



Editor's View

IN MEMORIAM: KENNETH BLACK, JR. (1925-2005)— MEMBER, EDITOR, FRIEND

Joseph E. Frack, CPA

Guest columnist Joseph E. Frack, CPA, is chief executive officer of the Society of Financial Service Professionals, Newtown Square, Pa. He joined the Society in 1988 and was promoted to Chief Executive Officer in October, 2000. Prior to joining the Society, he was a manager with Johnston, Young and O'Fria, CPAs.

A member of the American and Pennsylvania Institutes of Certified Public Accountants, Mr. Frack served as a senior accountant with Coopers & Lybrand and has held domestic and international finance positions at Johnson & Johnson. He is a graduate of St. Joseph's and Villanova Universities and held the rank of Captain in the U.S. Naval Reserve.

When Kenneth Black, Jr., PhD, CLU, CPCU, passed away on Monday, March 7, 2005, the Society of Financial Service Professionals lost one of the best friends it has ever had.

Ken was a Society member for 49 years and, for 41 of those, was editor of the *Journal of Financial Service Professionals* and its earlier incarnations, the *Journal of the American Society of CLU* and the *Journal of the American Society of CLU and ChFC*. He not only brought the Journal to prominence, he kept it there for decades, serving an

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ever-growing readership who looked to the Journal for quality education that spanned the breadth of financial service issues and practice specialties.

Ken demonstrated the truth of the old adage, "If you want something done, ask a busy person to do it." For example, in 1959, the same year he became editor of the Journal, Ken served as regional vice president for the Society of Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriters, founded Educational Foundation, Inc., to facilitate industry funding to support Georgia State University's insurance program, and was named Regents' Professor of Insurance at Georgia State.

Ken managed to oversee the production of the industry's premier scholarly journal even as he was building an insurance program at Georgia State that would become one of the most highly regarded in academia. The Journal, however, never suffered because of his many other duties.

Society chief executive officer emeritus, John R. Driskill, CLU, ChFC, remembers Ken both for his dedication and his humility: "Ken was deeply dedicated to education, to the truth, and to technical correctness. He saw to it that everything in the Journal was accurate to the very best of his knowledge. On the one or two occasions when something incorrect did slip through, Ken accepted responsibility for it. He never blamed his writers. His view was, 'I'm the editor, I'm responsible, and I'll make it right.'

"One thing that made Ken very proud was the fact that, in every survey of Society membership conducted during his tenure, the Journal was cited as the number one member benefit. He

would never speak openly about it, though. He was also proud of the fact that many colleges and insurance programs included articles from the Journal on their lists of recommended reading. Again, you would never hear him mention it publicly, but inwardly he was very, very pleased about that."

Current Journal editor Kenn B. Tacchino, JD, LL.M, knew Ken Black as a quiet gentleman with uncompromising standards. "Ken was very giving of his time, very willing to help anyone, anywhere he could. He was the quintessential 'Southern gentleman.' His legacy to the industry was that he pushed the boundaries of knowledge and, in doing so, helped to frame the concept of 'financial services' as we know it today. He was also, in a sense, mentor to an industry, because the education disseminated through the Society's Journal and the textbook *Life Insurance*, which he coauthored, has helped practitioners all over the world to deliver better service to their clients."

By the time he retired from the editorship in December 2000, Ken had edited the Journal for three-quarters of the 55 years it had existed. It is completely accurate to say that the Journal is the highly regarded scholarly publication it is today because of Ken Black's caring guidance and unwavering commitment to excellence.

Ken Black has left behind a grateful membership and staff who thank him for all of his hard work and guardianship. The outstanding legacy he left in the Journal continues. Its reputation for excellence is secure. Rest peacefully, friend. ■