

Gerald A. "Jerry" Heinzen

This week we are happy to name Gerald A. "Jerry" Heinzen as the 141st inductee in Marshfield's 150: Heroes and Leaders, Past and Present register. Gerald A. "Jerry" Heinzen was nominated by Michael D. Meyers.

Many Marshfield businessmen throughout the community's history are remembered for their successful business ventures, but we find many of these same individuals contributed to the success of the various community, fraternal and religious organizations. One poignant example of such a person is Gerald Arthur "Jerry" Heinzen, longtime owner of Heinzen Printing.

Jerry was born to Benjamin and Marie (Kohlbeck) Heinzen on August 14, 1927, in Marshfield. He attended St. John's Catholic School and Marshfield High School, graduating with the Class of 1945. While attending MHS he was a member of the National Honor Society and participated in band and drama.

After graduating, he continued playing music as a member of the 135th Medical Regiment Band, playing the cornet and in a dance band playing the trumpet. Years later, he was pleased to have played the cornet at each of his children's weddings.

In April 1946, Army Pvt. Gerald Heinzen reported to Camp Pickett, Virginia after completing three months of basic training at Fort Worth, Texas. He was later attached to Engineering Base Topography Battalion at Fort William D. Davis in the Panama Canal Zone. He was discharged in May 1947 as Technician Fourth Grade.

Returning from the service, Jerry enrolled in Marquette University at Milwaukee in the fall of 1947, but when his father died of heart attack in 1948, Jerry quit school and entered the printing business. Less than six months later, he took over printing operations of the plant, when his mother passed away in early February.

Ben Heinzen established Heinzen's Print Shop at 103 N. Central Avenue in August 1932. Five years later, the shop relocated to 734 S. Central Avenue. Then in 1943, needing more space, Heinzen Printing moved to 156 S. Central Avenue where they remained through several building expansions. Jerry's sons, Rick and Mike, joined him as printers in 1976 and 1982, respectively. Then in 1993, Rick and Mike bought the company and Jerry



semi-retired. Two years later, Heinzen Printing moved to a much larger, newly renovated, building at 550 S. Central Avenue. Rick and Mike retired in 2017 selling the business, which continues today as Heinzen Printing and Promotional.

Jerry recognized the value of joining other business leaders to promote the city and what it offers to others through the Marshfield Chamber of Commerce. He served the organization over the years in multiple capacities, helping it to grow,. He also recognized the importance of growing the city's taxbase and boosting its economy through industrial growth, so he served 27 years as a member of the board of directors of Greater Marshfield, Inc., which became Marshfield Development Corp., the predecessor of today's Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

His church commitments included being a charter member of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church where he was a lector, usher, first lay eucharistic minister, a lifelong member of the Holy Name Society, and school board and church board member. Jerry also led fundraising efforts on behalf of the parish towards funding for various construction projects at OLP and Columbus High School.

Jerry devoted 50 years in service to the Knights of Columbus, and served many years in the Serra Club of Marshfield, a Catholic organization, dedicated to the promotion of vocations to the religious life.

He was also a member of the Columbus Galleon Club, a group of about 100 members formed in 1974 who donated a minimum of \$100 each year to support the annual operating budget and various school projects at Columbus High School.

In 1961, when St. Joseph's Hospital embarked on a massive facility expansion project. Jerry joined other downtown businessmen as part of the Business and Professional Division of the Hospital Expansion Fund, soliciting memorials and contributions from business firms and their employees. In 1967, Jerry was named as a member of the board of directors of the Marshfield Clinic Foundation for Research and Education. He served on the board of directors for 18 years. Then in 1978, he was named as a director of the Marshfield Savings & Loan Association board.

Jerry was also active in the Marshfield Area United Way, the Marshfield Elks, and Rotary International serving as their 56th president in 1976.

In 1978, Jerry's frequent blood donations to the American Red Cross Bloodmobile, topped nine gallons.

Jerry was honored as the Marshfield Junior Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Young Man of the Year in 1958 for his many community contributions. Then in 1987, Rotarians honored him with the Service Above Self award recognizing his notable record of volunteer

service and support to area organizations and the community. In accepting the award, Jerry thanked his wife, Rita, who he said, “really knows “service above self.”

Jerry Heinzen and Rita Koller, daughter of Louis and Mary Koller, were married June 29, 1950, at St. John’s Catholic Church in Marshfield. Jerry died December 12, 1998, and his wife, Rita, on June 21, 2003.

Their children, Jeff, Rick, Kathy, Jean, Mike, Bob and Kris each worked at the print shop at a young age and continue to carry on that sense of community involvement taught to them by their parents’ example.