



2009

Barefoot Sanders

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Recommended Citation

William Wayne, *Barefoot Sanders*, 62 SMU L. Rev. 1703 (2009)
<https://scholar.smu.edu/smulr/vol62/iss5/13>

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BAREFOOT SANDERS

*William Wayne Justice**

IF there is such a thing as a born leader, my friend, the Honorable Barefoot Sanders, was one of them. My first encounter with him, or at least the first time I ever heard his name, occurred in Austin close to sixty years ago. I was on the campus of the University walking along, when I happened to see something I thought very peculiar. Outlined in paint on the walkway were the tracks of a single, unshoed human foot, seemingly marked along the way. I marveled at this strange emblem for some time, and finally asked some passing student what it meant. He told me it was a campaign advertisement for a fellow running for president of the student body, a fellow with the odd but memorable name of Barefoot Sanders. It was of no surprise that, of course, he won that race.

After that time, Barefoot Sanders passed from one richly deserved success to the next. In the 50's, he served with my then future law partner Bill Kugle in the Texas Legislature. In 1961, he was appointed United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas at the same time that I was appointed U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District and our late friend Woodrow Seals, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District. Unlike Woodrow and I, however, Barefoot did not remain in Texas long. His superiors having realized his merits, he was soon in Washington, first as assistant deputy attorney general, and finally as President Lyndon Johnson's legislative counsel. In all those offices, Barefoot Sanders distinguished himself, as he had throughout his career, with notable gifts of intellect, vigor, judgment, and integrity.

Judge Barefoot Sanders was a remarkable man, who through his life's work, represented the nobler aspects of law. It is an honor to have counted him my friend and colleague.

* Senior United States District Judge.

