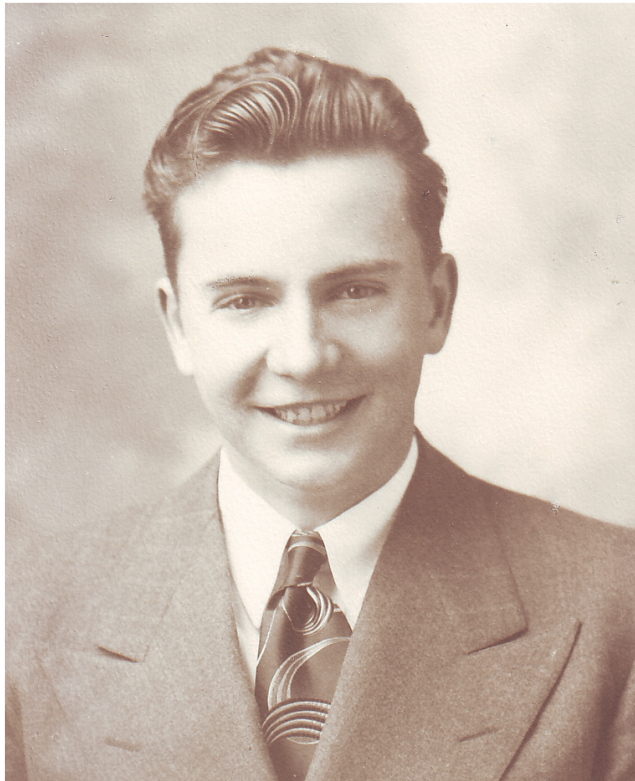


Raymond Joseph Perschbacher



Ray in 1948



Ray (on the left) and his friend Walt Iiams (on the right) at Sweeties

Raymond Joseph Perschbacher of Salida, Colorado, died Saturday, October 23, 2021, surrounded by his family and caregiver Laura Wagner. Born March 3, 1930, he was the only son of John Raymond Perschbacher and Ellen Lucille Dunham Perschbacher, in Denver, Colorado. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sweetheart and wife of seventy years Gwendolyn Nadine Cain Perschbacher. He is survived by his loyal pug Pepper; children Kirby Ray Perschbacher (Margo) of Salida, CO, Micheal Trent Perschbacher (Colleen) of Cañon City, CO, Ruth Ellen Perschbacher Price of Salida, CO, and Mark Wendel Perschbacher of Salida, CO. Grandchildren are Charis Cheeseman (Shawn) and Nicholas Perschbacher of Salida, CO, John Perschbacher of Cañon City, Maude Blaylock (Alex) of Penrose, CO, Kolton Perschbacher of Denver, CO, Kortney Perschbacher Romanetz (Ted) of Poncha Springs and Kael Perschbacher of Keystone, CO. Great grandchildren are Cody Cheeseman and Tait Cheeseman of Salida, CO, and Silas Blaylock of Penrose, CO.

Shortly after Ray's birth his parents moved to Buena Vista (BV), where his father owned and operated a successful grocery store. Ray often said, "It's almost literally true that I cut my teeth on the edge of a grocery shelf while stacking cans of beans." When Ray first started waiting on customers, he had to use a wooden box to reach the cash register. All his life, Ray told stories about the characters he met in the store. Many were original settlers with tales of the earliest days in BV, some lived in old mining shafts or rustic cabins, most were hard workers, and others were simply notorious.

In 1945, to be eligible to work as a rodman for the Bureau of Reclamation's first survey of the Frying Pan Arkansas he fudged his date of birth. After graduating from Buena Vista High School, Ray worked one summer as a produce manager in Colorado Springs, before returning to BV and then on to Gunnison, where he worked again as a rodman on a survey crew for the Colorado Department of Transportation.

After Gunnison, Ray returned to Buena Vista where he took over management of a wholesale produce truck, delivering to grocery stores around the area. With this job, Ray moved to Glenwood Springs, which subsequently, was one his best decisions because he was introduced to his soon-to-be wife. Due to a smart remark Ray made to Mrs. Berthod of Berthod Motors about his Chevrolet truck making better time up the mountain to Glenwood Springs than the Diamond T's they sold, Mrs. Berthod promised "I'll fix you." She marched Ray over to where Gwen was sitting in a car nearby and introduced them. Ray not only lied to work as a rodman, he also told a fib to Gwendolyn so she would take his hand in marriage. The day they applied for their marriage certificate, Ray confessed that he was in fact, two years younger. She never let him forget it. They married on May 28, 1950, in Glenwood Springs.

They lived in Glenwood until Ray's father became sick and they moved to Buena Vista to assist in the Perschbacher's grocery store. He ran the store until early 1954 when his father recovered enough for Ray to take on a different job. Ray became a field underwriter for New York Life Insurance

Company, which he proudly represented for over 30 years. On Labor Day weekend of 1955 Ray and Gwen made Salida their home so Gwen could work at the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Hospital, now the Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center.

As a life insurance agent, Ray qualified for "Star Club Meetings" which were held at various resorts throughout the United States. Ray and Gwen immensely enjoyed these trips. Vision problems forced Ray to take an early retirement from New York Life in 1984. Soon after, Ray and Gwen moved from their family home on "F Street" and purchased the apartments on "2nd Street," where they rented units and lived a happy life.

Ray was known throughout the community for his love of the railroad, especially The Denver South Park and Pacific; his great grandfather "Joe" Perschbacher was a brakeman on its perilous narrow-gauge tracks through the Rocky Mountains, including the Alpine Tunnel. St. Elmo was a cherished ghost town due to its place in the Perschbacher family history.

The Perschbacher Family extends thanks to the many members of Ray's caregiving village which included: Mark Perschbacher, Gwen and Ray's youngest son, Tammy Barnthouse, Laura Wagner, Juliet Schawb, Johnna Baughman, Scott Ferguson, Zachary Vosburgh, and John Paul Bryant along with special friends Liv Holmes and Cookie Cook; Outstanding Coffee Buddy Walt Iiams; Rob & Sarah Gartzman, their two children and the kind staff at Sweeties; Karen Adamson and her co-workers at Planned Parenthood; and the kind and responsive staff of Heart of the Rockies Home Health and Hospice.

Friends who desire may make memorial contributions to:

- Historic St. Elmo & Chalk Creek Canyon P.O. Box 282, Nathrop, CO 81236 <https://www.historicstelmo.org/>
- Planned Parenthood, 233 E 2nd St, Salida, CO 81201
- Heart of the Rockies Hospice, make check to Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center (HRRMC) Foundation, with Hospice in the memo line, P. O. Box 429, Salida, CO 81201

Arrangements are with Lewis and Glenn Funeral Home. Online condolences may be made to the family at <https://www.lewisandglenn.com>.

A Joint Celebration of Ray and Gwen's Lives will be November 6, 2021 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM at the Poncha Springs Town Hall, 330 Burnett Ave, Poncha Springs. Fun & Poignant Remarks with Shared Memories will start at 2:30. Refreshments will be served.

A Private Graveside Service Will Be Held at Mount Olivet Cemetery.

- Pall bearers will be Nicholas Perschbacher, John Perschbacher, Kolton Perschbacher, Kael Perschbacher, Cody Cheeseman, Shawn Cheeseman, Tait Cheeseman (Honorary) and Silas Blaylock (Honorary), Ted Romanetz, and Alex Blaylock.