

'Human rights hero' Gerald Gall mourned

SHERIE A. PRATT
Edmonton Journal

Karen Gall has lost her husband and best friend while Edmonton has lost a "human rights hero" in Gerald Gall, co-founder of the groundbreaking John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights.

A University of Alberta law professor for more than 30 years, an internationally respected advocate for human rights and a tireless community builder, Gerald Gall died Sunday at age 65.

The couple, who had three children, would have celebrated their 39th wedding anniversary Monday, Karen Gall said from their St. Albert home.

Instead, the family and community gathered that day at the Edmonton Jewish Cemetery, where many paid tribute to her husband's lifelong work of legal scholarship and promotion of human rights here and abroad.

Gerald Gall saw many of his hopes and dreams come to fruition and his work had a direct impact on making Edmonton "a more livable city," said Andy Knight, chairman of the U of A political science department.

Gall was a key organizer of the high-profile 1998 human rights conference that brought South Africa's Bishop Desmond Tutu, former federal chief justice Antonio Lamer and other leaders in human rights to Edmonton to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

From that conference, Gall and others founded the city's John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, of which Gall was president for seven years.

The centre was named for the late McGill University law professor John Peters Humphrey, principal drafter of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

In 2004, Gall led the campaign to make Edmonton the



Gerald Gall

first municipality in North America to declare itself a human rights city, with the object of educating and advocating for rights at home.

"He was concerned about the homeless, native populations and ethnic populations at home, as well as international human rights," said Knight.

As author of *The Canadian Legal System*, a highly acclaimed legal treatise, Gall also had a special talent as a collaborator between academia

and the community on social justice issues, said Satya Das, a co-founder of the Humphrey Centre.

"He really understood the power and breadth of the law to alleviate discrimination, and he had a very human interpretation of inequity," said Das.

Renee Vaugeois, executive director of the Humphrey Centre, said Gall firmly believed in educating young people in a culture of human rights and respect. For that reason, the centre has strong education programs and organizes a four-day biennial global youth assembly in partnership with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and the non-partisan Canadian organization Rights & Democracy.

"Edmonton has lost one of its heroes," Vaugeois said

just two weeks ago. Gall finished his chapter in a new book, *The History of Human Rights in Alberta* and Vaugeois noted he has educated generations of young lawyers in

constitutional and human rights law. Gall was also a former executive director of the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice.

In 2010, Gall received the Law Society of Alberta and Canadian Bar Association (Alberta) award for distinguished service in legal scholarship. In 2001, he was appointed officer of the Order of Canada.

Karen Gall, who accompanied her husband on many trips to China, Argentina and other countries, to champion human rights, said his compassion came from his Jewish upbringing.

"He had a strong belief in social justice," she said. "He was a very caring individual."

Gall had been ill with lung disease for some months and died of heart failure following surgery, she said.

The John Humphrey Centre is setting up the Gerald Gall Memorial Fund to honour his work and legacy.

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head freeway at 1 p.m. on a Friday.

■ I love it when my horn blows when I lock my car door. It accomplishes two things: 1) I know the door is locked 2) I can watch sensitive types get annoyed.

■ Why is the elevator at my seniors centre almost always out of order? It is very difficult to climb the stairs to the third floor carrying groceries, laundry, etc. UBC gives honorary degrees to 74 former Japanese-Canadian students unjustly forced to leave their studies in the early '40s. U of A honours the CEO of baby-formula-pushing-and-water-purifying-and-bothing Nestle.

■ A no-win situation. Get out of Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Iran. Let's mind our own business. They will work it out.

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Picture: BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Jake S., Jacob S., Ethan S., Bailie K. and Lauren K., and front row, from left, Jessica B., Jennifer K., Chelsea W., Jonah S. and Zachary B.

WWW.CJNEWS.COM and click the "Family Moments"

Lawyer was 'genuinely committed' to human rights

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Gerald Lorne Gall — local, national and international human rights advocate, University of Alberta law professor, and a *CJN* columnist from 2005 to 2010 — died March 18. He was 65, and had experienced serious health issues for the past year.

A native of Toronto who received his BA from Queen's University and his LLB from the University of Windsor, Gall moved to Edmonton with his wife, Karen, 38 years ago to begin teaching at the law school there. They had been married the previous year on March 19 — ironically, the date of his funeral.

Among the honours listed on Gall's 38-page CV, he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2001. In 1995, he was awarded the Alberta Human Rights Award, and in 2010, he received a Distinguished Service Award for Service in Legal Scholarship from the Law Society of Alberta and the Canadian Bar Association.

A key organizer of the 1998 International Conference on Universal Rights and Human Values and a founder of the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, Gall was the organization's president at the time of his death. The centre has set up a memorial fund in his honour.

Karen Gall told *The CJN* in an e-mail that her husband's Jewish values "guided his passion for equality, human rights and justice."

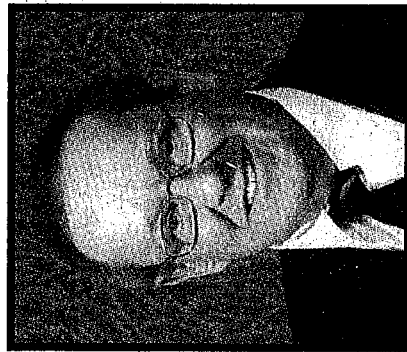
Their daughter, Wendy, said in a eulogy that her father would say, "If it's a human rights issue, it's a Jewish issue, meaning that a person could not ignore an injustice just because it didn't affect them."

Her brother, Andrew, also in a eulogy, recalled their father's playful side at home and spoke of his teaching style at the university. He called him a "committed educator" who lectured without notes or props and believed that lawyers needed strong language skills and an understanding of current events to be professional and effective.

Gall's book, *The Canadian Legal System*, was "an innovative text" that explained Canadian law in an accessible way, Andrew said.

Supreme Court Justice Rosalie Abella said, "Professionally, Gerry was genuinely and unwaveringly committed to the protection of human rights. Personally, he was a warm, wonderful and generous mensch."

Bernie Farber, former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, recalls Gall as "a man of great sincerity [who] had tremendous integrity, and it was really his fidelity to justice that singled him out as a special person."



Gerald Gall

Farber had a long association with Gall, who served as CJC's Edmonton representative and chair of its law and social action committee in the mid-1980s. "He was an eminently fair man who you could go to at any time, and you would get a fair hearing and very wise counsel," Farber said.

Rabbi Reuven Bulka, a former co-president of CJC, told *The CJN* in an e-mail that Gall "was a dedicated Jew. He was smart and humble. He always was full of great advice, but he was a gentleman who offered advice, and never imposed it. He was a pleasure to work with."

Gall is survived by his wife Karen; children Melanie, Wendy, and Andrew; and sisters Phyllis Elifan and Carole Robertson, both of Toronto.

Allan Raymond worked to preserve community's legacy

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Allan Raymond was the type of fellow who might have loved to attend his own funeral.

He died March 9 at age 90, and as those who knew him