

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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In Memoriam: Kurt Dramm

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If you've ever watered with a Dramm watering wand, you'll recognize the name: Kurt William Dramm, second-generation of the famous greenhouse and irrigation equipment company, passed away in May. He was 84.

Kurt's father, John "Johnny" Dramm, was a Manitowoc, Wisconsin, florist with a knack for invention. One such design was a better watering tool—the Dramm 400 Water Breaker (named for the number of holes in it, which turned high-velocity water into a gentle stream). It caught on quickly with growers, so he began manufacturing the breakers in his workshop.

Johnny died young (47), leaving his widow, Perdita, and two sons, John Peter (18) and Kurt (12) to keep the new business going, with mom using the proceeds of the business (and working as a librarian) to put the boys through college. Kurt graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a double major in business and horticulture. After graduation, Kurt worked for the

Vaughan Seed Company with a sales territory covering the Southeastern United States.

In 1968 he and his brother, John Peter, formed the Dramm Company to produce garden and greenhouse watering products. John Peter unexpectedly passed away in 1978 at age 45.

Kurt was known for saying, "Nothing happens until someone sells something," and for the next 45 years, Kurt's entrepreneurial spirit and passion for providing quality products grew the Dramm company into the four divisions it has today—Commercial Products, Consumer Products, Water Management and Organic Fertilizer.

His son, Hans, daughter, Heidi, and Heidi's husband, Kurt Becker, have long been active in the business, as are their cousins Andy and Fritz Dramm. They continue to grow the business; in fact, last December they held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for their state-of-the-art new offices. But even as he'd slowed down, Kurt Dramm never actually officially retired from the business, always saying, "Maybe next year." **GT**