

BOUQUET

Tribute to Jack Bouquet

by Dea Price, CIC Midwest Legislative Committee Chair

Attorney Jack Bouquet of Hellmuth and Johnson retired in May, ending

a forty-three year career dedicated to serving Common Interest Communities. I first had the opportunity to meet Jack in 2005, when he was with Thomsen & Nybeck, P.A., and was working as the attorney for one of my condo associations. Shortly thereafter, Jack and I began working together on the CIC Midwest Planning Committee where we became co-chairs of the Legislative Committee. In the six years we have worked together, it has been my pleasure to call him my most significant legislative mentor.

Jack hails from Lake City, Minnesota, a river town about 60 miles southeast of the Twin Cities. He completed his undergraduate degree at St. John's University in Collegeville in a mere 3-1/2 years, and then went on to law school at William Mitchell in St. Paul. Jack married his wonderful wife Marie just before starting law school and had a new baby arrive during finals two of his four years, plus during the bar exam. He remembers studying while waiting for each of them to be born.

During law school, Jack worked as a tax examiner for the State of Minnesota Department of Revenue, and then went on to work at the former Northwestern National Bank of Minneapolis in their Trust Department. Ever the visionary, Jack approached the head of the bank with an idea of how a lawyer could help integrate all of the different banking aspects into a cohesive whole, but the banker had other ideas. So Jack went out into the world as an attorney in private practice, and left the banking world behind.

He initially worked mostly in estate planning and probate. He dove into the exciting field of real estate law somewhat unexpectedly early in his career when one of his associates retired. Jack expected he would sit down with the associate and delve into real estate law slowly, but instead, the man led Jack into a room full of his files and said something to the effect of, "here you

go, now I'm retired." And he left Jack alone to figure it all out. As we all well know, figure it out he did. Fortunately, Jack found real estate law equally as interesting as his previous work, and he stuck with it.

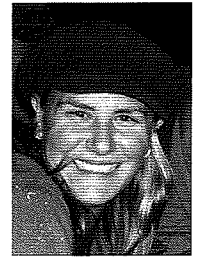
About five or six years into his practice, he joined a number of industry organizations, including MHA, and he has served for many years on the CIC Midwest Planning and Legislative Committees. As an attorney, Jack is a member of the Minnesota State Bar Association, and he sat for many years on the MCIOA Committee.

As we all know, the state law which affects our industry the most is MN Statute 515B, or the Minnesota Common Interest Ownership Act (MCIOA). Jack was instrumental in developing the original version of MCIOA in 1994. This was a piece of legislation that had come down through a national group based on the Uniform Condominium Act. It was suggested by members of the state legislature at the time that Minnesota adopt the Uniform Act, but the Bar Association thought they could make it even better. The existing act left townhome associations out, so they were essentially powerless. The MCIOA Committee of the Bar Association was formed to combine elements of UCIOA with the existing statute for condominiums, 515A, and 515B was born. MCIOA outlines the rights and responsibilities of all condominiums, and townhome communities formed after June 1, 1994, and also allows older associations to opt in if they choose.

Jack's proudest accomplishment, aside from being married to Marie, and being a grandfather of three, has been watching the legislative committees he served on grow and become more efficient.

This year's unique legislative environment, with bills no one expected coming out left and right, was fascinating to Jack. And it gave us all a good lesson in how effective we can be if we pool our resources. In the past, many of our industry groups, including the CIC Midwest Legislative Committee, have relied on the Bar Association to send information our way on pending legislation. This year, however,

we had many groups tracking legislation and informing members of other groups what was coming down the pike. Working together this year was imperative, and will continue to be more and more important in the years ahead.



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One of Jack's hopes for the future is that groups like CIC Midwest become the first thing legislators think of when they face bills regarding Common Interest Communities, and that they start to rely on us as a trusted resource for information. Our group was successful this year getting our name out to legislators, with many members, including Jack himself, testifying at hearings in various committees on bills which affect our industry. Going forward, we will continue to have a presence at the Capitol and encourage legislators to contact us directly to discuss pending issues.

Although Jack has officially retired, he can still be found some of the time at the law firm of Hellmuth and Johnson, where he is in the process of transitioning his clients to his trusted colleagues. Jack says he is retiring from a great firm with great people, and is sure his clients will be well taken care of.

Once his transition is complete, Jack hopes to spend time developing some new hobbies. With his busy career, he didn't always have time to pursue as many outside interests as he would have liked, but he looks forward now to spending time gardening and golfing and will spend more time at his home in Florida.

I'd like to congratulate Jack on his long and accomplished career, and wish him well in his retirement. It has been an honor and pleasure working with Jack, and I certainly owe much of the success of the CIC Midwest Legislative Committee, and our work on legislative issues, to him. ■

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