

## John J. Flieder

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After a long career in direct marketing and public relations, John J. Flieder and his wife Barbara moved from Chicago to Columbia, California.

During his career John was active in the Sacramento Public Relations Society, serving as a past president and publicity chair, as well as serving on the executive committee of the Reagan for Governor campaign for Sacramento County. He was active in several national, statewide and local political campaigns in Sacramento during the years he and his family lived there.

He most recently was a senior partner in a management and marketing consulting firm based in Chicago. The Callahan Group, L.L.C., was started by Flieder and 14 associates in 1995. His main client for the past ten years was American International Group's personal casualty lines insurance division based in Wilmington, Delaware. He wrote the rationale for AIG's initial entry into television advertising and aided in the development of the company's first commercial featuring Wrigley Field and the Chicago Cubs "and even the cars in the parking lot." He was an avid Chicago Cubs, Bulls and Bears fan.

In 1995 he retired as a vice president of the Allstate Corporation in Northbrook, Illinois, after 33 years, in which he headed marketing support for the company's sales forces, including all of the company's advertising. He was most proud of his role in prodding the then-Big Three automobile manufacturers to install airbags as standard equipment in new cars. With the aid of Allstate's ad agency, Leo Burnett Co., he developed the first television and print ads showing a live person crashing unrestrained into a solid wall with only an airbag for protection. The driver, Hal Needham, who became a Hollywood director, was completely protected by the car's airbag and the resultant commercial helped introduce a new era in automobile safety after a protracted battle with the automobile manufacturers, who finally realized that the consumer was willing to pay for safety rather than 8-track tape players.

He was on the board of directors of The Advertising Council and served as coordinator of the national seatbelt campaign, featuring the test dummies, "Vince and Larry."

His professional pursuits are only a portion of his story. He has a rich history of community service, including his role as president of the Sacramento Jaycees in the 1960s where his chapter won state and national recognition for installing the first seat belts in the public's cars. He was named Outstanding Local President for California and received the Distinguished Service Award as Sacramento's Young Man of the Year, 1963. He also chaired the Sacramento City-County Chamber of Commerce's Sacramento Beautiful Committee and worked on the new port committee as well as the YMCA membership drive and twice chaired the small business division of the United Crusade drive. He was on the board of Sacramento's Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization.

Flieder was active in Columbia and nearby Sonora as vice president and board member of the Columbia City Hotel Corporation and was heavily involved in the transfer of the concession to Forever Resorts, L.L.C., after the organization was nearly bankrupted by a Fall 2005 kitchen fire. He also served as treasurer of the Gold Springs West Homeowners Association and was a member of the Tuolumne County Republican Central Committee.

He served on the board as a director of Sierra Foothill Senior Management, Inc., and the Meals-on-Wheels program as well as other initiatives supporting Tuolumne County seniors. He was an active member of the Meals-on-Wheels' Meals at Wheels event committee. As a contribution to Columbia College he facilitated a one-day seminar on teamwork and breakthrough thinking for the administrative staff of then-college president Jim Riggs.

He served over 25 years on both individual club boards and on the board of directors of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago, the largest organization of its kind in the world. He was chairman of the board from 1992-1994. He had served two three-year terms as president of the Kiwanis Unit of the Chicago Boys & Girls Clubs, located in a changing neighborhood on the city's northside. Flieder was also part of the Leadership Team of El Valor, an organization dedicated to early learning for Hispanic children and the inclusion of those with disabilities in everyday learning. El Valor has built several learning centers in the Chicago area. He conceived and implemented a national advertising campaign aimed at Hispanic parents about the need for early learning in the home through "playing, reading and sharing music" with their children. The campaign started as part of the Ad Council's efforts and then became supported by other organizations dedicated to early education of children. It is now running in Mexico as well as in the U.S.

Flieder also served on the boards of directors of the Association of National Advertisers and the Direct Marketing Education Foundation. He received the Chicago Association of Direct Marketing's highest honor, Direct Marketer of the Year in 1986 at a conference in Chicago. He also was awarded the Direct Marketing Education Foundation's Edward N. Mayer, Jr. Outstanding Educator Award in 19xx.

He was a U.S. Army veteran, having served as a Captain, Artillery, but primarily as a combat infantry training officer at Fort Ord and Camp Roberts from 1957 to 1963. He had been trained as a Nike Missile officer but never actually served in that capacity.

A member of American Legion Post 58/Sonora, Flieder wrote the Veterans Corner for the Sonora Union Democrat beginning in December 2004. He had also written a veterans column for the Sacramento Union newspaper.

Flieder attended the University of Washington, 1953-55, and then transferred to and graduated from San Jose State University in 1957, where he was commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. He was a graduate of the Advanced Institute of Advertising Studies at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and earned his Masters Degree in Marketing Communications from Chicago's Roosevelt University, where he later taught both graduate and undergraduate classes as an adjunct professor. He was a frequent lecturer and speaker at colleges and universities and at industry conferences.

Education and development among our nation's youth are intertwined throughout John's life. The establishment of the John Flieder Fund honors a life full of service to our nation's youth – combining his vast success in the fields of direct / interactive marketing, as well as his involvement in enriching the lives of youth in hopes of molding the lives of tomorrow's leaders.