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**Carmine "Zeke" Melignano**

1926 - 2017 Carmine "Zeke" Melignano, better known as "Zeke," passed away on Thursday, June 22, 2017 in Beaumont. He was born on January 12, 1926 in New York, New York to Thomas and Louisa Melignano. Zeke loved baseball, he grew up in Italian Harlem, Manhattan where he practiced pitching and batting whenever possible. Unfortunately, his High School did not field a baseball team so Zeke compensated by playing "pick-up" games at nearby Randall's Island Park. By the time he was seventeen, Zeke's yearning to play professional became strong enough to convince his father to allow him to play after his junior year in high school. However, his father stipulated that he must return the following year to complete his education. Zeke went to Wellsville, N.Y. in 1943 to play for the Wellsville Yankees. There, Zeke earned a second nickname, "Fireman Zeke," because his pitching "doused" several threats by opposing teams. He finished the season by helping Wellsville win the PONY League Championship for 1943. After receiving his diploma, he rejoined the New York Yankees minor leagues. For the next nine seasons (1945-1953), Zeke played on several Minor League teams. Some of Zeke's favorite memories include in the fall of 1946 season, Zeke was called to New York to pitch to the Yankee Clipper Joe DiMaggio. Another memory occurred during the first half of the 1951 season. Mickey Mantle was sent to the Kansas City Blues where Zeke happened to be playing. Zeke came to Beaumont for the second half of the 1949 season and all of the 1950 one playing for the "Exporters" and after the name changed to "Roughnecks". During his professional career, he played in 311 games, started 67 games, and had a .470 win-loss average. Zeke retired from professional baseball, but stayed with the game by coaching teenage boys in the local Little League and the Pony League. For six years he conducted workouts on the French High School ball field. and another two years coaching the Sour Lake team. In 1950 he met and fell in love with Syble Faye Hoffpauir, he and Syble married on September 21, 1950. The marriage lasted 64 years until Syble's death on December 8, 2014. After retiring from Mobile in 1992, Zeke spent almost every morning at one of two local golf courses; Tyrrell Park golf course or nearby Pinewood Country Club. Survivors include his sister, Dolly Fabrizio of Harrington Park, New Jersey and her family; sisters in law, Ruby Hanna and her family, Leslie Bridgers and her family; brother in law, Jim Collins and his family. Also surviving are numerous beloved nieces and nephews. Preceded in death by his loving wife of sixty-four years Syble Faye Hoffpauir Melignano. Other family preceded in death brothers in law, Sonny Fabrizio, Bill Webb, Nathan Bibb, Benny Hanna, Kenneth Bridgers; sisters in law, Ann Webb, Loraine Collins, Barbara Bibb. The family will receive friends from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Sunday at Forest Lawn Funeral Home Funeral Services will be 10:30 a.m. Monday, June 26, 2017 at Forest Lawn Funeral Home. Interment will follow at Forest Lawn Memorial Park.

**Funeral Home****Forest Lawn Funeral Home**

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