



# George Rajcevich

MAY 5, 1920 - MAY 17, 2008



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# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 5



## **George Rajcevich**

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**G**eorge "Dutch" Rajcevich, 88, died May 17, 2008 at Harmony House in Clinton, Iowa. George was born to Nikola and Milica "Mildred" (Pjevac/Peavich) Rajcevich on May 5, 1920 in Silvis, Illinois. The family moved to Clinton soon after George was born; his father, Nikola died in 1922 and his mother married Mike Rajcevich. "Dutch", as he was affectionately known, graduated from Clinton High School where he was voted outstanding male athlete and MVP in football his senior year.

He served in the Army during WWII as the SSgt for Co. K, 9th Infantry and fought in the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), Rhineland and Central European campaigns. He was awarded many decorations including the Purple Heart for a wound received Feb. 18, 1945 in Germany.

George married Harriet Helen Dellit in Clinton on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1941. They celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary in December. He retired from Climax Engineering Co. in 1984 where he worked as a tool and die maker for nearly 40 years.

Sports was Dutch's passion; as an observer, a volunteer and a participant. He competed in many sports but his favorite was running; he placed 5 times in the Bix 7, taking 1st in his age group in 1993. He collected over 560 trophies, medals and special awards and held "All-American" status in several Masters Track and Field Events. He was active in Senior Olympics into his 80th year. He was a charter member of the Cornbelt Running Club and member of the Midwest Masters Track and Field and former member of the Fulton Country Club. He was an active volunteer, working as a wrestling coach and referee for many years for both the YMCA and CHS. He was the Gateway Classic Volunteer Honoree in 1998.

Visitation will be held on Tuesday, May 20th, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Clinton Chapel Snell Zornig Funeral Home in Clinton. Services will be held 10:30 am Wednesday, May 21st at the



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Trinity United Methodist Church where Dutch was an active member. Burial will be in the Clinton Lawn Cemetery.

Survivors include his wife; one daughter, Nancy (David) Andrews, of Clinton; a son, David (Morgan) Rajcevich, of Fulton; two brothers, John Rajcevich of Florida; Eli (Phyllis) Rajcevich of Council Bluffs, IA; three sisters, Mrs. Helen (Chris) Martensen of Clinton, Mrs. Dorothy (Ed) Truninger of Clinton and Mildred Ronnfeldt of Michigan; four grandchildren, Jennifer Andrews, Theresa Andrews, Kim (Dale) Schwer and Amber Rajcevich; three great-grandchildren, Collin, Autumn and Caden.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his son Bobby, grandson Chris, three brothers and two sisters, Online condolences may be made to [www.snellzornig.com](http://www.snellzornig.com).



## Tribute Wall

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TA

**Theresa Andrews** posted:

Grandpa, I've thought and thought how I could put into words what an amazing man you were. Its so hard because there are so many things that come to mind. Over and over through the years, as i grow and meet new people, when they find out you are my grandfather, the reaction is mostly the same; "What an amazing man...", "The nicest man I've eve known", "Do you have any idea what your grandfather has done for young athletes?", I heard that one a lot. Grandpa you volunteered every bit of your extra time to the sports you loved, yet you never shorted us on anything. You were there for us no matter what. When we'd had a bad time or felt bad about something that happened, you always had a way of adding a chuckle to a lesson that made us know we had learned and it would be O.K. I was a horrible student in social studies. One year my father, who's favorite subject it was, offered me a hundred dollars if I could gt an "A" in this class. I did O.K. throughout the quarter, but when it came time for our final paper, I wrote it on you. You let a young child bring your purple heart to school and show it off; and tell your story of the "Battle of the Bulge". Your story of how close you fought with General Patton. I finished that class with a hundred dollars in my hand. That hundred could never re-pay you for the sense of pride, ambition, loyalty, and honor you passed on to us as your family. In eighth grade I went out for track. My first real meet you came to. I'll never forget because you not only came but you were down on the track, watching. My leg of the race was the last of a relay. I was all cramped up from not breathing right and running as hard as I could to impress you. I can still see you standing over me as I lay in the grass at the end, saying,"You feel that pain? That's the feeling of winning." You were always good for a story. As a matter of fact, for years I believed the cysts on your back were bullets working their way through from the war, that eleven children shared two mattresses, and that your little red Volkswagen Bug could drive on it's own. Some things that will always make me think of you: Apple trees, running shoes, tropheys, Volkswagons, stained glass, listerene, cough drops, garlic salt, bread and butter at every meal, soldiers, smiles, a tickle spot just above the knee, a man that would never put anything before family. Some words I'll always remember you by: son, brother, friend, husband, father, grand father, great-grand father, coach, referee, co-worker, neighbor, volunteer, and most of all a hero not just to your country but to your family also, in more ways than we ever could have told you. A lesson I have learned from you grandpa: Run one, Walk one. That's what you always said when people asked you how you learned to run. I'm taking that lesson to hert from now on and I'm going to run through all the bad days and walk through all the good. You just never know how long you're going to get to share the good times with the ones you love, that's why I'm going to walk those. We've all been blessed for whatever part of the last eighty-eight years that we've been able to share. Thank you Grandpa. God bless you Grandpa. For those of you that do not know, Grandpa is wearing his running shoes now. Everytime I hear thunder from now on I'm going to imagine it's the sound of your stride as you jog laps through heaven waiting for us. And the lightning, well that's just what's left in your path, because you were always the best. Hugs and Kisses until we meet again. -Theresa

May 16 at 7:00 PM



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LM

**Laura Merritt** posted:

Aunt Nancy and Family, So sorry to hear that your Dad has passed away. He was always so sweet.  
Laura, Kevin and Family

May 16 at 7:00 PM

KD

**Karol Dellit** posted:

Uncle Dutch, You inspired me in so many ways during those young years I spent visiting in Clinton. I looked forward to those visits. I had a blast playing pool with you - teaching me trick shots and just musing about your take on life. You had such a great sense of humor and you really had a great influence on all of the young people around you. We would all gather on your porch and you would talk and talk. Giving us some grain of wisdom to take with us. I've thought of you fondly throughout the years. You really inspired me to begin running. It was infectious. You were so full of information and your enthusiasm was inspiring. I began trail running in the CO mountains and thought of you. I can no longer run anymore (lost my leg), but I hike the backcountry here in New Mexico and I think of you all of the time. You've left a real legacy and were a wonderful role model. Via con Dios... Karol

May 16 at 7:00 PM

KS

**Kelly Mceleney Schemers** posted:

To the family of George Rajcevich: So sorry to hear of your loss. I can remember George getting me motivated to run road races from the time I was 12 yrs old. I always thought he was such an inspiration, liked he really cared. I was so impressed how he kept so fit for all those years. He will be greatly missed by all.

May 16 at 7:00 PM

HJ

**Heather Johnson** posted:

We want to express our condolences for George. What an amazing man he was! The Johnson Family

May 16 at 7:00 PM



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AR

**Amber Rajcevic** posted:

Grampa, There are a lot of things that I would have liked to have thanked you for, but the amount of strength that is needed to make our truest feelings known is often dwindled by fear - and I regret not having had that strength. When I was young and a little bit lost, you always made me feel like I was as much a granddaughter as my sister and cousins, even though I was separated by blood. I would only have to see the wisdom and warmth in your eyes and I would feel at home. It is this warmth that taught me the most. I began to notice when I was in middle school that you had this strange ability. You were able to find humor and happiness in small things, and disarm negativity with the wisdom of joy. As I grew older, and so did you, I saw these gifts grow and grow. I saw the lines of stress in your face replaced more and more with lines of laughter, and with that humor a freedom that seemed to grow as well. Just through observation I learned lessons that have given my life great joy, and lessons that allowed me to better endure life's hardships. You taught me so much by your example, and yet I know that your example will continue to teach me. Thank you for all you have given us -- I love you very much!

May 16 at 7:00 PM

KS

**Kimberly Rajcevic Schwer** posted:

Grandpa -one of the kindness men I've ever had the pleasure to know; strong in every facet of the word. A hero and role model to so many; truly an incredible person with shining eyes, a wonderful sense of humor and a heart filled with compassion. Loved and admired by all. After the birth of my first son, I dubbed you "The Great One" - a very fitting name as you have always been and will always be... I love you.

May 16 at 7:00 PM

JA

**Jennifer Andrews** posted:

Grandpa, In college I was asked to write a paper about my idol. Many famous people came to mind, but it was you who I wrote about. You have blessed me in so many ways. You have inspired me...motivated me...grounded me... I will be forever thankful for having you to look up to all these years (and the years to come)! I am going to miss you belly laughs. I am going to miss you asking me what kind of car I am driving now...how many miles are on it...what running shoes I am wearing. I am going to miss your strong hugs. I am going to miss the confidence you gave me every time I saw you. I love you yesterday. I love you today. I love you tomorrow. I will always be your "punk." I will always make you proud. Every time I run, I know you will be beside me...cheering me on. Thank you. This is not goodbye...this is until I need you again...which is always. I know you will always be there. My love and prayers, forever and always, Punk (aka Jennifer)

May 16 at 7:00 PM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring George by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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