



## Brigadier General (Brevet) Peter John Sajevic

July 27, 1921 - November 3, 2012

Age 91 of St Paul. Died 11/03/2012. Survived by his loving wife of 68 years, Florence; children Skip(Pat); Dave(JoAnn); Jack; Mary(Quentin)Pearson; Bob(Teri) and Sue; 13 grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren and family friend Devie. Born and raised in Chisholm, MN to parents who immigrated from Austria (now Slovenia). His father was killed in a tragic mining accident and left Peter as head of the household at age 15, the oldest of three boys. His mother spoke mostly Slovenian. He was a good student but spoke little English when he first began school. A quick study, he soon rose towards the top of his class and discovered a passion and talent for sports. He attended Hibbing Junior College, then Gustavus Adolphus College before heading west to study and play basketball at Colorado A&M. WWII broke out and he enlisted in the Marine Corps, then completed courses at Colorado College before boot camp at Parris Island, SC. Out of 2000 candidates, he was chosen as one of only 120 to be commissioned as a 2nd Lt. He and Florence married Sept 9, 1944 while at Quantico, VA and spent seven weeks together before Peter was sent to California for further training. He then sailed to the Pacific Islands, spending over two months training on Guam before the invasion of Iwo Jima. He led a platoon ashore and quickly found himself in charge of twice as many men when his fellow lieutenant didn't survive the landing. He then moved around the sulphuric island as a forward artillery observer, one of the most dangerous assignments. He spent 48 days on Iwo Jima. After a year and a half separation from Florence, he returned to

Colorado A&M after the war ended. There he was selected captain of the basketball team and earned his Bachelor of Science degree. He began his teaching and coaching career at Ft Morgan, CO and then returned to teach in Long Prairie, MN, then Cloquet, MN before settling in St Paul to teach and coach for the next 26 years at St Paul Johnson High School. He coached track, gymnastics, basketball and football and was the JHS Athletic Director. Upon returning to Minnesota he transferred from the Marine Corps Reserves to the MN Army National Guard in 1953 where he served in various assignments of increasing responsibility. According to many senior military officers, he was extremely effective as a trouble shooter and was repeatedly assigned to organizations requiring his outstanding leadership. During his career he commanded the 1st Battalion 175th Field Artillery and 1st Battalion 151st Field Artillery. He graduated with distinction from the Advanced Artillery School and Command and General Staff College. He retired as the 47th Infantry Division Artillery Commander in 1976. As an acknowledgement of his outstanding service to the State, he had the Peter J Sajevec Range Office at Camp Ripley, MN dedicated in his name in 1979, He was awarded the Legion of Merit, the Minnesota Medal for Merit and the Presidential Unit Citation (Iwo Jima). He was also President of the National Guard Association. He was an avid golfer and longtime member at Indian Hills Golf Course, a Lifetime Master Bridge player and active at St Louis Catholic Church where he was President of the Men's Club. There he successfully spearheaded the fundraiser to replace the old church bell with the first three new bells. He will be remembered for his love of sports and Scotch, great sense of humor, discipline and organization, high standards and integrity, but most of all for his devotion to his wife and family, and loyal dog, Magic. Florence always reminds us that they have had a good life. It was many years of blood, sweat and tears, but rewarded with remarkable golden years. They had the opportunity to travel the world with great friends and share wonderful memories. They continued to play golf and bridge for a very long time. They enjoyed many, many days at the cabin on Big Pine Lake enjoying pontoon rides, playing

cards, watching volleyball and enjoying the company of kids and grandkids. They went on exotic vacations with their children from Hong Kong to Jamaica, visited relatives in Slovenia and rung in the New Year in Puerto Vallarta. They've been blessed with healthy and loving children, 13 grandchildren: Pete(Jill), Beau and Shea; Amy(Brian), Kristin(Patrick)and David; Zach; Shawna and Nathan(Carli); Kim(Eric), Lindsey, Jake and Ben; 7 great-grandchildren: Nick and Cara; Lucas and Izzy; Jorey, Colin and Liv. They've been great role models who remind us all to enjoy the journey. Husband, father , grandfather, friend and mentor, Peter Sajevic will be missed. Special recognition and thanks go to the staff at Waverly Gardens Presbyterian Homes for their comfort and care. Visitation 4-8pm Thursday November 8 and Mass of Christian Burial 10AM Friday November 9 (visitation begins at 9AM) at HHBP, 515 Hwy 96 W, Shoreview. Interment Fort Snelling. Memorials preferred to Little Sisters of the Poor, St Louis Church or Wounded Warriors.

# Tribute Wall



“ You were the best dad anyone could wish for....I love you.  
Susie

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**Sue Sajevic** - November 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM