

OPINION

JACKSON CITIZEN PATRIOT

OUR VOICE

ROBERT D. CRAFT

Robert Craft gave to business, others

Robert D. Craft died suddenly and inexplicably last week, the victim of an apparent hit-and-run vehicle collision outside Spring Arbor. Yet as the circumstances of his death fade, what certainly will remain is the legacy of the former leader of the Craft Agency. Not just to a business he built, but to his family, community and country.

Craft was a force in the Jackson community.

He served on the Jackson School Board, as president of the Country Club of Jackson, in the Lions Club and other organizations. His son Robert started the hugely successful Walk to Cure Diabetes in Jackson.

Craft served in the Army in the Korean War.

He expanded the family owned insurance agency that his father and uncle founded using a personal style. Clients became friends, and many say Craft nurtured those relationships over the years. Even after retiring from a full-time

role in the company, Craft remained active as board chairman.

And Craft served his own family, as a father who went home at lunch to see his kids and as the doting grandfather who stuffed dollar bills into pockets. Craft turned over the family business to three sons but not before insisting they first gain work experience elsewhere.

Craft attained a rare level of business accomplishment, but his personal story is common to his generation. He gave to his country, made a living, was active in raising a family and found time to give to his community.

Craft and so many others built a foundation for future generations, both within their own families and for all of us. They showed the way by example of hard work and resilience, yet also charity and compassion.

Our condolences today go to the Craft family. Robert Craft will be missed.