

"A Single Step Begins with a Journey of a Thousand Miles" "There are Two Kinds of UW Law Grads"

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As many of you know, I and other members of the Law School have been visiting within and outside of Wisconsin to report to you on our efforts, and to hear your reflections about legal education from the perspective of your practice and public service. Most recently, Professor Stu Gullickson, UW Foundation Vice President Dave Utley, and I covered some 1000 miles, dropping in on alums and other lawyers in Sparta, Eau Claire, New Richmond, Amery, Balsam Lake, Baron, Rice Lake, Superior, Ashland, and Rhinelander, which was our destination. I was scheduled for the UW Founders Day speech there, so we decided to use a Sunday and an extra day of travel for some additional visits. Everyone seemed as enthusiastic as we did about the value of these contacts, so there will be more. The recent trek was actually only one of several short tours to see our graduates in the past year. I believe a trip like the one to Rhinelander is a good step for a new dean. Therefore, I cannot resist turning on its head one of President Kennedy's phrases (which no one has been able to trace to its alleged origins in China) to arrive at the symbolically appropriate "A single step begins with a journey of a thousand miles."

In order to help us with these journeys, let me know shortly after you receive this GARGOYLE if you'd like to be included in my itinerary around the state during late August. Of course, there will be other occasions, so keep that invitation generally in mind, and write me a note when you are so moved.

Although there seems to be much to catch up on when I return from visits, I feel renewed by the meetings with alums who span more than six decades. After many conversations, I have discovered an obvious but little known fact: there are two kinds of UW law graduates. There are those who have Herbie Page stories, and those who don't. For those who don't, I should say that Professor William Herbert Page was a faculty member for 36 years, ending his service in 1952.

I have been associated with several law schools, and all of them have some kind of legendary Mr. Chips. But I have never seen anything like the Herbie Page phenomenon. The enthusiasm with which the amusing, outrageous, and occasionally unbelievable tales are told is amazing. After I'd heard ten stories, I thought I'd heard them all, since there were sometimes more than one version of the same basic story. How wrong I was! A collection of these tales would only be a footnote in the history of the Law School, but it would be a long one, and, like many such notes, more interesting than some of the text. Here is what I'd like you to do. Send me your stories. Do include details of the appearance and mannerisms of the characters, and indicate whether you saw the event or heard about it, but do not worry about your literary style. We will collect, compile, and edit the tales until we have a suitable pamphlet. This may take some time, but I suspect that the supply is endless, and our first edition may not be the last.