides to his life and personality, including popular teacher, respected scholar, art and Oriental carpet collector, even handball player. But the facets of Jim's life that I personally will miss most are two:

Jim was one of those rare colleagues with whom you always knew where you stood: he was not in the least reticent, and his views did not run to the moderate or wishy-washy. If the Emperor had no clothes, Jim would be the first (and sometimes only) one to say so. Faculty meetings will never be the same without Jim's booming voice setting forth his principles, quoting relevant authority, and pointing out the lack of logic or fairness in some proposed action of the faculty or administration.

That was Jim's public persona. But in his private life, Jim was an accomplished pianist who loved to share his talent with his students and colleagues. I will not be alone in missing those post-semester recitals at his and Anita's home, where surrounded by (and standing upon) numerous works of art, we would relax and be reminded that there is more to life than law school, and more to teaching than the law.

It is, perhaps, fitting that Jim's academic life coincided so closely with that of UPS as a law school. Jim was fiercely loyal to and staunchly supportive of the school he helped found. I am sure that he will be looking down on his old comrades, watching to be sure that in his absence we keep the faith and continue on our upward path.

We shall, of course, carry on as Seattle University, Jim; but we leave behind a University of Puget Sound School of Law with which you will forever be identified.

*Mark Reutlinger
Professor of Law
Seattle University School of Law*