



## John Ralph Helmen

July 16, 1940 - March 4, 2024

John "Jack" Ralph Helmen

John "Jack" Ralph Helmen at 83 years young, made his transition on March 4, 2024 in Alexandria, MN from Alzheimer's Disease.

Jack is preceded in death by his wife, Rute Helmen (Zarins); parents, Ralph and Henrietta (Peterson) Helmen; his sister, Marjorie Thompson; brother-in-law, Thoburn Thompson; and nephew, Ian Thompson. He was born and raised in Milaca, MN. Where he grew up fishing, hunting, playing baseball and being a mischievous youth.

Jack joined the Milaca National Guard in 1961 then was honorably discharged in 1967. He graduated from The University of Minnesota with a degree in Business Administration, also in 1967. He worked for PAKO Corporation in Minneapolis from 1959-1976, departing the company as the vice president of marketing. In 1977 he joined Supra Color Inc. as president; worked in ownership and took it to an employee-owned company (ESOP) in 1986. He remained president and general manager until 1992 when he sold to Kodak's holding company. He stayed on as president until 1997 when he accepted the position of CEO of a small NASDAQ company, Photo Control Corp. That organization merged with another company, and he retired in 2006. Jack served on the board of the Association of Profession Color Labs (APCL) from

1988-1994 and was president of the board in 1993. Jack may have titled a manager, but he was a true leader.

In 1963 he married Rute Zarins, his wife of nearly 55 years. They enjoyed traveling, cruising and time with family and friends. They lived in Eden Prairie, MN until 2001 when they built Up North on Roosevelt Lake. Starting in 2005 they divided their time between Outing, MN and Hurricane, UT. They made lasting friendships wherever they lived.

Jack was an avid golfer, Gin and Poker player, and he loved playing the stock market. He was a great cook, window washer and cocktail creator. The last 5 years he lived in Alexandria, MN near his daughter's family, where his presence was a true gift. He will be greatly missed.

Survived by: daughter, Nicole (Matt) Warner; grandson, Jack Warner; and nieces, Catherine (Phil) James, Sarah Tonn, and Sue (John) Helgeson.

A memorial service will be at 11am Saturday, March 16, 2024 at the Washburn-McReavy Crystal Lake Chapel & Cemetery, Minneapolis, MN. Visitation at 10am, and burial and reception to follow service.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to The Alzheimer's Association or ELCA World Hunger.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 16. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Crystal Lake Chapel  
3816 Penn Avenue N.  
Minneapolis, MN 55412

## Memorial Service

MAR 16. 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM (CT)

Crystal Lake Chapel  
3816 Penn Avenue N.  
Minneapolis, MN 55412

# Tribute Wall



“ Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels created a Memorial Service for John "Jack" Ralph Helmen in memory of John Ralph Helmen



Washburn-McReavy - March 08, 2024 at 02:15 PM

JH

Great neighbor, friend and what an organizer. Gin rummy tournaments, 4th of July parades, golfing, North Star games, too many great memories of raising our families together and Jack was the rock. So sorry to hear about this Nicole, sending love your way.

Sue and Jerry Hill

Jerry and Sue Hill - March 11, 2024 at 09:10 AM

DS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Dave Sheble - June 11, 2024 at 04:57 PM

AK

One of the best!! A great golf companion, jokester, and human being!

Andrew Kalman - April 02, 2025 at 12:47 AM

DJ

“ Jack was a friend, a mentor, A man of integrity, He was joyful, He was kind,  
His laugh was contagious. He would remember your name . The Cabin. Best customer/staff Christmas party ever ! Jack was the Best!!

David Jones - March 15, 2024 at 10:28 PM

NW

“ I just want to make sure you know, if you are unable to attend the service in person, the service will be streamed live. You just click on the play button on my dad's face! Then you sign your name and you are in...

Nicole Warner - March 14, 2024 at 09:13 PM

VW

“ Jack was a wonderful man always friendly and would do anything to help you. I was a college classmate of his wife Rudy and over the years we visited and he was always welcoming and so wonderful to Rudy. I am unable to attend the Memorial as I recently had surgery . I would love to be there but just can't make it. Nicole and Jack my deepest sympathy . I am sure he will be missed but I am sure he and Rudy are together again.

VeeAnn Wood - March 14, 2024 at 08:01 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of John Ralph Helmen.



March 13, 2024 at 09:52 PM

RA

“ I got to know Jack from the Supra Color days. He was a friendly gentle soul. Once you met him it's like you were forever friends. My sympathies to his family.  
Rick Apitz

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**Rick Apitz** - March 13, 2024 at 09:29 PM

JS

“ Jane S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Ralph Helmen.

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**Jane S.** - March 12, 2024 at 04:02 PM

LL

“ Linda L. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Ralph Helmen.

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**Linda L.** - March 12, 2024 at 06:05 AM

DS

“ Jack was a mentor, friend, and taught me so much as an employee at Supra Color.  
If you wished advise (regardless of the topic) Jack's door was always opened. He had a smile that lit the room and a heart that cared and shared with anyone in need. When Jack laughed we all laughed. When Jack spoke we all listened. I feel so Blessed to have worked for Jack. Rest in peace dear friend, you will be missed by so many.

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**Dixie Schmit** - March 10, 2024 at 06:30 PM

GG

“ We were blessed to develop a friendship with Jack and Rute over 20 years ago when they began playing golf at our golf course in Emily, MN. Jack was always generous with his time and efforts and contributed so much to the community. Each person who came in contact with him was better for it, ourselves included. He freely shared his vast business acumen with us as we developed our business in the area. We can not imagine a more principled and genuinely nice person to be friends with, work for, or do business with, than Jack Helmen. You will truly be missed.  
Gregg and Susan Gamble

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**Gregg and Susan Gamble** - March 10, 2024 at 01:28 PM

LB

“ Worked for Jack for many years, never was there a better leader. Truly made a family out of Supra employees, always lifting us up in the hard times. He made a huge impact in my life and will never be forgotten! RIP, you will be missed by many...

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**Lisi Boyle** - March 10, 2024 at 01:09 PM

JH

“ Jack was an amazing person to work for. Always smiles and laughter. I enjoyed my years at SupraColor under his leadership. Heaven has gained a great soul. Julie Beth Holmquist

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**Julie Beth Holmquist** - March 09, 2024 at 09:57 PM

TS

“ Truly, one of the greatest men I have ever known. Jack was an angel that walked amongst us. I loved "Uncle Jack" and was thankful that he took us under his wing

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**Tony Smith** - March 08, 2024 at 09:02 PM

HJ

*I Loved that man as a mentor ,business partner and a person who we both had mutual respect for each other. At one point I told him he was a father figure to me. My Best to Nichole and family.*

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**Harold johnson** - March 11, 2024 at 07:19 PM

JW

*Jack hired me shortly after he started at Supra in1977. My first job after recently graduating from the U of M.*

*We learned the sales end of the professional photographer business together, logging countless hours and miles attending meetings and conferences in the 5 state region.*

*Jack was a true mentor, leader, coach and role model. Always a smile on his face, I never heard a bad word out of him.*

*Rest in peace my friend.*

*Jon Weber*

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**Jon Weber** - March 14, 2024 at 11:54 AM