**Raymond John (Ray) Petrzelka**

Raymond John (Ray) Petrzelka, 83, of Cedar Rapids, died suddenly Saturday, July 2, 2011, at Mercy Medical Center from a brain hemorrhage. Funeral services, 10 a.m. Wednesday at St. Matthew Catholic Church, by the Rev. David Beckman and the Rev. Gerald Condon co-celebrating. Burial: Czech National Cemetery. A vigil service will be held at 5 p.m. today at Teahen Funeral Home, where friends may visit the family from 4 to 6 p.m., and after 9 a.m. Wednesday at the church.   
  
Ray is survived by his wife, Jean, whom he married Oct. 29, 1949, at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Cedar Rapids.   
  
He was preceded in death by his son, Michael (2000).   
  
Raymond was born Dec. 2, 1927, in Cedar Rapids, the only child of John E. and Lillian Mary (Douda) Petrzelka. In 1945, he graduated from Roosevelt High School, where he lettered in baseball, basketball, football and track. He was on the first high school baseball team in Cedar Rapids at Roosevelt High School. Officials agreed to a team, appointed a coach, not being able to provide new uniforms, they used the uniforms no longer used by the Cedar Rapids Indians and the team won the 1945 state championship. Ray, 6'3," was primarily a first baseman, but played every position except catcher. In the district tournament he pitched a no-hitter against Perry. He pitched against Elkader in the semifinals, and defeated its star pitcher who went on to play in the major leagues.   
  
That summer he pitched for the Storm Lake White Caps. He then enrolled at Notre Dame. He played three seasons there, at first base hitting .373 as a freshman, and in only one season was his average below a .300. As a senior he was co-captain of the team. After graduation he signed with the Cleveland Indians and reported to Green Bay in 1949, playing short stop. Assigned to Cedar Rapids by the Indians the next year, his pitching record was 16-7. In the papers and radio Ray changed his name to Peters, so people stopped mispronouncing his last name.   
  
Called up the following year by the Indians he held the Chicago White Sox to one hit and no runs in an exhibition and had the same record against Pittsburg in five innings. Ray pitched for Wichita 12-3, Dallas, Reading, Tulsa, Nashville and San Diego during his minor league career. He retired from organized baseball at 27, developing arm problems.   
  
He returned to work in Cedar Rapids and worked for Iowa Manufacturing in international sales for 35 years. Ray was a member of the Iowa Manufacturing Team in the popular M & J League. He played on the championship team with a 5-3 pitching record and winning the batting title with a .429 average.   
  
Ray received many honors, including being elected to the American Legion of Iowa Baseball Hall of Fame, the Iowa High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame, and the Cedar Rapids Baseball Club Hall of Fame. He also officiated at Iowa State Tournament basketball games, and Iowa and Midwest conference games.   
  
Ray was a member of the St. Matthew Holy Name Society, a parish greeter, parish fundraiser, a member of the Archbishop Circle of Xavier High School and the Notre Dame Monogram Club. His first love was Notre Dame, but he also liked the Iowa Hawkeyes.   
  
He liked playing golf and was very proud of getting two holes-in-one.   
  
Ray was a loving, friendly person who loved a good joke. He was a devoted husband and caregiver to his wife Jean. He will truly be missed by his many friends to whom he was very loyal.   
  
Instead of flowers, memorials may be directed to St. Matthew Catholic Church, Xavier High School and Mercy Medical Center.   
  
Online condolences may be left for the family at www.teahenfuneralhome.com.

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