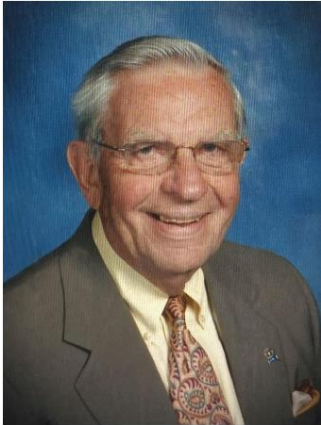


1LT (FORMER) JOHN R. (JACK) BERGER
Class of 1950
Enshrined 2021



John R. (Jack) Berger graduated from St. Xavier HS in 1946 and from Xavier University in 1950 with a BS degree in Economics. Upon graduation, he received a Reserve commissioned in the Field Artillery.

While at Xavier, he was a member of the Pershing Rifles, and in his junior year, he was chairman of the Military Ball. In his senior year, he was selected to be a member of the Xavier Order of Military Merit (XOMM) and was a Distinguished Military Graduate (DMG).

After graduation, Jack started a career in sales, accepting a position to sell high-end Florsheim shoes until he was called to active duty in February 1951. As he was completing his Field Artillery OBC, it was noticed that he studied Latin and Greek at St. Xavier, and he was nominated to attend language school at the Presideo of Monterey. However, orders sending him to Korea took precedence.

Jack served as a Forward Observer in the 52nd Field Artillery Battalion. In December 1951, a platoon that he was supporting was being attacked by a Chinese force. The platoon was firing point blank at the enemy, so Jack called in artillery fire where the Chinese were attempting to overrun the American positions, while the Americans were hunkered down in their foxholes. This was a courageous call for fire for a first lieutenant. Jack returned to the US in September 1952, receiving the Korean Service Medal with 1 cluster and the Bronze Service Star.

Returning from Korea, he and a close Xavier ROTC friend decided that Cincinnati needed to celebrate Armistice Day in a more patriotic manner. They were able to borrow an Army $\frac{3}{4}$ ton truck from Xavier to haul a mortar, various small arms and ammunition, posters, and an ROTC uniform to put on a two-week display in the main lobby of Fifth/Third Bank.

Jack returned to selling Florsheim shoes but was recruited by and accepted a position with Burkhardt's, a fine men's apparel store in downtown Cincinnati. After 10 years, he was awarded the "Bevvy" award, given each year to the employee who demonstrated the greatest sales ability, fellowship, and enthusiasm, as voted on by all Burkhardt employees. His sales ability and enthusiasm, coupled with strong leadership traits made him the perfect Burkhardt gentleman to open a new Hyde Park store.

In 1975, Jack was lured to the Rodes Rapier store in Louisville, KY as Executive Vice President and General Merchandise Manager. He returned to Cincinnati and Burkhardt's in 1987 when he was given the opportunity to run all store operations, including merchandising, buying, sales training, and advertising. He eventually was promoted to Burkhardt's President.

Jack was a dedicated Rotarian in both the Cincinnati and Louisville clubs, having served on the Board of Directors of both clubs, as well as President of the Cincinnati Rotary Club. He received the prestigious Walter Emerling Award by the Cincinnati Rotary Club in 2007. In addition to his work in the Rotary Club, he has served in leadership positions on Cancer Fund drives, United Appeal, Fine Arts drive, the Chamber of Commerce, and he served as a tutor for students at St. Francis de Sales School. He also spent many hours volunteering at St. Gertrude Church, especially during its festival.

Jack had a love for Xavier and Xavier sports, especially the basketball program. He supported many alumni events during the 1990s, was a basketball season ticket holder, and member of the Musketeer Club. Throughout his life, Jack has displayed the Army and Xavier values.

Jack passed away January 17, 2020.