

J.W. (JOE) KANUKA, Q.C.

Joseph William Kanuka was born and raised in Regina. His parents, who came to Canada from the Ukraine, stressed the importance of education, respect for elders, and the law. After high school Mr. Kanuka studied Commerce at the University of Saskatchewan where one of his professors remarked that he should think about going into law because it was doubtful he would ever be an accountant.

Mr. Kanuka was called to the Saskatchewan Bar in 1959. One of his clients, an oil transporter, recommended him to the Saskatchewan Trucking Association who needed someone to act on behalf of a number of highway carriers wishing to oppose a railway application for certain trucking rights.

Even though the hearing was the next day Mr. Kanuka, who knew little about the highway transportation industry, agreed to take the case. After spending a long evening with about ten truckers who educated him about their business, he went to the hearing the following morning and won his case. After that he had ten or more highway carriers who would go nowhere else. He had become a trucking lawyer.

During the following years Mr. Kanuka practiced extensively in the area of transportation law, acting for hundreds of motor carriers, providing advice on all matters that effect transport operations, and appearing before most transportation boards in Canada and the Interstate Commerce Commission in the United States. He has long been regarded as an expert in this area. In the past several years he has also become involved in the regulation of short line railways in Saskatchewan.

In his long and illustrious transportation career Mr. Kanuka was directly associated with many highway carrier issues. Some of the most memorable in which he participated were approaching the Highway Boards in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta, to have joint hearings; approaching the Boards throughout Canada to have joint hearings; co-operation meetings between the three prairie Boards and the U.S. Interstate Commerce Commission; being a founding member, and president, of the Canadian Transportation Lawyers Association and being elected an honorary life member.

Throughout his life Mr. Kanuka stressed the benefits of education and sports, and he and his wife June-Ann instilled this belief in their five children, all of whom excel in sports and their professions.

Mr. Kanuka, who was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1979, is currently the senior partner of Kanuka Thuringer in Regina. He is a member of the Canadian and American Transport Lawyers Association, the Canadian Trucking Association, the Law Society of Saskatchewan, and the Canadian and Regina Bar Associations, and is a past lecturer at the University of Regina. A life long interest and involvement in sports led to his induction into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame in 1998.

Inducted into the
Saskatchewan Transportation Hall of Fame
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