



# Nevada Alumnus Remembers Law School Butler Leaves \$100,000 to Schaber Legacy Society

By Cynthia Kincaid

When John Hawkins, '74, and Bob Butler, '74, met at Pacific McGeorge, little did they know that within a few years, they would share office space and a friendship that would span more than 30 years. The two worked for various law firms before meeting up again and deciding to create their own separate law practices in the same building.

"I bought a building in Reno and asked him to move in with me as an associate," says Hawkins, now a retired personal injury attorney still living in Reno. "He was an excellent attorney, honest as the day is long. If someone came in wanting a bankruptcy, and they tried to hide any money, he would withdraw from the case and tell the judge."

Butler specialized in bankruptcy and business law, while Hawkins focused on personal injury cases. "We were very close," says Hawkins. "We practiced law together and shared our thoughts and helped one another. He was a very ethical guy and did a good job for his clients, and I was always proud that he was there."

Bob Butler died unexpectedly late last year, leaving behind two sons, a wealth of friends like Hawkins, and a generous \$100,000 gift to the McGeorge School of Law, Schaber Legacy Society.

"As people begin to plan for their legacy, and what they want to leave behind on this planet, they often think highly enough of their alma mater to make a planned gift," says Charlene Mattison, '06, assistant dean for advancement at Pacific McGeorge. "Many of our alumni choose to leave a legacy at McGeorge to make sure that their law school thrives today, tomorrow, and in perpetuity."

The Schaber Legacy Society was named after Gordon D. Schaber, the legendary dean of the law school. Dean Schaber left many legacies at Pacific McGeorge, one of which was an estate gift that created the first endowed chair at the law school – the Gordon D. Schaber Chair in Health Law and Policy. "This gift established a program and ensured a focus

on health law at the law school, one that we are currently expanding with new gifts even today,” says Kevin Gonzalez, senior development officer at Pacific McGeorge.

The Schaber Legacy Society’s main intent is to recognize and honor alumni and friends who take these planned gifts. The gifts come in various forms including retirement plan designations, charitable trusts, gift annuities, gifts of life insurance and donations of property. The funds are used to establish endowments and scholarships, or to support ongoing academic programs.

“A majority of our alumni discuss their wishes with the law school, and then plan for and earmark their money for use in a specific way,” says Gonzalez. “Others leave their gift for the betterment of the school. Either way, the law school and students of today and tomorrow feel their impact.”

In many instances, as in the case of Bob Butler, gifts are very welcome, but sometimes unexpected. “Bob Butler left us a gift in his will, but the day it arrived was a little bit of a shock,” says Gonzalez. “Here an alumnus left a generous and caring gift, and we at the law school did not know and were not able to thank him in his lifetime. That is why we would like to open up those discussions with people considering, or who have made, estate gifts to McGeorge. We would like to help them think through the future use of their funds, but more importantly we would like to acknowledge them.”

Pacific McGeorge has set up a web site ([www.mcgeorgelegacy.org](http://www.mcgeorgelegacy.org)), which provides valuable information about gift legacies and gift vehicles, as well as the tax benefits

and calculators to see which gift vehicles would provide the donor and their family with the best giving and tax options. There are two components to the web site: one for professionals practicing in estate planning or a related area, and the other is for anyone considering a legacy gift. The law school also offers a quarterly newsletter targeted to alumni and friends interested in either of these things. This newsletter can be subscribed to online at the above web site.

The law school never got to acknowledge Butler’s bequest when he was alive. The semi-retired attorney came to several of the Alumni Association’s January MCLE programs in the last few years, but he told only his closest friends that he was putting Pacific McGeorge in his will. The former U.S. Air Force officer, Vietnam veteran, and retired Nevada Air Guard lieutenant colonel was swimming at a Reno health club on a December Sunday when he suffered a massive coronary. His loss shocked the close-knit Reno legal community, particularly the early 1970s Pacific McGeorge alums who started the Pacific McGeorge pipeline to northern Nevada.

Many people have made significant legacy gifts to Pacific McGeorge, which have, in turn, made a huge impact on the law school. “People think about how their university helped make their life what it is, and then they really want to make the school a better place now and for the next generation,” says Mattison.

That was certainly the case with Bob Butler. “Bob wanted to reward McGeorge for allowing him to do what he wanted to do and live the way he chose,” says Hawkins. “He told me, ‘I appreciated it, and I’m going to pay them back for it.’”



**Bob Butler, '74, right, was president of the Northern Nevada Senior Golf Club and loved to play new courses with his many friends. Here, he joins Joe Marson, left, and Frank Omboli for a golf trip to Death Valley.**