

Murry Greenwald

Publisher, *Government Recreation & Fitness*

Murry Greenwald, publisher of *Government Recreation & Fitness*, died Sunday afternoon, Feb. 19. Though few of them have ever even heard his name, U.S. military service members and their families have lost one of their strongest champions.

Early in the summer of 1962, Murry and two partners — all three of them veterans of the World War II-era Army or Navy, as well as the Army Times Publishing Company — formed the company that is now Executive Business Media Inc. Their goal: to publish magazines primarily written for military business managers but focused on improving the lives of those serving in the armed forces and their families. They began that autumn with *Exchange & Commissary News*, covering the military resale market, and a few years later launched *Club News*, the predecessor of *Military Club & Hospitality*, which focuses on Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) programs throughout the military services.

Later in the century, *Government Recreation & Fitness* and *Government Food Service* were added to the portfolio, along with a magazine in the higher-education market, *On-Campus Hospitality*.

In 1977, Murry became president of the corporation. He shouldered the mantle alone, leading the crusade the three partners had all begun together to improve the quality of life of military service members and families. It was a responsibility he relished, a task he never tired of, even in the last hours of his life.

If someone had ever asked him what was the greatest invention of all time, he would have said the telephone — even greater than the printing press, the magazine publisher's most formidable tool — because it was his constant companion.

Even before networking was invented, he was a master. If the phone wasn't ringing, he was dialing; and his Rolodex (eventually, he did transfer it to his computer) was deep and far-reaching. Front office and back office both, the Pentagon ... Capitol Hill ... military brokers ... service and resale agency headquarters ... regions,



districts, zones ... distributors ... MWR heads ... fitness chiefs ... prime vendors ... trade associations ... club and store managers ... the nation's leading manufacturers and marketers: they were all on the phone, day in, day out, well into the evening.

They wanted his opinion, because as often as not, he could find the shortest distance to the best solution. They traded the valuable currency of information with each other, a small bit here, a small bit there, which he put together like mosaics to build an accurate picture of the complicated, massive military and government markets.

Murry preached return on investment, and was at a loss to understand the shortsightedness of those who would cut funding for a program like commissary operations, which return to service families more than two dollars for every taxpayer dollar invested, or

turn down even the paltry amounts of support needed by the exchange systems, which help fund vitally important MWR programs and activities. He continually beat the drum to increase funding for quality-of-life programs because he knew how important they are for service members and their families.

For 50 years Murry kept his focus on preserving the hard-won rewards armed forces families had obtained by putting their lives on the line.

He was never deterred from defending the rights and benefits earned by those who had taken it upon themselves to defend the rest of the nation ... simply because it was the right thing to do.

He often spoke and wrote of the dedication and passion of those who delivered these quality-of-life enhancements — the MWR professionals; the managers and operators of the recreation and fitness activities; the dining facilities and mess halls; the exchanges; the commissaries; the clubs; the food, beverage and entertainment outlets; lodges and child development centers — but in giving them the recognition they so well deserved, it was his own dedication and passion that remain in their hearts.

And ours.