

JOSEPH H. KOENIG

Cedar Rapids USA

<http://internet-us.com/news/116605/joseph-koenig>



Joseph H. Koenig, a simple man who lived an amazing life, died suddenly on Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2016, at University Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City. He died peacefully surrounded by his loving family. Joe was born Aug. 14, 1922, in Halbur, Iowa, the youngest of nine children of Joseph and Frances Koenig. Joe loved sports and they played an important role throughout his life. A quarterback at Carroll High School, he gave up football for his junior year to box and train for the Golden Gloves in Gary, Ind. That year he won the Iowa Golden Gloves and made it to the semi-finals of the national Golden Gloves where he fought in front of 18,000 people in Chicago Stadium. He sparred with Rocky Marciano and met numerous famous boxers including Muhammad Ali, Joe Louis, George Foreman, Sugar Ray Robinson and many others. Baseball was another of Joe's favourite sports. He and his six brothers formed a baseball team

with two of their cousins, the Koenig Brothers baseball team, which played against other small town teams in western Iowa. One of Joe's favourite baseball memories was that he got a base hit off Dizzy Dean. He and his wife, Lucille, went often to Arizona to watch spring training. Joe was also an avid fan of the Iowa Hawkeyes. Joe joined the Army Air Corps during World War II. His B-17 bomber was shot down off the coast of France in his first combat mission in 1944. Joe and six other crewmates were captured and taken as German prisoners of war for 14 months. During this time, he was moved to multiple prison camps and endured the gruelling German "Long March," a 52-day, 500-mile march across Germany in the middle of a severe winter, often sleeping at night on the snow with one blanket. Numerous men died on this forced march. For his service, he was awarded many medals including the Prisoner of War Medal and the Purple Heart. Joe's plane was just discovered last year after being underwater for 70 years. Joe survived many hardships during the war, but was sustained by his strong Catholic faith and love of family as shown by his letters from prison camp which the family still has. His faith had been an integral part of Joe's entire life, never missing Mass even at 93 years old, except a few times for health reasons. Joe lived his faith every day of his life. After being liberated in April 1945, he married the love of his life, Lucille Schenkelberg, on Aug. 7, 1945. Joe and Lucille were an amazing couple, loving each other more and more as the years passed. People enjoyed seeing them still walking together and holding hands after 70 years of marriage. They celebrated their 70th anniversary with their entire family last August. They loved to travel and travelled the world. Joe owned a Sinclair station on Ellis Boulevard for 16 years and later became an insurance agent for Mutual of Omaha. Joe was an avid and excellent golfer, he loved to play cards, he loved to talk to anyone and everyone, he really loved chocolate, but more than anything he loved his family. He was the perfect example of living one's life for God, family and country. Joe remained vibrant until the very end, playing his regular Sunday night pinochle game with his family and doing his exercises. Taped onto his dresser were the words "I bet you can't think of more things you're grateful for than I am." He was loved by everyone who knew him and his family loved him immeasurably. Joe was preceded in death by his parents, his eight brothers and sisters and seven of Lucille's brothers and sisters. He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Lucille; son, Steve Koenig and his wife, Mary Ann; daughter, Becky Picard and her husband, Denny Waldron; grandchildren, Jenny (Mike) Shirk, Jodi Koenig, Christian (Erica) Picard and Ryan (Jill) Picard; and great-grandchildren, Joseph and Katherine Shirk, Lauren and Macy Picard and Juliette Picard. Joe was extremely dedicated to his family and he will be remembered by them as an amazing husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He was a true American hero and will always be a hero to his family.

