

Tribute to: John “Jack” Joy

(1923 – 2014)

Jack Joy was the total package... war hero, President, CEO and Chair of the Board of one of the world's largest tree companies, husband, father, grandfather, friend community leader...and, by the way, one of the finest men I have ever known.

The above accomplishments are not what one might predict from a young boy who spent his early years in thirteen foster homes as a result of the death of his father and the inability of his mother to care for the family. Jack started slow and finished his life in championship form.

Jack enlisted in the Army Air Corps, became a pilot, became an officer (others do that the other way around) and flew more than thirty (over 200 hours) B-17 missions over Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia and Romania (Several accompanied by Tuskegee P-51 Airman. Once at a Rotary meeting, Jack gave a passionate response to a program about these airmen and said that he owed his life to them). Jack was awarded numerous medals for his bravery.

Jack always joked with me about me “out-ranking” him as I spent thirty-two years in the Naval Reserves, but his service to our country goes far beyond rank. Jack joined Davey Tree Company as a lineman and worked his way up the ladder (You must read his autobiography, Climbing The Ladder...one step at a time which is available at the Bricker

Gallery in Kent, Ohio) to head this multi-million dollar company. Jack was a respected leader.

Jack was a family man (At his funeral there were over three dozen family members in attendance) and he attributes much of his success in life to his wonderful wife Elsie. They had an exciting and altruistic life together. At the funeral, one grandson said, "Grandpa was the greatest man I have ever known." To most of us, being respected by our family is more important than what the rest of the world thinks of us...Jack was respected by everyone.

When Ruth and I lost our son, Jon, in 1980, I called Jack to see if he could get us a dwarf Japanese maple tree, as Jon had planted and cared for one in our backyard... and we wanted to get one for his grave site. Jack said he would check. Several days later Jack called to say that the only one he could locate was in North Carolina and he was having it shipped to Kent. We planted it, and over the years have decorated it with eggs at Easter, flags on Memorial Day and Veterans Day, with ornaments on Christmas and with other, sometimes silly things that we knew Jon would love. Strangely, over the years, the tree has grown and grown and this "dwarf" tree is now about twenty feet tall. Ruth and I have decided that this tree, a family monument, is just like Jack...bigger than it/he was predicted to be...and that is the way we will remember our friend.

March 2014