



Robert LaRue Rice

August 30, 1931 - September 21, 2025

On September 21, 2025, Robert LaRue "Bob" Rice passed peacefully surrounded by family at the Madrone Hospice House in Yreka, California. Bob was 94 years old and led a long and fulfilling life dedicated to family, public service, forest and watershed conservation, and the enjoyment of sports and the outdoors.

Bob is survived by his wife of 68 years, Charlotte, three children Perry (wife Nancy), Bradley (wife Vicki) and Jennifer (husband Joe), and his beloved granddaughter Cheyenne.

Bob was born on August 30, 1931 in Columbus, Wisconsin to Robert Emmett "Sam" Rice and Sarah "Sye" Skone. He had one sibling, Melissa Ann Rice Schwedersky, who preceded him in death. He grew up in Lodi, Wisconsin, a small town surrounded by lakes, hills, farms and forests where his life-long passion for the great outdoors began. While at Lodi High School, he lettered in football, basketball, baseball and track and his teams regularly went to state championships.

He started his higher education at Wisconsin State College in Platteville, Wisconsin in pre-forestry. Bob's college was interrupted by the Korean War, and he served in the United States Navy on the USS Unadilla (ATA-182) ocean tugboat. He only recently shared with his family that he had been shot in the leg on a beach while evacuating a high-ranking foreign dignitary from the Korean Peninsula. In 1954, while serving in the Navy, he was part of Operation Castle, which was a series of high-yield nuclear tests in the

Marshall Islands. His ship was part of an effort to monitor the radiation during the blasts. 65 years later, Petty Officer First Class Robert L. Rice was awarded the Atomic Veterans Service Certificate.

Following his honorable discharge from the Navy, and recipient of the GI Bill, Bob resumed his higher education at the University of Minnesota studying forestry and playing on the football team. While at the University of Minnesota, Bob met Charlotte Rae Quinn at a FarmHouse Fraternity social and he married his lifelong partner in 1957. Shortly thereafter, he graduated with a Bachelor's of Science in Forestry.

In 1958, Bob started his distinguished 31 year career with the United States Forest Service (USFS) with Charlotte on the Inyo National Forest in Lee Vining, California where he learned to ski at Mammoth Mountain. The Rice's then moved to Bishop, California where Bob worked on the National Forest Survey for the Inyo National Forest and the carbon dating of the ancient Bristlecone Pine. They then moved to Pinecrest, California where Perry was born in 1961. The next assignment was in South Lake Tahoe where Brad and Jennifer were born in 1964 and 1968 respectively. Bob was part of the newly created Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit that comprehensively provided for the wise use and protection of 156,000 acres surrounding Lake Tahoe. This included setting up the Taylor Creek Visitor Center and Stream Profile Chamber where trout and aquatic life can be viewed. The family then moved back to the Midwest in Duluth, Minnesota where Bob was a planner on the Superior National Forest very active with the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. The next stop was in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho where Bob was the Assistant Forest Supervisor of the large Idaho Panhandle National Forest.

In 1976, Bob became the Forest Supervisor of the Inyo National Forest in Bishop, California where he worked with the United States Congress to establish the Golden Trout Wilderness. Representing the Inyo National Forest, Bob rode on horseback in the Tournament of Roses Parade on two occasions. The annual Mule Days Celebration in Bishop was a family favorite.

In 1981 the family moved to Yreka, California where Bob became the Forest

Supervisor of the Klamath National Forest, one of the largest and most diverse forests in the United States. In that same year he helped the Klamath River become designated as a Wild and Scenic River. In 1984, Bob worked with the United States Congress to establish the Russian Wilderness in the Marble Mountains. In 1986, the Klamath National Forest was selected to provide the Nations' Capitol Christmas Tree. The communities of Siskiyou County united as part of the "That's My Tree" campaign and a Shasta Red Fir was harvested from the slopes of Mt. Shasta and transported to Washington, D.C. by railcar. In 1988, Bob worked with a group of veterans to found the Living Memorial Sculpture Garden on Forest Service land on the foothills of Mt. Shasta to pay homage to all honorable veterans.

Bob retired from the United States Forest Service in 1989, but he continued to enthusiastically serve the community for the remainder of his long and remarkable life. Throughout his career and into retirement, he was an active member of Rotary International and enjoyed the fellowship, learning and community service.

Bob was elected to the College of the Siskiyous Board of Trustees in Weed, California in 1992 where he served for 24 years. During his tenure he helped to establish the nursing program, Yreka Campus and major renovations of the sports facilities. Bob's son Brad was on the Hartnell College Board of Trustees during part of this time and together they received national recognition as the only father-and-son team to serve consecutively on college governing boards. A former college president fondly remembered Bob's leadership presentations made to other community college trustees. He was a leader in the community college system.

As the Forest Supervisor of the Klamath National Forest, Bob became very involved in the Klamath River Basin. After many years of work, Bob helped to establish the Collier Interpretive & Information Center on the Klamath River. The center opened in 2003 to provide an interactive learning opportunity focused on the area's culture, history and natural resources, with emphasis on

anadromous fisheries and related watersheds. His passion for the Klamath River continued for over 30 years in his retirement as he tirelessly researched and advocated for the river. In 2025, Bob donated a large amount of his Klamath River research to the Siskiyou County Museum to start the Bob Rice Klamath Collection. With a generous donation from the non-profit Shasta Valley Serves and at Bob's request, his extensive research data is now being organized and automated at the museum to support ongoing research for the betterment of the Siskiyou-Klamath watershed. Bob's legacy continues.

Throughout his life, Bob enjoyed sports and the outdoors with his family. Some of his favorites were crabbing in Bandon, Oregon; hiking in the Russian Wilderness with Charlotte and the dogs; ranching on their 40 acre -R property in Siskiyou County; horseback riding in the Sierra Nevada and Marble Mountains; fishing in Alaska; wintering and golfing in Borrego Springs, California; and rooting for the San Francisco 49ers.

Words can not express what an incredible man Bob was and the legacy of his service to family, community and the outdoors. We love you and you will forever be a part of us and the trees, lakes, rivers, flora and fauna that you so dearly stewarded.

O merciful Father, we entrust Bob to your loving care. Welcome him into Your heavenly kingdom to rest and inspire us always.

A Celebration of Life will be announced in the future. Please consider planting a tree, donating to Madrone Hospice (255 Collier Circle, Yreka, CA 96097 or <https://www.madronehospice.org/donate>) or the Siskiyou County Museum (910 S. Main Street, Yreka, CA 96097) in honor of Bob.

Tribute Wall

JE

“ Our condolences to the family. We were neighbours for 20 ~ years have often thought of times spent to gather with Bob working on small projects around the place.

Jim and Ruth Eigenhuis

Jim & Ruth Eigenhuis - January 11 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ In memory of our dear friend, Bob Rice.

Carol and Mark Sapousek - January 10 at 12:00 AM

TT

“ Sorry to hear this. Condolences to the family.

Theresa Tallerico - January 07 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ This was a man that was such a joy to know ☐ He was a man so very special 🦋 ☐

Selma Schantz - January 05 at 12:00 AM

SG

“ Such a nice man!

Shelly Gwilt - January 05 at 12:00 AM

CB

“ Our condolences to Charlotte and family. 🌸

Charlene Broce - January 05 at 12:00 AM

GH

“ *He was a fine man and nice to know*

Greta A Hockaday - January 05 at 12:00 AM

BB

“ *Esther and I are very sorry to hear about Bob's passing*

Ben Beer - January 05 at 12:00 AM

DT

“ ❤️

Donna Kleaver Thompson - January 05 at 12:00 AM

AR

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

A Memorial Tree was planted for Robert LaRue Rice - January 05 at 12:00 AM