

A MEMORIAL TO

MARVIN L. FUGINA

Born, March 17, 1911

Died, January 18, 1988

Marvin L. Fugina was born in the city of Fountain City, Wisconsin on the 17th day of March, 1911. He was the only child born to Martin L. Fugina and Emma (nee Schmoker) Fugina. His grandparents, Joseph and Elizabeth (nee Holzer) Fugina and John and Emma (nee Baertsch) Schmoker Sr., were pioneer settlers of Fountain City, coming to the city in the 1850's.

Marvin was educated in the local public schools and graduated with honors from high school in 1928. He went on to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, obtained his BA in 1932 and graduated from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1935. He returned to Fountain City and practiced law with his father, Martin L. Fugina, until his father's death in 1952. For the next 15 years, he practiced alone until being joined by his son, David J. Fugina, in January 1968. After being admitted to the bar in 1935, Marvin L. Fugina was engaged in the uninterrupted practice of law for over 52 years, until the day of his death, January 18,

1988. He served for 35 years as the city attorney for Fountain City, and was the Buffalo County Family Court Commissioner from 1975 until the time of his death.

On June 8, 1938, Marvin married Alethea H. Hofer of Cochrane, Wisconsin. He is survived by his widow, Alethea; his son, David J. Fugina; his daughter, Faye A. Conners; and four grandchildren, Eric M. and Mark S. Fugina and Jennifer E. and Bryon J. Conners.

The history of Marvin L. Fugina, like his father's before him, has been shaped and interwoven with the history of Fountain City and Buffalo Co., WI. It was here that he lived his entire life and learned the lessons that would serve him well during his lifetime. These lessons included not only formal schooling but lessons absorbed each day in the living of ones' life among family, friends and neighbors in "small town America". These were lessons about friendship, honor, integrity, respect, honesty, civility, generosity and the value of hard work. He came from a family tradition, a community and a time in history that expected a lot from each person.

Because of this background, Marvin was a man of principle, a man whose handshake and word meant something. He knew that he had a responsibility to his community and to those he served in his practice. He lived each day of his life with the idea of "doing the right thing", regardless if that was easy or very difficult.

Marvin was a mediator. He had a way about him that could address the problems between parties and somehow find a solution that would be agreeable to all and allow each party to come away with dignity. He was a good counselor, as he possessed the qualities of: being a good listener; an astute observer; a compassionate and feeling human being; a soft-spoken, articulate speaker with a gentle humor; a man of firm convictions, but one who was always willing to meet a person half-way; a man of wisdom and confidentiality.

Semantics are the sword of the practice of law and Marvin L. Fugina had an outstanding vocabulary! He picked and chose his words carefully, whether telling a story or writing the most detailed legal document. As a connoisseur of the English language, he was on occasion, charged by his colleagues as being "lengthy and wordy". Though this was usually said in jest, it was the truth. It was his nature to be thorough. If there were questions to be asked, he asked them. If there were clues missing, he looked, endlessly for them. If there was information needed, he obtained it. If there were hours needed to put it all together, he spared not a minute.

Marvin L. Fugina was a frugal man and disliked waste. This was a trait that was probably ingrained in him from his childhood years. He would use his typewriter ribbon until it could hardly be read, his pencils until they were little stubs, his erasers until they were impossible to hold in his fingers and the en-



velopes sent to him as scratch paper. He was the original "recycler" and he saved and "hoped to find" a use for just about anything. He was the same in his office practice, as he would never counsel his clients to pursue a frivolous litigation. He was always frankly honest with clients, since he knew that their dollars were important to them and he guarded their possessions as if they were his own.

Marvin L. Fugina was a gracious and genteel man. He was courteous to everyone regardless of their station in life. He made each person feel accepted and important. He tried his best to see the good in everyone, always giving an individual the benefit of the doubt. He very seldom spoke ill of anyone and would go out of his way to extend himself and his resources if needed. He knew great compensation in the expressed satisfaction of his clients and felt special gratification just knowing he pleased whomever he served socially or professionally.

Marvin L. Fugina was a teacher. He enjoyed passing on the wisdom and knowledge that he had acquired. He had learned the day to day workings of a law office from his father and who better to teach his son, than himself. It pleased Marvin a great deal to have shared his years in the practice of law with his father and his son. Since its start in 1895, there have been three generations of attorneys in the Fugina Law Office. It was a privilege that he took seriously. To serve fourth and fifth generation clients was a reward mixed with heartfelt obligation and

he always wanted to be certain that the Fugina Law Office did it's best.

Living one's lifetime in Fountain City, Wisconsin could not be complete without recognition of the Mississippi River and the bluffs along it's banks. These landmarks were Marvin's backyard. From childhood he had accompanied his father and grandfather into the world of nature. He learned to swim, boat, fish, and hunt at his pioneer grandfather, John Schmoker's, knee. Marvin's father was influential in the acquiring and the acceptance of the Merrick State Park lands by the State of Wisconsin. The appreciation of the mysteries of nature and the need for sound ecological management were impressed on him by two preceding generations. Marvin was an avid outdoorsman. When not with his family or in his office, he was happiest when on the river; fishing, duck hunting, boating, and observing or in the hills and valleys hunting for deer, partridge, or squirrel. These activities called him to be one of nature's guardians. The river and the hills were part of him. Together they were a tradition, a history from 1911-1988.

His professional reputation was one of dignity and respect. At the occasion of his 50th anniversary of the practice of law, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, by letter, recognized his "exemplary reputation" as an attorney. The Wisconsin Bar Association recognized him as "a professional of the highest integrity and principles." The Board of Professional

Responsibility, of the Supreme Court, recognized him as "exemplifying the highest ideals of the legal profession". All of the members of the bar who practiced with him truly echo those accolades.

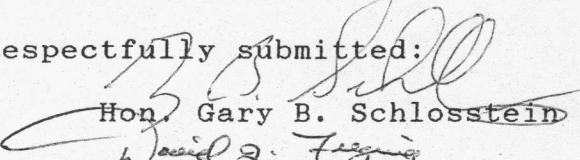
The greatest thing that can be said about a man, is that he did his best and that he will be missed and remembered fondly. Marvin L. Fugina, was such a man. Those who had the pleasure to know him and work with him do, indeed, miss his presence and will remember him most fondly.

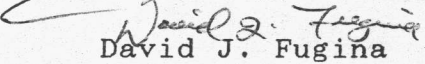
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The committee appointed by the Tri-County Bar Association to present to the Circuit Court of Buffalo County, Wisconsin, a memorial in honor of the late Marvin L. Fugina presents the preceding; and upon motion duly made, it was adapted and moved that it be filed as part of the permanent records of the Circuit Court of Buffalo County, Wisconsin.

January 11, 1991

Respectfully submitted:

  
Hon. Gary B. Schlosstein

  
David J. Fugina