

litigant. He, like the other judges in the district, conducts most of his civil and criminal matters by telephone or video conference, and has conducted only a few in person matters so far. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Magistrate Judge Krause is enjoying his new job, and he looks forward to seeing more people in the courthouse in person as soon as it is possible.

### **What's On Your Wall?**

## **Walter LaFeber: Legendary Historian, Generous Mentor, and Lifelong Friend**

**By C. Evan Stewart**

Dating from the 1960s, Walter LaFeber has been the nation's pre-eminent scholar in the history of American foreign policy. Recipient of the Beveridge and Gustave Myers awards, the Bancroft and Ellis W. Haley prizes, and the American Historical Association's 2013 Award for Scholarly Distinction, Walt was a legendary teacher of generations of Cornell students. For the last 50 years, I was Walt's student and friend, and the accompanying picture graces my office wall.

In the second semester of my freshman year at Cornell (spring 1971), I had the incredible good fortune of having Professor LaFeber lead my tiny freshman seminar. I did not realize at the time how lucky I was to be in a class with this great scholar every week, having him grade my weekly

essays, and to be drawn into his gentle but utterly absorbing approach to the understanding of American history.

That began a procession of LaFeber courses – his famous two semester survey of American foreign policy, his advanced seminar, the history honors program, and finally a tutorial course in my last semester of reading American history books that “had to be read.” I will never forget the oral defense of my honors thesis before Walt and my other history mentor, Joel Silbey. Petrified to be under the gun before these two intellectual giants, both men gently fed me softballs and I somehow survived the historical interrogation.

Unlike many of Walt's students who went on to pursue academic or diplomatic careers, I went on to law school. But we never lost touch. Indeed, Walt always remembered

how I house-sat for him in the summer of 1977 when I was studying for the bar exam.

Life as a young associate in New York City did not allow for a lot of free time, but with Walt's help I stayed current, not only with his scholarship, but with other leading works in the field. One wonderful side benefit was the sparking of a decades-long written correspondence between us which now fills file drawers (unthinkable in today's email era). Walt encouraged me to join the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (“SHAFR”); and in the aftermath of the Enola Gay exhibit disaster, he engineered my going on the board of trustees of the American Historical Association. Walt was also instrumental in my gaining membership in the Council on Foreign Relations.



The author and Professor LaFeber at a Cornell graduation.

## Generous of Spirit

One of the highlights of my life came when Walt gave his inaugural address as president of SHAFR in 1999. Focusing on the critical role William Henry Seward played in formulating the basic blue-print of American foreign policy, I was stunned to see him publicly cite to an article I had published on Seward (in the *Federal Bar Council News* (April 1998)). When I expressed my (astonished) gratitude, Walt's reaction was typical: "Why are you thanking me? You did the work." As scores of LaFeber disciples can (and will) attest, that graciousness and generosity of spirit was typical of this special man.

For many, many years, on my frequent trips to Cornell one night was always devoted to a visit to Walt's beautiful house (overlooking the gorge), where we would catch up over a glass of wine and then head to dinner at his favorite restaurant. A few years ago, when I had some extra time free, we took a trip to the Auburn, New York, home/museum of our mutual hero, W. H. Seward. The highlight of that experience was our frequent correcting of the tour guide who got historical details not quite right!

As Walt's health was failing, I wanted to do something to honor this man who has been so important to me for so long. Thankfully, he lived to see the establishment of an endowment in his name at Cornell. His response was typical Walt: "Your proposal obviously knocked me out [and is] uncommonly generous. . . . My health is not the best right now, so I cannot try to thank you in person

and this will have to do for awhile, but Sandy [his wonderful wife] and I want you to know how much we treasure this place because of you."

Walter LaFeber died on March 9, 2021. He was a wonderful man; I will miss him terribly.

## **COVID-19**

## The Show That Did Go On

By Sarah L. Cave, U.S. Magistrate Judge



The lights of Broadway went dark on March 12, 2020, when New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo ordered all theaters to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is one show that *did* go on, however, despite the pandemic: the Federal Bar Council Inn of Court Program.

Under the leadership of Jamie Bernard, the president of the Inn, and with the dogged assistance of the Council's staff (led by Anna Stowe DeNicola and Aja Stephens), the Inn's eight teams persevered and presented each of their programs

notwithstanding the limitations and obstacles arising from operating an interactive, performance-based initiative during a global health emergency. The Inn's success is a testament to the creativity, commitment, and character of the talented Inn teams and their judicial team leaders.

The Inn is dedicated to "fostering collegial interaction between the Bench and Bar through intellectually stimulating programs and informal discussions that promote the ideals of professionalism, mentoring, ethics and legal skills." The Inn strives "to create a community of lawyers and jurists who care about the legal profession and each other," with an eye toward mentorship and friendship across the organization.

## The Inn Year

The Inn year begins in September with a guest speaker and runs through May, ending with a final dinner in June. When the pandemic hit in March 2020, three teams had yet to present their planned programs for the 2019-2020 year. The remaining team presentations were put on hold as Inn leadership determined how to move the season forward. In addition, the Inn doubted that it could still hold its annual end-of-year dinner in June, which would feature a traditional celebratory musical presentation. Adopting a "Can we pull this off?" mindset, the Inn's Margie Berman and Sammi Malek sang an enthusiastic, "Yes!" and undertook to create a presentation that would combine the traditional year-end wrap up with a memoriam and tribute to Inn