

A Fond Farewell to Frederick M. Baker Jr.

WITH SINCERE THANKS FOR 28 YEARS OF SERVICE



Fred Baker displays the framed cover of the mock *Michigan Bar Journal* he received from the Publications and Website Advisory Committee at his final meeting in May.

The SBM Publications and Website Advisory Committee (PWAC) has reached a significant milestone with the retirement of Frederick M. Baker Jr. as chairperson. Fred has served on the committee for 28 years, all but 4 as chairperson. As the committee transitioned from the Bar Journal Advisory Committee to the Bar Journal Advisory Board and finally to the present PWAC, Fred was at the helm, steering the group and all SBM members into the new and exciting waters of the web and electronic publications.

PWAC is a working committee, with each member responsible for some aspect of the SBM website, *Bar Journal*, member directory, and some 30 or so other Bar publications. The members help develop theme issues of the *Bar Journal*, read unsolicited articles, check citations, propose changes and additions to the website, and update other writings. No one has worked harder than Fred, whether negotiating contracts, conducting meetings, taking minutes to relieve a busy staff, editing theme issues, or

dealing with happy or disgruntled readers. If Fred's hours were billable, he would be a millionaire. To his credit, no committee member and certainly no staff member has ever said anything but a positive word—in fact, many positive words—about Fred. The sidebars on the following pages demonstrate my point beautifully.

One of the many reasons I have enjoyed Fred so much and will continue to glow from his friendship is that he is wonderfully literate. No matter the reference one makes to culture, literature, history, philosophy, and almost any other discipline, Fred has a quick comeback, always on point, showing himself to be a true renaissance person. We understand why his lovely spouse, Irene, wants more time with him—we all do.

As Fred steps out of the PWAC shoes, it will not be difficult to fill them—it will be impossible. Knowing that gives me some measure of comfort, as I know trying will be futile. Fred, you will always be #1 in PWAC history and in our hearts.

—Francine Cullari, PWAC chairperson

“Fred has performed a great public service to the entire legal community for these past 28 years. We will miss his leadership, but his contributions will endure.”

—Gerard Mantese



Members of the Publications and Website Advisory Committee 2010–2011, from left to right, front row: Joe Kimble; Lawrence Shoffner; David Cohen; Nancy Brown, SBM director of member services and communications; Fred Baker; Francine Cullari; John Juroszek; and Naseem Stecker, SBM manager of media and public relations. Back row: Elmer White; Stephan Savickas; Christopher Trudeau; John Tatum; John Runyan; Nicholas Krieger; Hon. Stephen Cooper; and Linda Novak, *Michigan Bar Journal* editor. Not pictured: William Ard, Elizabeth Baergen, Sarah Cahill, Stephen Conley, Patrick Crowley, Brian Draper, William Fleener, Jason Hanselman, Richard Kraus, Gerard Mantese, Marc Melamed, and Linda Watson.

HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU, FRED!

I first met Fred Baker when I joined the Bar Journal Advisory Board (now known as the Publications and Website Advisory Committee, or PWAC) around 1986. Fred has led the Bar Journal Advisory Board/PWAC with unfailing intelligence, kindness, grace, diplomacy, and good humor for the nearly 24 years I've been privileged to serve with him. Every year, he offered the chair to any committee member willing to assume the task, and every year his offer was declined unanimously. His special skills and talents and his constant above-and-beyond-the-call-of-duty diligence will be sorely missed. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to serve with Fred and I wish him and his family every joy and success in their future endeavors.

—**Beth Baergen, Elizabeth A. Baergen Attorney at Law PLC; Member, Publications and Website Advisory Committee**

I know this is a blast from the past! You were always an amazingly friendly and inclusive member of the Bar Journal Advisory Board. I always looked forward to your smiling face at the meetings and a *bon mot* any time we spoke. Thank you for all you have done to maintain high standards for the *Bar Journal*. Best wishes for continued success in your new ventures!

—**Pat Battersby, Law Offices of Patricia J. Battersby**

During my years as a member of the Bar Journal Advisory Board, I came to appreciate that Fred had the perfect combination of qualities to chair that varied and sometimes fractious group. His genial personality, dry humor, and deft editorial touch made things work at a remarkable level of efficiency. He deserves all the best as he moves on.

—**Thomas J. Byrne**

Fred's insight, organization, inspiration, writing, and editing skills have made our *Michigan Bar Journal* the respected professional publication we enjoy, but his positive approach, leadership, and, above all, keen humor are what have made him so successful and such a pleasure to work with.

—**Hon. Stephen C. Cooper, Mediation, Arbitration, and Receivership; Member, Publications and Website Advisory Committee**

Fred, you're a wise and temperate man. Thank you for your kindness to me. May our paths cross again.

—**Steve Dunn**

It was a dark and stormy night... Fond memories and warmest regards.

—**Phyllis Marlowe (a.k.a. Diane Duvall)**

In the almost two decades I worked with Fred on the board, he was nothing less than outstanding. Well done, sir!

—**Bill Haggerty**

Fred, your dedication has been OUTSTANDING! It was a real pleasure to serve with you. Good luck in your future endeavors!

—**Hon. Richard Halloran**

Many years ago I thought I had been on the Bar Journal Advisory Board for a long time. But my time was short compared to the years Fred has been on the board. It's a record that couldn't have been made by a nicer person and will likely never be broken.

—**George Hathaway**

I've never met anyone as hard working, conscientious, thorough, thoughtful, diplomatic, and friendly as Fred. The Bar ought to install him permanently in a diorama at the Museum of Legal History and take him on the road periodically as a traveling exhibit for law students and lawyers to see what they should aspire to.

—**John O. Juroszek, Reporter of Decisions, Michigan Supreme Court; Member, Publications and Website Advisory Committee**

I've been on the Publications Committee almost as long as Fred has served as chair. When meetings were held at different locations around the state, he and I often drove together, listening to The Band and other classic rockers. Fred is a master of committee arts, and the quality of the *Bar Journal*—and its smooth operation—are the best tribute to his leadership. He is the consummate class act.

—**Joe Kimble, Member, Publications and Website Advisory Committee**

Fred Baker deserves a tribute. He has worked tirelessly with humility and with no expectation of recompense or even recognition to maintain and improve the flow of salient information to members of the Bar.

In doing so, Fred has followed his passions. He has long been keeper of the U.P. issues. As would logically follow, he is an expert on all things written under the pen name "Robert Traver" from judicial service to *Laughing Whitefish* to *Anatomy of a Murder*. Perhaps in retirement he'll author a piece of his own? As for the rest of us who have been or are committee members, Fred always encouraged us to edit issues reflecting our substantive areas of interest and expertise.

As the chair of this committee as far back as I can remember, Fred has always had the gift of bringing forth and binding together others wishing to similarly serve our State Bar. This commit-

tee has seen little turnover with most members having served for more than a decade if not closer to two. This is almost unheard of in our professional world, where loyalty and inspiration are quickly becoming relics of a day gone by. Joni Mitchell summed it up best when she sang, "Don't it always seem to go that you don't know what you got till it's gone."

—**Cindi Lardner, JD, MA, LLPC**

It was my distinct privilege and pleasure to work with Fred on the Bar Journal Advisory Board for many years. His leadership encouraged initiative and creativity among the board members. He was always appreciative of everyone's efforts. He was generous in acknowledging each individual's work product, giving praise when merited, and tactful and considerate with constructive criticism. He contributed unstintingly of his own time and effort. Above all, I considered him a friend and respect him as a person who upheld and demonstrated the finest qualities that represent our profession.

—**Renee Vintzel Loidas**

Fred Baker is a brilliant scholar and an inspiring leader. As chair of the SBM Publications and Website Advisory Committee, Fred has been effective, conscientious, and generous with his time. He has performed a great public service to the entire legal community for these past 28 years. We will miss his leadership, but his contributions will endure.

—**Gerard Mantese, Partner, Mantese Honigman Rossman and Williamson; Member, Publications and Website Advisory Committee**

I had the pleasure of working with Fred Baker for 10 years on the Advisory Board and then PWAC. Always a gentleman, he was tremendously gifted with creativity, skill, and temperament to oversee production of our fine *Journal*. We are losing our strong anchor—thanks, Fred!

—**Gary M. Maveal, Professor/Director for Research & Faculty Development, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law**

I've had the tremendous privilege and pleasure of working with Fred Baker for the final 6 of his 24 years as chair of what is now the Publications and Website Advisory Committee. He is one of the most intelligent, thoughtful, diplomatic, and truly genuine individuals I've known. His passion for the committee's work was apparent in the countless hours he devoted. His selfless dedication to the State Bar and its membership is unparalleled. Although I will greatly miss his

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leadership and wise counsel, I know I've gained a lifelong friend. A quote from former Houston Oilers coach "Bum" Phillips seems particularly fitting of Fred: "He might not be in a class of his own, but it doesn't take long to call roll."

—Linda Novak, Editor, *Michigan Bar Journal*

Fred Baker stands out as a person who made big differences in many people's lives. He has a way of bringing out the best in people, a skill that is sometimes lacking in the legal field. I worked with Fred on the old Bar Journal Advisory Board and then under its new name. His approach to the board and those contributing to the *Journal* was very respectful and facilitative. He was always open to exploring new ways to do things. We accomplished a lot and had a lot of fun during the process. His contributions to the practice of law have been tremendous during the past decades and it was a joy working with him. My thoughts are with him as he starts a new part of his life. Best wishes and sincerest thanks, Fred!

—Candace Elliott Person, Senior Corporate Counsel, Apollo Group, Inc.

One of the ways that the Bar is held together as a group is through the *Bar Journal* that arrives every month on every lawyer's desk. For 28 years

as a member and chair of the Bar Journal Advisory Board, Fred Baker made sure that the *Bar Journal* was a top-quality publication welcomed in every lawyer's office and home. Every member of the Bar owes Fred a debt of gratitude for his service to each and every one of us through his leadership of the board. Thank you, Fred.

—George T. Roumell Jr., President, State Bar of Michigan, 1985–1986

Fred: Although my tenure on the committee pales in comparison to yours, I have enjoyed working with you over the past five years. Your dry wit has enlivened our meetings and your deft touch has proven invaluable as we have faced a wide array of challenges. Like a steady hand on the tiller in stormy seas, your wisdom, experience, and good judgment will be missed. Good luck and good health, my friend.

—John Runyan, Managing Director, Sachs Waldman; Vice Chair, Publications and Website Advisory Committee

Fred Baker was a leader who engendered both scholarship and creativity among the members of the Bar Journal Advisory Board. For those of us who had the privilege of serving as editors of specific issues of the *Bar Journal* while under his

direction, we had his wisdom, confidence, and friendship. The resulting issues were a great success. Thank you for your excellent service to the State Bar.

—Shirley A. Saltzman, Former Member, Bar Journal Advisory Board

It was indeed a high honor and a distinct privilege working with you.

—Steve Savickas, Member, Publications and Website Advisory Committee

Thank you for welcoming me to the *Michigan Bar Journal* "family" when I first joined the State Bar 11 years ago. Your guidance and leadership and this magazine will always have a special place in my memories and in my heart.

—Naseem Stecker, Media and Public Relations Manager, SBM

An effective lawyer must be ethical, understanding of the human condition, and very smart. In the three decades I have known Fred Baker, he is the very model of an effective lawyer. Fred is a client's lawyer, a lawyer's lawyer, and now a justice's lawyer! Fred, congratulations on your many years of service to the Bar, clients, lawyers, and the high bench! Well done!

—Elmer White, Ann Arbor

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