

In Memory of Roger F. Peterson

Roger Franklin Peterson was born June 20, 1928. He was the only child of Benjamin Harrison Peterson and Eda A. (Swenson) Peterson. Roger grew up in Cedar Rapids and graduated from Franklin High School in 1946. His interests included track and basketball. After high school he attended Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa where his father taught chemistry. Roger played football at Coe and was involved in campus activities. He graduated in 1950 with a Bachelor of Arts in Finance.

In 1950, after graduation from Coe, Roger was drafted into the United States Army. After completing his training at Fort Leonard Wood he was stationed in Europe. He was honorably discharged in 1952.

Roger entered the University of Iowa law school in 1952 and graduated in 1955. He married Mary E. Van Vliet on February 23, 1957. The wedding was held in Pella, Iowa at the Second Reformed Church. Mary preceded Roger in death on October 12, 2003.

Roger practiced law in Waterloo, Iowa. He enjoyed several years of success with the firm of Butterfield, Ball, Beckman and Peterson. He served as Black Hawk County Attorney in 1967-1968.

He was appointed as a district judge April 16, 1972 by Governor Robert D. Ray. January 1, 1984 he was appointed by the Iowa Supreme Court as chief judge of the First Judicial District and he served in that capacity until his retirement on July 2, 1993. Following retirement, Roger served as a senior judge from July 3, 1993 until August 1, 2001. He spent the majority of his time as a senior judge assigned to the Iowa Court of Appeals.

After retirement, Roger and Mary moved to Door County, Wisconsin. They were there members of Hope United Church of Christ. Roger was active in Rotary Club and served on the local board of adjustment.

Roger died during the evening of May 13, 2010 at Pine Crest Residential Living in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. He was eighty-one years old. He was laid to rest beside his beloved Mary in Oakwood Cemetery at Pella, Iowa on May 19, 2010.

Roger and Mary are survived by their three sons: Bruce, whose wife is Susan, and their son, Simon, all of Essex, Massachusetts; Jeffrey, whose wife is Jill, and their children, Brandon and Breanna, all of Macomb, Michigan, and Justin, whose wife is Kyle, and their children, Lydia and Ben, all of Silverthorne, Colorado.

Roger was devoted to his family and friends. He loved fixing things and was always willing to lend a helping hand. He was quiet and thoughtful in all aspects of his life. As a judge he was extremely conscientious, so much so that he often agonized over making a decision. He genuinely cared for the people he worked with. After retiring to Door County, Wisconsin he frequently stopped in both Dubuque and Waterloo when he made trips to Pella or Des Moines. He valued his friendships and attended to them carefully.

I move that this memorial be approved unanimously and be spread upon the records of the Iowa Judge's Association. A copy shall be provided to Judge Peterson's family.