



Jefferson Thornton Dorsey

October 13, 1954 - March 8, 2014

It is with deep sorrow that the family of Jefferson (JD) Thornton Dorsey announces his passing on March 8, 2014 after a short illness. Jefferson Dorsey lived a richly faceted life, as attorney, musician, photographer and mentor. He graduated from Goddard College, Vermont College and Vermont Law School, and had been admitted to the bar in Vermont, Tennessee and Arizona. He was highly respected for his work in the Post-conviction Defender's office in Nashville, most notably for his defense and arguments for a new trial in the Philip Workman case, appearing on Good Morning America with Matt Lauer and eventually arguing in front of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. While in Arizona he worked with both death row inmates and Native Americans in federal prison. He was an ardent and tireless fighter for the rights of those disenfranchised in our society.

JD's reputation as a musician was well established, and he played in numerous bands over the years including the Something Quick Band in Vermont, Cheetah Palomina in Nashville and most recently as drummer for Jane Rose and the Deadend Boys, touring more widely. He recorded with Jesse and Noah Bellamy and was beginning to work in the production end, most recently with Mike Lawlor.

Combining his passions for justice and music, Jefferson organized several benefits for "Choosing Life" including the 1999 Journey of Hope concert in

Nashville featuring musical performances by the Indigo Girls, Steve Earle, Emmylou Harris and Jackson Brown as well as a speech by Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking* (later made into a film starring Susan Sarandon). He organized other rallies to educate the public about the Death Penalty.

As a photographer he contributed images to album covers, posters, and publications, documenting carefully and thoughtfully, recording the essence of his subject matter. He was beginning to work in videography.

Beyond his notable accomplishments, he was a wonderful, generous, funny and kind human being, a friend, mentor and inspiration to so many, defender of the underdog, beloved husband to Anastasiya, father to Jasmine and brother to Frances. A rebel to the end, he is deeply missed. A private memorial service has taken place in Tennessee. and a graveside family service in Alabama. A Vermont memorial service is planned in Montpelier on June 7th, 2014.

Tribute Wall



“ *Really miss you my brother... Rest in Peace.*

Johnny Lyon - June 13, 2014 at 06:22 PM



“ *Beautifully written piece! Loved him dearly!*

Sarah Munro - June 12, 2014 at 07:02 PM