

## **Mervin James Evans**

**(April 5, 1952 - Feb. 3, 2008)**

Mervin James Evans was born April 5, 1952 in Consort, Alberta. Mervin was the third son born to Frank and Elsie Evans.

Merv was raised in Altario. After completing high school, Merv ventured to Edmonton to try his hand at surveying with the Mid West Survey Company.

On March 18, 1972, Merv married his best friend Frances Foot. Their marriage was blessed with their first son Jason. After two years of city living, our country boy at heart moved his family home to join his dad and brother Larry on the farm. Merv's family was twice more blessed with the addition of their daughter Janilea and their son Tyler.

Merv loved farming and all the challenges that it brought. In the early 1980's, Merv and his brother Larry decided that farming wasn't enough and they started M&L Trucking. In the beginning it was a one truck trucking company. Over the past twenty five years, Merv worked day and night to grow the business and see all his dreams come true.

For those of you that knew Merv best, you will always remember how much he loved his horses. From a young age, Merv spent endless hours with his horses. He had a gentle hand and a forgiving heart no matter how wild the horse. Merv always got back into the saddle no matter how hard the fall.

Merv loved to hunt and fish. He shared his passion with his dad, his sons, their wives, and his grandchildren. On many occasions, Merv would sit with them and never shoot at anything, but have more fun turning on and off the Roboduck than he could ever have pulling the trigger.

Merv will always be known for his ability to make people laugh. Merv was always a practical joker. He was always scheming and planning. He had a contagious laugh that when you heard him you just had to laugh even if you didn't know the joke.

Merv's greatest pleasure was spending time with his family and friends. Merv took great pleasure in watching his children and grandchildren succeed. He was always there to support all of them. From watching hockey games and dance recitals to sitting on the floor playing games, he always took the time to let them know he was there.

Merv has spent the past thirty five years loving his wife, his friend, his soul mate. They were partners not only in marriage, but in business. They worked side by side every day, each one picking up when the other needed a hand.

Mervin will be lovingly missed by his wife Frances; children Jason (Stacy) Evans, Janilea (Leon) Hager, Tyler (Naomi) Evans; grandchildren Tristen Evans, Natasha Evans, Kailea Hager and Kiera Hager; father Frank (Dorothy) Evans; brothers Ken (Jo-Ann) Evans, Larry (Ruth) Evans; sister Gail (Monty) Mattson; Mother In-Law Ellen Foot; brother in-law Keith (Shirley) Foot; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and many friends.

Mervin was predeceased by his mother Elsie Evans (1989) and his Father-In-Law Bill Foot (2007).

Funeral Service was held Saturday, February 9, at the Altario School Gym in Altario, Alberta. Officiating Clergy was Rev. Roger Kett and Rev. Sandy Macpherson. Beryl Ward was the organist and reflections were given by Frank Murphy and Jim Evaskevich. Pallbearers were Jim

Evaskevich, Frank Murphy, Ron Chopek, Dale Chopek, Barry Hager, Neil Galloway, Al Bouchard, Jim Hirsekorn, Ron Hager, and Claire Coates. Also M&L Trucking-Honor Guard. KAC Lions-Honor Guard, and the Consort Peewees Hockey Team.

Memorial tributes can be directed to the Canadian Cancer Society, #102 - 1865 Dunmore Road SE, Medicine Hat, Alberta, T1A 1Z8; or the Consort Hospital Ladies Auxiliary (After occasional visits to the Consort Hospital, Merv felt strongly that an additional super comfortable bed may be beneficial to others.), P.O. Box 310, Consort, Alberta, T0C 1B0.

Following the funeral service, family and friends were invited to a luncheon hosted by the KAC Communities and Penn West Energy Trust in the Altario Community Hall.

MacLean's Funeral Home of Oyen in care of arrangements.

### ***Tribute by Frank Murphy***

Jim and I recognize how special Mervin was to each of you and hope that our tributes help bring back some personal times that you spent with Mervin.

I'm Frank Murphy. I have had the fun of being a friend of Mervin's since Grade 1. Some 36 years ago my two best friends got married to each other. To so many of us here today Mervin and Frances falling head over heels in love and staying that way has enhanced our lives. I would like to thank Tyler and Naomi, Janilea and Leon, Jason and Stacy and Frances for giving Jim and I the privilege of doing the tributes and I pray that we can come close to doing it justice.

To begin with I would like to say to TJ, Natasha, Kailea and Kiera, you know how much you loved your Grandpa. Papa Merv was a man with a big heart who not only loved you at least as much as you loved him but he was very proud of each of you. As you look around today, it is important for you to realize that the huge number of people and all of the flowers show how much we all loved and respected your Papa Merv. Your grandpa was very important to so many people and that is why we are here today. All the people here today are here because of the love and the respect that they hold for the Evans family. We know that he loved all of his family very much, however his greatest love was for your Grandma Frances. From now on your hugs will be even more important to your Nana.

Mervin's family has done an excellent job in preparing the eulogy which everyone has received. His accomplishments as well as his paths in life were a very major part of who Mervin was. Today I will try to focus on the personality of the man we knew and loved.

Mervin's philosophy on life was that it was meant to be fun. Mervin loved teasing and playing practical jokes (things like wadding up wet paper and putting it in the ball receiver of a friends horse trailer or putting garlic salt in the sugar bowl). But the real neat thing about Merv was that he equally enjoyed having someone play a trick on him, if anyone was sharp enough to get the job done. One Halloween night when Mervin and Frances were living in the little house over on Laing's, a group of us waited until the wee hours and had a big round straw bale ready on the back of a pickup truck. We backed up to the front door and thought we were being quiet enough getting the bale pushed in against the door so that they couldn't get out. As we hurried to crawl back in the cab of the truck there was Mervin sitting in the truck laughing and drinking one of our beer.

Mervin lived life and all aspects of it with a passion. His family and his friends, his fellow Lions, his neighbors, his work and those we worked with and his hobbies were all extremely important

to Mervin. Those of us here today as well as so many more were fortunate to be a part of that. Everyone in Mervin's life was treated with respect and kindness.

There was never enough time for Mervin. There were always so many things and so many people that he wanted more time for. The days, the weeks, right up to the years were never long enough to fulfill all of his passions. Mervin most definitely lived life to the fullest.

Always being behind schedule it was lucky for Merv that we live so far out in the sticks, he made up a lot of time on the road. When his license accumulated too many points, he learned to stop fast when the cop lights came on to allow him time to position Frances behind the steering wheel while the cop car was turning around.

Frances quickly got used to being the last to leave any social function they attended.

Together Mervin and Frances raised a family that they loved and made them overflow with pride. Over the years the love and pride Mervin felt also grew into respect. Jason, Janilea and Tyler have grown up with excellent values and principles. You have done well at work and at play as well as at accumulating friends and earning respect and love in life. Merv has been proud of his children, and particularly proud of the spouses each of you has chosen. As you fell in love with your spouses your Dad and Mom also fell in love with them. Mervin not only grew to love and be proud of Stacy, Leon and Naomi but they also earned a high level of respect from him. Not only did Mervin make all of your worlds a better place, you did the same for him. Much like Mervin becoming Mervin and Frances, the family has become Jason and Stacy, with their family TJ and Tash, Leon and Janilea, with their daughters Kailea and Kiera, Tyler and Naomi. Our hearts and love go out to all of you.

This week has been heartbreaking for so many of us but we have to be thankful for the years and the memories. I know that Mervin will remain a part of us forever, his influence was strong. Although Mervin lived more in life than many people could in 200 years, we feel he was taken from us far too early. My heart and sympathy go out to the many friends today but even more so to his family. Along with the immediate family I have just mentioned, also to: his Dad Frank and Dorothy; his Mother-in-law Ellen Foot; his brother Ken and Jo-Ann; his brother Larry and Ruth; his sister Gail and Monty Mattson; His brother-in-law Keith and Shirley Foot; as well as his nieces and nephews.

#### *Tribute by Jim Evaskevich*

When I was asked to say a few words today and had to think about what I might say, the first thing that came to mind was my childhood years growing up in this area, and the great fun I had whenever I stayed over at Mervin's place.

When Merv and I were young boys we spent a lot of time together riding horses. I don't think either of us had a bicycle, so we spent a lot of our time jumping off the horses at full gallop onto hay piles, playing cowboys and Indians on horseback (Mervin was a bit older so he made me be the Indian), teaching our fathers' horses how to race like thoroughbreds, and doing things that ranch kid's did back in the '60's.

With that came a lot of experience and one that I won't ever forget is the time King (Merv's Shetland pony) got away from Merv while we were out riding. Merv, being faster than I was, caught up to King, and by the time I arrived King was speeding off and Merv was kneeling on the road in obvious pain. I asked what was wrong and Merv simply raised his shirt and showed me the 2 perfect hoof prints on his chest that King had left as a parting gift. We both broke out

into laughter and finally caught up with King at the barn where he was enjoying fresh grass out front.

Another day things got a bit tense when Merv decided to shoot the hired man in the ass with a BB gun; we had a good run with the hired man in hot pursuit and the event added greatly to our growing up experience.

Merv and his brother Larry always had a very special relationship. Early in the years, Larry showed us how milk would stay in the milk pail even as it was over your head by swinging it in a circular windmill fashion. Unfortunately, Larry's pace of swinging was a bit slow at one point and the milk spilled out on his head, which I believe added to Larry's growing up experience and certainly Merv's entertainment.

Merv graduated to real horse racing, riding for Norman Dewald in the local horse races that were popular in those days, where he showed the passion early in life that he had for everything he tried his hand at. During this time he also was an excellent teacher for me in the art of car racing. If it could go fast, Merv wanted to drive it and he was good at it. Uncle Frank's old '67 Impala was the fastest car in the country in those days and Merv could make that Impala do things that I didn't know cars could do. I don't think Uncle Frank knew cars could do that either and we sure didn't tell him.

Soon after this time, Merv met the love of his life, Frances, and they have been inseparable since.

The enduring theme is that you always had a good time when Merv was around. If he wasn't playing a practical joke on someone, he was busy enjoying whatever his current interest was, and if you got together over a bottle you knew you were dug in at least until the bottle was empty. When you went to a dance or a party of some sort you always knew Merv was there because you would hear his tell-tale giggle and he always made the event more fun for his friends.

We have all spent this past week saddened and felt a loss that will never be filled. I do know however, that Mervin knew the hazards of this business that most of us are in and that danger did not and should not stop any of us from pursuing our interests and dreams. Mervin pursued his dreams without hesitation and lived his life full every day.

Merv's legacy will forever be passed on through our memories.

### ***To Our Friend Mervin***

On behalf of the Lions Club, I would like to share a few thoughts with you.

Mervin was a fine young man and I am proud to say I was his friend. Not only was Merv a proud Lions member, he was a great community leader. Mervin donated his time and efforts without ever asking for anything in return. It's men like this that help to keep communities and clubs alive and thriving.

Mervin was quite a jokester and I can see that his sons and nephews have picked up on this trait. If only the rest of us could have some of Merv's mannerisms, the world would be a much better place to live.

Mervin and Frances were always front and center when it came to helping out. Well rest in peace my friend, because this time we got you covered.

Frances is one of the most respected and strongest woman that I have known and through her we shall always remember Mervin.

Mervin was a strong believer in the principals of Lionism and I'm sure he's already gathering up all the Lions who have gone before him and making another Lions club in the heaven above.

Sometimes you can forget the pain in your heart but you will never forget the love, because Mervin will always be there forever. Goodbye my Friend.

Dan Beier,

*President KAC Lions*