



## Mark Hume Ritchie

June 20, 1938 - January 27, 2025

In the presence of his family, Mark passed away peacefully after a short but courageous battle with bladder cancer. To say the last couple of years were trying would be a gross understatement. A stroke, broken hip, and mom's open-heart surgery were challenges but, like a Marine, he battled back from all these obstacles with humor, bravery and plain 'ol toughness. He inspired us all to be better patients and have more patience. Dad has a way of making everyone in the room laugh in a tense situation.

Mark was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts on June 20, 1938, to Virginia and Alexander Ritchie. Yes, our dad is a Yankee by birth, but he got to Oklahoma as soon as he could. Mark didn't just "move" to Oklahoma – he fought his way in. The story goes that he got into a fight every single day of first grade when he first arrived in Garfield County because apparently, his accent didn't quite fit in. Soon he won over his classmates with his charm and wit and assembled a group of cohorts in Enid who would become lifelong friends. Dad had a way of disarming the natives and assimilating into the group.

Mark was a member of George E. Failing Legion Baseball team and went several times, we understand, to the Little League World Series. He recalls Mr. Failing giving each of the boys \$1 as they exited the bus wherever they were playing, for spending money. These strong and lasting memories are a testament to the power of positive influences in one's life...a lesson to be your best even when you think no one is watching.

Mark was a faithful citizen of Enid but left for Oklahoma State University

(Oklahoma A&M) in 1956 where he became a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity and, again, developed a gaggle of friends that would last well beyond his graduation from OSU. In 1960, he earned a degree in Agronomy and a minor in Chemistry, carrying 21 hours his last semester. He gained a reputation for having fun and gained a few scars from a brawl in the kitchen at the fraternity. If you can't cook without turning the kitchen into a war zone, are you even really living?

Before Mark went to college, he spent many summers on a harvest crew that cut wheat from Texas to Canada. His second cousin, Earl Jay Estill was the boss...but of course Mark thought he was the boss. The crew that he worked with and the friends that he made along the way were many and colorful. Until the end, he could recall the names, number of acres and location of many of the farmers for which they cut wheat and perhaps some of the shenanigans that took place in that area. There was never a shortage of stories when Dad and John R. Vice were together.

So, about John R. Vice....statesman, gentleman, scholar and clown. John left Oklahoma State University early in his academic career and ended up at Northwestern Oklahoma State University where he met Gayle Wells. John introduced Mark and Gayle on Friday, October 13, 1960. It was a blind date that went off the rails that night but ended up working out pretty well.... Mom and Dad's 63rd wedding anniversary is February 10.

In 1960, Dad joined the United States Marine Corp, later transitioning to the Marine Corp Reserves. He earned the rank of Lance Corporal, was a platoon honorman and was honorably discharged in 1966. This chapter in Mark's life probably prepared him to handle tough situations later.

Just like many of our Okie neighbors, the Ritchie family is in Carrier because our ancestors established residence during the Cherokee Strip Land Run of 1893. As generations before him, Mark was forever dedicated to the Carrier Community, Carrier Congregational Church, Carrier Mill & Elevator and other neighborly organizations. He served on the board of Carrier Mill & Elevator from 1971 until 2016 (for the mathematically challenged, that's 45 years) and

served as president for 40 of those years. He was a proud member of the Carrier Young Farmers and hosted many a wild calf fry on their behalf. He was a little league coach, favorite partner at daughter/dad dinner at Chisholm High School, Santa Claus at the Church Christmas Party, Pie-Eating Champion at the Carrier 4th of July picnic, devoted to Carrier Girl's Basketball 1972 State Championship team and was always a presence at our sporting and school events, of which there were MANY. Living here has always meant something to mom and dad and means everything to our family now.

Dad was a lifelong lover of hunting, dogs and guns. He fell into the pawn broker business and owned and operated Gunrunner's Pawn for many years and became a self-proclaimed ballistics expert and an actual gunsmithing expert. He spent many hours on the road traveling to hunt elk, deer, pheasant, dove and quail and had an award-winning hunting dog, Petie. He loved spending time with his son, sons-in-law, grandsons and extended hunting family in the countryside everywhere. Here is another example of Dad making friends....

Dad always wanted to share his love of the farm, farming, Carrier, and his heritage with his grandsons. They spent every summer with Papa and GG in Carrier and there were plenty of muddied faces, sunburns, stitches, stubbed toes, fish stories and trips to the elevator in the wheat truck as evidence of the fun and love all those hot days. If there is something to celebrate in these times of sorrow, it's the belief that Mark Ritchie will live long in the memories of his kids, grandkids and great grandkids.

Mark is preceded in death by his mother, Virginia Estill Ritchie, father Alexander Ritchie, and sister Alexandra Ritchie Gille.

Mark is survived by his favorite wife, Gayle, and their four children: Shawn Ritchie and wife Jody Ritchie, Shannon Ritchie Cowan and husband Scott Cowan, Kristen Ritchie, cleverly single, Jill Ritchie Roecker and husband Kent Roecker. (Mark was very proud of his children's choice of spouses who are better known as UNbloods) He and Gayle are also blessed with five

grandsons and two granddaughters: Guy Roecker and his wife Lauren, Mark Ritchie and his wife Megan, Grayson Roecker, Chase Ritchie, Gus Cowan, Jillian Gaines Mitchell and husband Cliff Mitchell, Jennifer Gaines and five great grandchildren, Wade Roecker, Mary Gayle Ritchie, Nash Mitchell, Rosie Mitchell and Goldie Mitchell.

Celebration of Life Service will be at Carrier Congregational Church on Saturday, February 8, 2025 at 10:00AM. Cremation arrangements by Anderson-Burriss Funeral Home and Crematory. In lieu of flowers, please make a contribution to Carrier Congregational Church, P.O. Box 73, Carrier, OK 73727, or through Anderson-Burriss Funeral Home. The service will be available to watch on facebook at Carrier Church page.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

FEB 8. 10:00 AM (CT)

Carrier Church  
204 5th St  
Carrier, OK 73727

# Tribute Wall



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.*



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February 10, 2025 at 01:42 PM



“ *Julia Dean purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.*



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**Julia Dean** - February 07, 2025 at 04:46 PM



“ *Allen Calfee and team planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mark Hume Ritchie.*

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**Allen Calfee and team** - February 07, 2025 at 01:47 PM



“ *Allen Calfee and team purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.*



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**Allen Calfee and team** - February 07, 2025 at 01:47 PM

JL

“ Jimmy and Sue Lee planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mark Hume Ritchie.

Jimmy and Sue Lee - February 07, 2025 at 01:45 PM

JL

“ Jimmy and Sue Lee purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.



Jimmy and Sue Lee - February 07, 2025 at 01:45 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.



February 07, 2025 at 12:46 PM

NS

“ Mark Ritchie was the best cousin ever, with the possible exception of his UnBlood wife, Gayle. Thank you for the memories of the Farm. The obit was hilarious, by the way. Well done. Mark, life well-lived. Love, Cousin Nancy Stucki, Brent the UnBlood, and family.

Nancy Stucki - February 06, 2025 at 04:32 PM

EM

“ Keeping the Family in our thoughts and Prayers. Eddie and Sue McDowell

Eddie McDowell - February 06, 2025 at 12:52 PM

WK

“ With Love, Chris & Alex (Monda) Kelbley purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.



With Love, Chris & Alex (Monda) Kelbley - February 06, 2025 at 12:16 PM

BP

“ My deepest condolences to Gayle and the family. Wonderful memories of growing up with Shannon and being in their home.....full of warmth and love. Sending prayers and hugs to all. Barbara Bunch Ponder

Barbara Bunch Ponder - February 06, 2025 at 11:52 AM

TC

“ My condolences and sympathies to Gayle and all the Ritchie family. A wonderful man willing to do what he could to help others and his community. A true friend of our family and will be missed. Terry Campbell and family

terry L Campbell - February 06, 2025 at 07:19 AM

DS

“ We were fortunate enough to be invited to several of the Ritchie's huge gatherings in the Quonset Hut where they served feasts of pork tenderloin, with all the drinks and fixings. Danced to Garth Brooks on one of the cookouts. Mark manned the grill and smoker to ensure everything was cooked to perfection. Years later we were welcomed back with our daughter and she had a grand time swinging on a rope in the barn. Marvelous family and fun to be around. Thanks for the memories. Dale and Susan Schmidt!

Dale and Susan Schmidt - February 05, 2025 at 06:52 PM

TB

“ Tamra Boteler purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.



Tamra Boteler - February 05, 2025 at 05:59 PM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.



February 05, 2025 at 01:31 PM

BS

“ Brad Swinnea planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mark Hume Ritchie.

Brad Swinnea - February 05, 2025 at 08:36 AM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.*



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February 05, 2025 at 08:36 AM



“ *Apache - DB purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.*



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**Apache - DB** - February 04, 2025 at 11:46 AM



“ *Blake, Kate, Nick, Emily, Zach & Chey purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.*



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**Blake, Kate, Nick, Emily, Zach & Chey** - February 04, 2025 at 09:32 AM



“ *I met Mark the spring of 2018 when we moved to Carrier. The Richie family soon became family to us. Mark and I spent a lot of time together over the next 6 years. We went hunting, fishing, shooting, I would work on his equipment and we spent a lot of time just telling stories. He was a great friend and will be missed greatly.*

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**Bill Troup** - February 03, 2025 at 04:42 PM



“ I met Mark when he was running Gunrunners Pawn. He was always very nice to me in our dealings.He will be missed. condolences to the family

Mike O'Brien - February 01, 2025 at 05:29 PM

LB

“ I am so sorry about Mark. My deepest sympathies to Gayle and all of the Ritchie family. I remember shooting photos ay the big barn. My deepest sympathies to all of your family. Love and prayers to all.

Lisa Bland-Selix

Lisa Bland-Selix - January 29, 2025 at 08:35 PM



KM

“ Kolt and Megan Van Meter purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mark Hume Ritchie.



Kolt and Megan Van Meter - January 29, 2025 at 12:00 PM

DD

“ So many good memories from the '80's as I was friends with the kids and Mark was always so nice and supportive to all of us. Great man. Rest in peace, Sir.

Daren Daggs - January 29, 2025 at 11:49 AM

PW

“ *Gayle and family. So sad to hear about Mark. What great memories I have of our time in Carrier!! All our family gatherings, church/community gatherings, monthly card club, pig roasts. Just getting together with you, Mark and our kids was always fun. Thanks for the friendship and the wonderful memories ❤️❤️❤️*  
*Patti (Grimes). Washburn*

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**Patti (Grimes) Washburn** - January 29, 2025 at 11:42 AM

CR

“ *My husband Steve went hunting and fishing with Mark many times. They always had some whopper stories. When I met Mark for the first time, he treated me with such kindness and acted like he had known me forever. Mark was definitely one of a kind. Is love for life and family, humor, and his knowledge will never be forgotten. Mark we will miss you forever but are so thankful you aren't in pain anymore. Fly high in that hunting grounds in the sky guy. We love ya*

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**Charla Ryel** - January 29, 2025 at 10:26 AM