

Richard "Dick" Rice

Mooreville-Richard "DICK" Rice, 80, legendary and celebrated Chief Meteorologist, Emeritus, for WTVA-Tupelo Television died from complications due to the Covid 19 Virus at 5:30 PM Saturday, January 16, 2021 at North Miss. Medical Center in Tupelo. Dick and his late wife, Jill, moved to Tupelo in 1979 after his brilliant full career in the U. S. Navy, and have made their home in Mooreville since. Jill died on Nov. 17, 2020. Richard Thomas Rice was born on Sept. 15, 1940 in Ware, Mass. to the late Thomas and Jean Lech Rice. He attended public schools there ultimately enlisting in the U. S. Navy. He did his basic training at Millington, Tn. Naval Station where he met Jilda "Jill" White of Memphis. They were married on Sept. 24, 1960. Chief Petty Officer Rice served as a meteorologist on ships around the globe during his 20 year military career. He would predict weather patterns and sea swells as well as forecast ballistic winds and densities in the atmosphere for missile launches. Dick and Jill moved to Tupelo in July, 1979 where he began an illustrious career as Northeast Mississippi's weatherman even up till his death. He became a household "family figure" to literally thousands and found great joy in speaking to civic groups and especially school children about his job and career. Many children were introduced to Dick as the "Santa Tracker" every Christmas Eve. A great part of Dick's legacy will be the mentoring he did for his colleagues at WTVA Television station in Tupelo. He was a "go to" man for advice, counseling, fun and direction in life as well as in the profession of broadcasting. Outside TV, Dick was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He adored Jill and his children and was a doting grandfather to the grands and great grands. A great lover of God's creation, Dick was a master gardener known most especially for growing prized tomatoes every year at his home in Mooreville. He loved sharing the produce with his colleagues and friends everywhere. Dick and Jill were members of the Eggville Church of Christ.

Per his request, a private family graveside service will be held at Lee Memorial Park in Verona with his grandson, John speaking. Friends may come by Holland Funeral Directors at 5281 Cliff Gookin Blvd. Tuesday afternoon from Noon-5 PM to pay their respects by signing the register book and watching videos of Dick's life. Condolences or personal reflections of Dick's life may be e mailed to hollandfuneraldirectors@comcast.net

Dick is survived by his daughter, Debbie Rice Vines and her husband, Grady of Mooreville; three grandchildren, John Vines (Courtney) of Saltillo, Robert Vines (Kimberly) of Etta and Scotty Vines of Mooreville; 3 great grandchildren, Lauren, Aaryn and Chloe Vines. his brother, David Rice (Patty) and sister, Eileen Chrabascz (Rich) of Somers, Conn. ; several nieces and nephews. Dick was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Jill, his son, Gary.

Honorary pallbearers will be present and former members of the staff of WTVA Television in Tupelo.

The family requests that memorials in Dick's memory be made to Sanctuary Hospice House, P. O. Box 2177, Tupelo, MS. 38802. Cards may be mailed to the Rice Family at 5281 Cliff Gookin Blvd., Tupelo, MS. 38801.

Holland Funeral Directors is honored to be serving their friends.