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Tribute to Robert F. Grabb

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TRIBUTE TO ROBERT F. GRABB

"Mr. and Mrs. Killdeer wish to announce the arrival of three baby Killdeers."

That was the message, scrawled in familiar handwriting, on a memo that came across my desk one recent morning. Dean Robert F. Grabb had been earnestly watching a pair of Killdeers hatch their young just outside of his window and, after several weeks of waiting, announced the happy result to the Law School community.

We will miss that voice of cheer next year in the sometimes overly serious Law School community. Bob Grabb will retire at the end of this academic year after completing nineteen years as Associate Dean at the Law School. It is highly appropriate that the Minnesota Law Review dedicate this issue to Bob Grabb.

Bob Grabb had already completed one career before he came to the Law School—a very successful one which seems to have developed as a result of a series of accidents. After graduation from Brown University in 1941, Bob was drafted into the Army as a private. Some young men were avoiding service, but not those whose fathers were chairmen of the draft board in Painted Post, New York—not Bob Grabb. After Pearl Harbor, Bob went through Officers Candidate School and became a Lieutenant in the Intelligence Division. As Bob is fond of saying, he spent the war defending such places as Santa Monica, Miami Beach, Macon, Augusta, and Battle Creek.

He entered Harvard Law School following the Second World War, graduated, and was two years into a corporate practice when Uncle Sam remembered what Bob had forgotten—Bob was a reserve officer. He was called back for the Korean conflict and was promptly dispatched to Italy for the duration. From 1950 to 1953 he served with the Allied Military Government in Trieste, while Italy and Yugoslavia made that city the subject of international controversy.

In 1953 Bob returned to Washington, D.C., and served in the Pentagon until retiring from the military in 1965. While rising to the rank of Colonel, he held three major positions in the Judge Advocate General's staff. He was Chief of the Interna-

tional Law Branch; Chief of the Procurement Law Division, responsible for approval of government contracts; and Chief of the Career Management Division, responsible for placement of all Army lawyers.

In 1965 Dean Bill Lockhart persuaded Bob Grabb to join the Law School faculty upon retirement from military service. During his tenure years at the University of Minnesota Law School, Bob Grabb has counseled more than half of the living graduates of the School. He has an unusual talent for working with people. Even when unable to respond affirmatively to a student concern, he invariably has earned the student's respect and affection. Bob Grabb knows which complaints to take seriously and which he can best respond to by being a sympathetic listener.

Bob Grabb has been a major part of the Development Program of the Law School since its inception. Under his leadership, the annual fund of the Law School, the "Partners in Excellence Campaign," has become one of the most successful development programs among the nation's law schools. This private support has been vital to the quality development of the Law School.

But it is his cheerful presence that has been Bob's most valuable contribution to the School. When the day-to-day pressures inherent in any law school have begun to rise, we have been blessed to have in our midst a wise and witty friend to remind faculty and students alike of the importance of mutual caring and respect.

We will miss Bob Grabb's presence next year. And future classes of law students will never know what wise counsel they have missed as a result of Bob's retirement. But we are happy that Bob and his wife, Jean Grabb, will remain in the Twin Cities area, and he will maintain an office in the Law School.

Bob, we thank you most of all for the love and friendship you have brought to the Law School. We wish you and Jean many, many years of happy and satisfying retirement.

Robert A. Stein