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Gordon D. Schaber Tribute

Gerald Caplan*

Dean Schaber lived many lives and, in each, contributed mightily to the public welfare. As a member of the bar, the Dean was a practitioner, trial judge, presiding judge, and a judicial administrator. As an academic, he was a gifted teacher, visionary dean, and national educational leader. As a private citizen, he was a political leader and a philanthropist.

Throughout his life, Dean Schaber attracted extraordinary individuals. They flocked to him, valuing his wise and gentle counsel, and treasured their relationship. In this issue, four individuals who knew the Dean well share their recollections. Each is a teacher, a scholar, and an educator.

Justice Kennedy, perhaps our nation's most distinguished jurist (and a two decade long member of the McGeorge faculty) provides the lead essay. It is the eulogy he delivered at Dean Schaber's memorial service on November 22 to a large gathering of mourners, a caring and erudite reminiscence.

Eugene Scoles, former dean and professor emeritus at Oregon and a frequent visitor to McGeorge, recounts how Dean Schaber transformed a small night school into a unique institution with a lovely 23 acre campus, a distinguished faculty, and strong programs in transnational business, state governmental affairs, and advocacy; and how, characteristically, Dean Schaber generously assisted students, alumni, and others.

McGeorge Professor Claude Rohwer, Dean Schaber's long-time colleague, co-author, and valued friend, examines a particularly vibrant decade in Dean Schaber's life, 1965-74. Here we see the depth and variety of the Dean's achievements and the grace and manner by which he proceeded.

Finally, James P. White, the consultant to the Legal Education Section of the American Bar Association, and himself an influential educator who has reshaped and elevated American legal education, offers his recollections of Dean Schaber.

As a personal footnote, I cite Dean Schaber's courage and dignity. Whatever the challenge he faced, particularly those posed by illness and disease—polio, stroke, post-polio syndrome, diabetes, kidney failure—Dean Schaber continued his life's work, advancing McGeorge, philanthropy, and assisting others.

In remembering the Dean, these words of Williams James are apt: "We measure ourselves by many standards. Our strength and our intelligence, our wealth and even our good luck . . . warm our heart and make us feel ourselves a match for life. But deeper than all such things and able to suffice unto itself without them, is the . . . amount of effort we can put forth He who can make much is a hero." Gordon Schaber was a hero in his life and remains so in our memories.

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In Memoriam
Gordon D. Schaber
1927 - 1997