



Long-time Supreme Court Justice Jerry Larson dies

HARLAN - Long-time Iowa Supreme Court Justice Jerry Larson, 81, Harlan, died April 25 at Myrtue Medical Center in Harlan.

Services will be held Monday, April 30 at 11 a.m. at First Baptist Church in Harlan with burial in the Harlan Cemetery. Family will greet friends Sunday, April 29 from 5-8 p.m. at the church.

Larson was the longest-serving justice in the history of the Iowa Supreme Court, having served from 1978-2008.

The Justices of the Iowa Supreme Court said Wednesday that the justices, former

colleagues, and friends remember Larson as a dedicated public servant whose long career combined a profound respect for the rule of law, an unwavering support for fair and impartial courts, and a great fondness for his hometown and the Shelby County Courthouse.

"The Iowa court family is saddened by the passing of former Justice Jerry Larson," Iowa Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Cady said. "I had the honor and great pleasure to serve with

Justice Larson for my first 10 years as a justice on the supreme court. He was a great mentor and better friend with a keen legal mind, a quick wit, and a deep love of the law. Our sympathies go out to his entire family."

Larson was appointed a district judge in 1975. He served on the district bench until his appointment to the Iowa Supreme Court in 1978. In September 2007, Larson surpassed Justice Theodore Garfield (1941 - 1969) as the longest serving justice in the history of the Iowa Supreme Court.

During his 29 years as a justice, Larson wrote 991 opinions. As a member of the Iowa Supreme Court, he

played a key role in developing the court's rules for expanded media coverage of Iowa's courts. These rules have served as a model for other states.

Larson was born and raised in Harlan. He received his bachelor's degree in 1958 and law degree in 1960, both from the University of Iowa. While at law school, he was an editor of the Iowa Law Review. Following his gradua-

tion from law school, he was a law clerk for U.S. 8th Circuit Court of Appeals Judge M.D. Van Oosterhout.

Later, Larson practiced law in Harlan with his father and served two terms as Shelby County Attorney before his appointment to the district court bench.

Larson is survived by daughters Becky (Bob) Larson of Bettendorf and Suzy (Jay) Christensen of Harlan; sons Jeff (Shelli) Larson of Harlan and Dave (Lea) Larson of Harlan; 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Jeff Larson is the chief judge in the Fourth Judicial District and Suzy Christensen is a district judge in the Fourth District. Becky Larson is an elementary teacher in Bettendorf and Dave Larson is an attorney in Avoca.

Pauley Jones Funeral Home in Harlan is in charge of arrangements.