



Mr Charles "Chuck" Ritchie

August 30, 1946 - July 30, 2023

A true American patriot died early in the morning, Sunday, July 30, 2023. Charles Lowrey Ritchie: known to everyone as “Chuck”, left us with a great legacy. He served twice in the U.S. Army; twice in the U.S. Air Force; and, while in the Vietnam War, he was “loaned” to the U.S. Marine Corps. Upon return, he later served on the New Orleans Police Force, and even later, on the Slidell LA Police Force. He was a hero abroad and at home! He is a graduate of William Carey University.

A born “salesman”, Chuck used his talents working for Crown Zellerbach from his then-home in Slidell. He moved to Gulf Shores AL in the early 1990’s to be near his Mom and Dad, Ethel Marie Ritchie and Burton Forbes Ritchie. He took real estate training under tutelage of Meyer Real Estate’s owner, Sheila Hodges. Her excellent training helped Chuck quickly become one of that firm’s top salesmen.

Unfortunately, Chuck suffered a major Myocardial Infarction only a few hours after arriving in Boca Raton FL on March 27, 1996. Medical pronouncements were not encouraging: He was left with a very serious Traumatic Brain Injury; staying in ICU for weeks; then 3 months in a brain-rehab facility in Boca. He was diagnosed as needing life-long, 24-7 round-the-calendar care. And, he had lost the ability to talk. In Boca, Chuck’s good friend, Claude O’Connor chartered a jet and transported Chuck back to Gulf Shores’ Jack Edwards Airport, one day after his August 30th birthday. Claude had volunteered to become Chuck’s legal guardian, and have Chuck live with him. This

arrangement was beneficial to both: having received projections of “He won’t last more than six months”, Chuck improved rapidly, with the enormous help of treatment for 29 months at New Orleans’ “Bancroft Rehabilitation Living Centers” But, he still couldn’t speak.

A freak accident restored Chuck’s speaking ability: Diagnosis of prostate cancer called for 39 radiation treatments. Believing that Chuck might suffer fear of the treatments, doctors ordered 5 MG Valium to be taken daily, 1 hour before each treatment. He followed that regimen for 2 days. As Chuck was in no way inhibited by the treatments, O’Connor decided that he should terminate the Valium. FATE STEPPED IN. On that 2nd day, Chuck and Claude were having post-treatment lunch by the backyard pool. Their housekeeper and her young son arrived, and her usual arrival door was locked, So, they had to come around to the backyard. Chuck spied the young man and hollered out, “----, get your ass over here.” We had not heard him speak for 12 years and were astounded!

Claude concluded that it could only be the Valium that brought back speech ability. He took that info to Chuck’s lead Neurologist, Dr. Howard Katz. He, believing, but dumbfounded, ordered the Valium dosage increased to 7.5 MG. Chuck’s speech improved to the point that Claude and the world-renown Dr. Katz of Jackson MS were invited by the North American Brain Injury Association to present their discovery at its annual national convention. One of Chuck’s hospice nurses researched and announced that medical science had, indeed, studied the Valium/speech issue and validated the possibility of the improvement that Chuck had enjoyed. Chuck continued improving, speech and otherwise, until Parkinson’s Symptoms overwhelmed his body about 5 years ago. He went into a slow decline that terminated with his death on July 30th.

On behalf of Chuck, sincere appreciation is extended to: The Boca Raton Fire Dept. for sticking with Chuck in 1996 and administering the amazing eight defibrillations; only the 8th brought Chuck back to life; And for the following, who kept Chuck alive, healthy and happy for over 27 years: Rhonda Grafton,

CNA; Jason and Christine Brown, RNs; Daren Montgomery; Jonathan Edward Wells; Bruce Nelson; June Brewer; Christ Blount; Ken Haynie and all who showered love and attention on Chuck and brought his “spirit, muscles and “will” back to life.”

Chuck is survived by his legal guardian and friend, Claude O’Connor, Gulf Shores; by his sister; Marie R. Brock (Richard W. Brock), Ocean Springs, MS; by his son Charles Burton Ritchie, father of Chuck’s two grandchildren, Stephen Tarver Ritchie and Taryn Carmel Ritchie of Park City, Utah.

Cemetery Details

Pine Rest Memorial Park

16541 US Hwy 98
Foley, AL 36535
(251) 943-5667
info@pinerestfuneralhome.com

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Pine Rest Funeral Home
16541 U.S. 98
Post Office Box 328
Foley, AL 36535
(251) 943-5667
info@pinerestfuneralhome.com
<http://www.pinerestfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

AUG 4. 11:00 AM (CT)

Pine Rest Funeral Home
16541 U.S. 98
Post Office Box 328
Foley, AL 36535
(251) 943-5667
info@pinerestfuneralhome.com
<http://www.pinerestfuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall



“ Chuck will be missed by all who knew him. His ready smile and outgoing personality will never be forgotten. May his family find Peace and Comfort in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Murray "Eddie" Seals

Murray E Seals - January 05, 2025 at 07:01 PM



“ I am saddened to learn of Chuck's passing. He and I were friends from our childhood and through high school. Chuck was a dear friend of mine. My condolences are extended to Chuck's family and friends. Chuck will be remembered, although gone. John South Lewis

JOHN SOUTH LEWIS - January 05, 2025 at 06:22 PM



“ I'm so sorry for your loss. Chuckle was my first steady boyfriend in the 6th grade. We rode horses together.

Judy Abrams - January 05, 2025 at 12:43 PM



“ Mr Charles "Chuck" Ritchie

October 04, 2023 at 01:12 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr Charles "Chuck" Ritchie.



August 03, 2023 at 02:40 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mr Charles "Chuck" Ritchie.

August 02, 2023 at 05:43 PM



“ Bright and Beautiful Spray was purchased for the family of Mr Charles "Chuck" Ritchie.



August 02, 2023 at 05:43 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Mr Charles "Chuck" Ritchie.



August 02, 2023 at 05:36 PM