



Walter Pauk

May 1, 1914 – December 7, 2019

Walter Pauk, the designer of the ‘Cornell Way’ note-taking system, passed away December 7, 2019 in Naples, Florida. He was 105 years old; born in New Britain, Connecticut. Professor Pauk was predeceased by his wife Esther Florian Pauk in 2003 and is survived by a son and daughter, both Cornell alumni, who live in Florida.

Professor Pauk received a Bachelor of Arts in 1949 from the University of Connecticut. He earned his Doctorate in Education Psychology from the College of Human Ecology at Cornell in 1955 and joined the faculty in CALS Department of Education on July 1st of that year. He retired from Cornell in 1978 and moved to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1994, and later moved to Fort Myers Beach, Florida.

He loved the outdoors, enjoying camping, hiking, canoeing, and golf throughout his long life. His trips were often to the mountains of the Wind River Range in Wyoming and to Quetico Provincial Park in Canada. His last camping adventure was a Canadian canoe trip at the age of 91.

Professor Pauk had a distinguished career as a member of the faculty

of Cornell's Department of Education. He served as director of the Reading and Study Skills Center at Cornell, and was a highly respected speaker and author, writing over 100 books and articles. He was lauded by Gene Kerstiens, professor of english/reading and associate dean of instruction at El Camino College, California, in the *Journal of Developmental Education* as "one of the most influential professors in the field of developmental education and study skills." His best-known book "How to Study in College", published in 1962, is still influencing students today, and it is in this publication that he advocated the use of the Cornell Notes system (also known as the Cornell Note-taking System, Cornell Method, or Cornell Way), as described on Cornell's Learning Strategies Center website, <http://lsc.cornell.edu/notes.html>. It is said that Professor Pauk designed the first iteration of Cornell Notes as a TA at Cornell in response to frustration over student test scores.

Selected publications [compiled by Wikipedia.org]

- *Pauk, Walter (1962). How to study in college. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.*
- *Pauk, Walter (1974). Six-Way Paragraphs - 100 Passages for Developing the Six Essential Categories of Comprehension. Providence, Rhode Island: Jamestown Publishers, Inc. ISBN 0-89061-009-6.*
- *Pauk, Walter; Josephine M. Wilson (c. 1976). Readings in English. London; New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN 0-07-094441-5.*
- *Pauk, Walter (1986). Study skills for college athletes. Clearwater, Florida: Reston-Stuart Pub. Co. ISBN 0-9614487-0-9.*
- *Pauk, Walter (c. 1987). Study skills for community and junior colleges. Clearwater, Florida: Reston-Stuart. ISBN 0-9614487-1-7.*
- *Pauk, Walter (c. 1998). Study skills for student athletes. Clearwater, Florida: H&H Pub. ISBN 0-943202-69-8.*
- *Pauk, Walter (1999). Essential study strategies. Clearwater, Florida: H&H Pub. ISBN 9780943202716.*

- *Pauk, Walter; Ross J.Q. Owens (c. 2008). How to study in college (9th ed.). Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Co. ISBN 0-618-76645-6.*

Professor Pauk was a member of the Cornell University Alumni, the Cornell Association of Professors Emeriti, the University of Connecticut Alumni, the International Reading Association, the Reserve Officers Association, the Retired Officers Association, Boehm's United Methodist Church (Willow Street, Pennsylvania), and the Adirondack Mountain Club.

Professor Pauk served in the U.S. Army during WWII and the Korean War, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. He was interviewed by Sally Melcher Jarvis, a correspondent with LNP, a daily newspaper in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, for an article published in April 2012. The article is included here in its entirety.

Willow Valley resident recalls his part in the liberation of Dachau

Sally Melcher Jarvis Correspondent April 16, 2012
Updated September 12, 2013, LNP

In April 1945, Second Lieutenant Walter Pauk crossed the Rhine with his battalion, the 910th AAA AW, attached to the 15th Corps of the Seventh Army, and received orders to detach a platoon, peel off the main road and take care of a place called Dachau.

The U.S. Army had taken the camp the day before and had moved on. The German guards had fled. Someone had to hold the place until the military government arrived. Pauk was in charge of 120 men, about 17 vehicles and eight guns-on-wheels.

Although he was aware of the existence of Dachau, he was totally unprepared for what he encountered.

What first met his eyes was a group of former prisoners with knives - taken from the abandoned

kitchens - chasing milk cows around a field, attempting to kill them for food, Pauk said in an interview given as part of "Once Upon a Lifetime: The Oral History Project of Willow Valley Retirement Communities," where he now lives. The burgomeister of the town pleaded with Pauk to save the village cows, he recalled. Pauk sent a squad to round up the former prisoners and then proceeded to the camp. It was then that the full horror of the place came to him, he said.

According to Pauk, a pile of bodies of men, women and girls, each in a long cloth bag, was stacked by the deserted railroad depot. The first job was to write down the numbers tattooed on the arms so the dead could be later identified after they were buried.

About 150 prisoners, men and women, "living skeletons," awaited in their ragged, striped uniforms. They refused to go back to the dreadful conditions of the camp. Pauk said he sent a squad up to the main road to ask the troops coming through if they could provide tents. All this was in the first hour of arrival.

"Before night fall, we had a pretty good tent town set up," Pauk said.

The prisoners' first need was food. The fleeing guards had taken all the supplies and Pauk had only enough for his men. Pauk had read somewhere that starving people should not have solid food, so for that first day he had the cook prepare a thin broth, he recalled. He told the village burgomeister, who was grateful that the cows had been saved, that the village must supply food, which the army would prepare and feed to the former prisoners. From then on, every day, the village supplied milk, beef, turnips, carrots, cabbage and potatoes from which the cook made a rich soup.

Medical needs came next. There were no medics in his platoon, Pauk said, because they had remained with the battalion which was still entering hostile territory. The prison camp had several imprisoned doctors, all of whom were "older, with no energy or desire to help anyone else," Pauk wrote in his memoirs. He placed the doctors in a separate tent to rehabilitate them so they could help their own people.

That first full day, Pauk, with his staff sergeant, toured the tents, neatly drawn up in two rows, military style. The people were already outside. As he walked down the middle, some gratefully kissed his hand in the European tradition. The American tried to shake hands instead.

One man showed his ulcerated leg, Pauk recalled. The only medication in Pauk's unit was a supply of Halizone, used to purify drinking water. Pauk gave him a Halizone pill, and, through an interpreter, told him to drop the pill in warm water supplied by the cook and to soak his leg. After giving the pill to others, he was amazed at its psychological value. Later he found that the sulfa powder issued to soldiers was helpful, he said.

In a telephone conversation, Pauk's daughter, Laurel Pauk, now a resident of Fort Myers Beach, Florida, said that her father did not talk about his experiences when she was a little girl.

It was "not until very recently - the last five years" that he spoke of what happened," she said. "It was something he wasn't that interested in talking about. We heard always the good parts."

She said she was glad to learn what he had experienced and speculated that his three brothers, all now deceased, who lived in the same town, may have

known more.

Pauk said he was at Dachau about 10 days before the officials arrived to relieve him. Near the end of his stay, Pauk received orders to transport some former prisoners to a central gathering place about 30 miles away. They loaded the prisoners into Army trucks. Each truck had a soldier guard with his loaded rifle. Pauk gave the order not to shoot any prisoner who jumped off the truck, he recalled. When the trucks reached their destination, there were only a few prisoners remaining.

"My heart went out to each man who jumped off the truck," Pauk wrote.

"They had real freedom now."

*Written by The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences,
Cornell University*