

## *In Passing:*

# **Life-Long Turf Industry Professional Jack Kolb**

Jack Kolb, an icon in the Minnesota golf turf industry, passed away on July 10 in an outpatient Hospice Home in St. Cloud, MN. His family was at his side and he went peacefully. The following is an excerpt from the January 1991 Hole Notes magazine which highlighted Jack's career as a recipient of the Distinguished Service Award.



“When Jack Kolb was graduated from high school in 1941, the United States was preparing for war. There was little time to plan a career, so Jack left a job as a Wisconsin cheesemaker near Green Bay and took up work as a shipfitter, building submarines at Manitowoc, Wis. In 1942 Jack was drafted into the Navy and was trained as a torpedoman with the Pacific Submarine Command. Most of his Navy career was spent on Midway Island.

Upon discharge, he enrolled at the University of Minnesota, intent on being a forester; however, he felt that a certain dark-eyed young lady was not about to be a homemaker in a cabin deep in the woods. So, after a change in majors, and 240 credits later, he was graduated with a degree in Plant Industry.

Jack's first job was as a fertilizer salesman with the old Farm Bureau Service Company in 1950. In 1953, Jack was hired by Dr. James Watson and went to work for the Toro company as an agronomist. After a few years and because the pay was better, Jack became golf course superintendent with The Mini-

kahda Club. After 10 years at Minikahda, he moved to Minneapolis Golf Club for a few more seasons. During this time he evaluated the turf industry and the idea of Turf Supply Company was conceived.






Jack left Minneapolis Golf Club on Dec. 31, 1969. Turf Supply Company was born the next day. Not one sale was recorded for the first three months of its existence. During this time his wife, Rajah, and five children under 11 years of age operated on a very low budget. Eventually, the business grew, and the next 21 years saw many new innovations in marketing. One of Jack’s hobbies was writing. Several of his articles were published in the old Golfdom magazine. One of his treasured letters is a four-page document from Herb Graff is, editor of Golfdom, commending Jack for his approach on the golf course superintendent’s role in the golf industry. “



Mr. Kolb mentored many aspiring turf professionals and will be remembered as a strong leader of the industry.

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