



Richard "Dick" Harold Rees

January 15, 1930 - June 30, 2025

Local resident Richard Harold "Dick" Rees passed away quietly at Madrone Hospice in Yreka on June 30, 2025. Dick was born in Los Angeles on January 15, 1930 to Ernest and Beatrice Rees. Dick was an only child, but grew up with his best friend, Donald Meramble, the son of Ernest and Beatrice's best friends. The two explored a good share of Southern California on their bicycles and the trolley, and remained close until Don's passing in 2002. Dick's first marriage was to Helen Nelson and together they had one son, Kurt Richard Rees. Dick attended community college in Southern California to become an optician. During the Korean War he joined the Navy and upon learning he could make, fit and repair glasses, he was immediately moved into the optical lab and for two years he made a fitted glasses for soldiers and officers. He never once set foot on a ship. At the end of the war he used his GI bill and returned to college to become an optometrist. He began his optometric career at Sears before opening his own office in San Pedro, California. In 1960, the family took a trip up the California coast and, due to bad weather, turned inland to Grants Pass and started south. When they came over the Siskiyou into Yreka the weather changed drastically: blue sky, sunshine and a view of the amazing Mt. Shasta. After visiting Yreka and finding open office space on Broadway, the three returned home to Southern California, packed up and moved to Yreka. He practiced in Yreka from 1960 until December of 2000.

Dick was active in Yreka Elks, Yreka Rotary and the Masonic Lodge. In 1975,

he also became active in the Siskiyou Performing Arts Center (SPAC), serving on their board for many years and was, along with Tom Sieber and several others, instrumental in obtaining a grant from the McConnell Foundation, paying off the mortgage on the SPAC theater, at that time called the Dunlap Theatre.

Helen and Dick separated and eventually divorced shortly after moving to Yreka. While active in SPAC, Dick met and married Terry Ann (Latimer) Wiley on July 16, 1977, and Dick gained two more children, Mark David Wiley and Tracy Rene Wiley. Dick and Terry remained active in SPAC for many years, acting, directing, building sets, and more. Dick served as board president for many years, and is best known for playing the part of Elwood P. Dowd in "Harvey".

Dick, along with a friend, successfully started the Siskiyou Century Bike Ride, which they eventually turned over to Rotary. He was classically trained from the age of six on the violin, and although he could play several instruments, he was best known for his amazing skill on the violin. In later years, due to arthritis in his fingers, Dick called himself a fiddler rather than violinist. He along with Jerry Murphy, played in numerous productions and Wilds at SPAC, and the two became close friends. As street musicians, they could often be seen on Miner Street, at the Yreka train station or on the Blue Goose, playing their beautiful and sometimes crazy music. Eventually they formed the Celtic Cats, adding Brian McKee, Ron Mahugh and Marilyn Steponovich.

The first year Dick and Terry were married, they bought a small trailer, and along with Mark and Tracy, traveled to Florida to visit Kurt, who had joined the Navy and was stationed in Pensacola. Upon returning to Yreka, Dick was impressed with the number of states they had gone through, and he and Terry set a goal to see all fifty states together. They not only accomplished that, they visited a good share of Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand and numerous parts of Europe. The two also enjoyed cruising with friends and family, and did so on numerous occasions.

Dick was not only an accomplished violinist, he was well known for his

culinary skills, especially his homemade, sour dough pizza, which he served to anyone who showed up for Friday night dinner. He was an amazing wood worker, and along with Terry as his "did you see my hammer backup" completely remodeled their first home in Yreka. He was a talented artist and several of his paintings are still hanging in their home. He had a wonderful, if not weird, sense of humor, and he was well known to his fellow actors for forgetting his lines while on stage. He was devoted to Terry, and as Tracy once wrote, "If she wanted to go to the moon, he would see to it that he got her there, and on time."

Dick will be missed and always loved by those who knew him. He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Terry; son Kurt Rees and daughter-in-law Rosalin; son Mark Wiley and daughter-in-law Victoria Lange; daughter Tracy Wiley; and considered a third son Jeff Farrior.

Please join friends and family celebrating this remarkable man at a Celebration of Life on Tuesday, August 12, 2025 from 1:00 - 4:00 PM at the Yreka Masonic Hall. Light refreshments will be served.

Tribute Wall

KO

“ Kathleen O'Neill lit a candle in memory of Richard "Dick" Harold Rees



Kathleen O'Neill - August 29, 2025 at 12:00 AM

CY

“ A New Angel is watching over his family & friends .. I worked for Dr. Rees & Terry many years ago ... What a wonderful team they were ... Working for them was never a chore, everything was always so comfortable... Rest in Heavenly Peace Dr Rees ... it was a real joy working for you & Terry ... Love & Prayers for the family

Charlene Young - July 16, 2025 at 12:00 AM

SF

“ Dick often would talk with me at Rotary about different recipes and cooking methods. He once bought a sous vide cooker and I enjoyed his cooking experience and enthusiasm. And he had the most wonderful sense of humor.

Scott Frick - July 06, 2025 at 12:00 AM

AT

“ Terry and family, I am so sorry to hear of Dr. Rees passing. I never could call him by first name. he was always so patient with me when I worked for you, but I always felt like a duck out of water. The man had patience! I have thought of you both over the years. He was a kind and wonderful person to work for. I am so sorry for your loss.
Ann Tozier

Ann Tozier - July 03, 2025 at 12:00 AM

AR

“ *We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Girdner Funeral Chapel*

A Memorial Tree was planted for Richard "Dick" Harold Rees - July 03, 2025 at 12:00 AM