



SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley

November 29, 2015

Sergeant Major Donald E. Ripley was born on April 14, 1926 in Maryville, Missouri. In 1930 his family moved to a farm in Linneus, Missouri, where he attended school and graduated from Linneus High School in May of 1944.

Don was drafted into the United States Army on June 18, 1944 where he remained for more than 30 years. He retired from the United States Army on September 1, 1975 at the rank of Sergeant Major.

Don's military career began at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in June of 1944 and ended at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, in September of 1975. His military career took him to the South Pacific Islands, Saipan, and the Philippine Islands. He was stationed in Guam from February 1946 to February 1949. In June 1949 he was sent to the Philippines until September 1950. He participated in the Korean conflict from September 1950 to August 1951 and was sent back to the Philippines in 1952. Don was stationed in Germany from March of 1953 to March 1956. He served in the Republic of Vietnam from December 1967 to December 1968. In April 1969 he was stationed in the Panama Canal Zone until July 1974. During his 30+ years as a soldier, Don also served his country on many state side tours of duty, serving three tours at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

Don supervised and directed the recruiting / induction station of all personnel

in the Canal Zone, Central and South America, from July 1969 to April 1974. During this critical time he was instrumental in procuring needed personnel into the United States Army, his efforts directly contributed to the Army's Southern Command winning the Army's First Term Reenlistment Award. Don was the top recruiter for the 5th Army Recruiting District from May 1956 to February 1960, having achieved 140 percent of his assigned quota.

For his faithful service to his country, Don received several awards and commendations: The Combat Infantry Badge, three Bronze Star Medals, two Meritorious Service Medals, Four Army Commendation Medals, a Purple Heart, an Air Medal, 9 Good Conduct Medals, The Asiatic Pacific Theatre Medal with 2 Bronze Stars, an American Campaign Medal, The National Defense Medal with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster, The World War II Victory Medal, The Army of Occupation Medal (Germany), the Philippine Liberation Medal, United Nations Service Medal, Korean Service Medal with 4 Bronze Stars, The Republic of Vietnam Defense Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with 2 Bronze Stars, two Presidential Citations, two Meritorious Unit Citations, The Korean Presidential Citation and seven overseas bars.

In 1972, Don was runner up for the Senior Career Counselor, Department of the Army. He served as United States Army South Senior Career Counselor, with the additional duty as the acting officer in charge of the Selective Service System for all of Central and South America except Mexico.

In 1964 he won the Continental Army Command Reenlistment Award at Fort Leonard Wood and again in 1972 while at United States Army South.

He always said his best assignment was in Panama from March 1969 to July 1974.

After retiring from the Army, Don went to work for Civil Service at the post

housing office as a housing inspector. In 1977 he was promoted into the housing referral office and in 1989 retired from Civil Service.

Don was a life member of VFW Post 3176 where he served as Adjutant for 12 years. He was a life member of the Military Order of the Cootie and served as past president and past adjutant for the 9th Supreme District Military Order of the Cootie for 6 years. He was also a life member of The Harry Herron Disabled Veterans Post #49.

Don met his wife and best friend Margaret on a blind date in March 1946 and they were married on November 6, 1948 in Agana, Guam. They shared 67 years together. They were blessed with five children, three sons and two daughters. Don's three sons Donald Jr., Dean, and Martin are all Master Masons and members of the Scottish Rite bodies and Shriners. His grandson, John A. Nichols, is a Master Mason and member of the Scottish Rite and York Rite. Worshipful Brother Don made masonry a family affair.

Don and Margaret have been members of the Waynesville First Baptist Church since Easter Sunday of April 1961.

Worshipful Brother Don's Masonic journey began on December 5, 1958 when he was Initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason in Hardin Lodge #29 in Keokuk, Iowa. He was Passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft on December 12, 1958 and Raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on December 22, 1958. While in the military, Brother Don held dual memberships in his home Lodge, Hardin Lodge #29, and The Army Lodge at Balboa in the Canal Zone. Brother Don affiliated with Waynesville Lodge #375 A.F. & A.M. on August 6, 1976 where he held an endowed membership. He served his Lodge as Worshipful Master in 1994, 1997 and 1998, receiving the Missouri Grand Lodge Achievement Award each year. Worshipful Brother Don held the

Instructors Sub I-II-III Ritual cards from the Grand Lodge of Missouri for more than 20 years.

Worshipful Brother Don's Masonic knowledge was invaluable to his Lodge and the 30th Masonic District. Brother Don started a Monday night Masonic Ritual of Instruction at Waynesville Lodge #375. This is still ongoing and serves as a respected and informative activity by the brothers in the area. He served as the 30th Masonic District Ritual Club president on four different occasions and Chaplain. Worshipful Brother Don gave most of the Masonic Lectures and Charges in his own Lodge and was routinely asked to perform this ritual work in surrounding Lodges.

Several years ago, the Waynesville Lodge members realized that a new Lodge building was needed. Brother Don spearheaded a group of the older Master Masons, lovingly known as the "old farts." Don and the "old farts" were instrumental in building one of the nicest buildings in the county. When money was needed to complete the Lodge, Brother Don stepped up and contributed in excess of \$35,000 of his own funds to see this project through.

Worshipful Brother Don served 8 terms as Worthy Patron of Hanson Chapter #22 Order of the Eastern Star in Waynesville. He also taught the secret work and ritual work of the proficiencies tests for the Order of the Eastern Star. Don joined the Orchid Chapter #1 Order of the Eastern Star on May 5, 1973, located at Balboa, Panama Canal Zone and demitted to Hanson Chapter #22 on August 5, 1976.

Brother Don has been a member of the Scottish Rite Bodies, Valley of Joplin Missouri since October 28, 1961. He worked in the 12th and 22nd Degrees at the Valley for many years. He has top-lined signed more than 300 petitions.

He was a Life Member of the Valley of Joplin, Invested with the Rank and

Decoration of Knight Commander, Court of Honor on October 25, 2003 and Coroneted as an Inspector General Honorary of the 33rd Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite on September 7, 2007.

Brother Don became a member of the York Rite Bodies of Lebanon, Missouri on April 4, 1993.

Brother Don was also an active member of the Shriners. While serving in the Army, he was in the advancing line for Potentate of Abou Saad Shrine Temple in Balboa, Panama, Canal Zone. In 1973, he was the top line signer for Abou Saad Temple. He also served as Commander of the Legion of Honor in 1972 and 1973.

Brother Don joined the Abou Ben Adhem Shrine Temple in Springfield, Missouri on December 1, 1961. In 1967, he served as the Potentate's Aide. He received the Harold Owens Award in 1973 for being the top line signer for the Temple.

Brother Don was an active member of the Pulaski County Shrine Club. He served the club as Past Rajah, Treasurer and Chaplain. For 16 years he served as the local Shrine motor corps captain, attending over 500 parades and 14 Central States Shrine Association Conventions and three Imperial Sessions.

Brother Don served as the director of the Pulaski County Shrine Club and was past president of the Pulaski County, Fort Wood Shrine Development Corporation.

Brother Don assisted the Assembly #87 of the Rainbow Girls and was an advisor to the local Demolay Chapter. Both were hosted in his home lodge, Waynesville Lodge #375.

Don served his community as a Cub Scout master of Dog Wood Hills Pack #202. He served as a volunteer bell ringer for the Salvation Army and donated food baskets for the needy and elderly during the Holidays.

Don loved the outdoors and enjoyed fishing and hunting. He owned and operated Twin Coves at Osage Beach. When it came to fishing, Don said the best fishing place in the world is Gatun Lake in Panama, for the peacock bass that came from Brazil. You could catch about 100 fish an hour and they could weigh between 3 and 8 pounds each.

Don leaves to cherish his memory his loving wife and best friend, Margaret; three sons: Donald Jr. of San Antonio, TX; Dean of Norman, OK; and Martin of Waynesville, MO; two daughters: Margaret Anglin of Fayetteville, NC; and Robin Nichols of Avondale, AZ; one brother, Dorman Ripley and one sister, Erma Rulon, both of Brookfield, MO; nine grandchildren: nine great grandchildren; several nieces, nephews, and friends.

His parents preceded Don in death: Orville F. and Edna B. (Thompson) Ripley; two brothers: Harold Ripley and Kenneth Joe Ripley and two sisters: Doris Lewis and Helen Bryan.

Donald E. Ripley demonstrated the true principles of Free Masonry through his words and most importantly through his deeds. He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather, a good citizen who conformed to the laws of our society, and a good Christian. He made this world a better place through his kindness, lovingness, and his never ending generosity.

SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley, 89, of Waynesville, MO, passed away Sunday, November 29, 2015 in the Life Care Center of Waynesville.

Funeral services were held at 1:00 p.m. Friday, December 4, 2015 in the Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville / St. Robert. Burial with military honors followed in the Sunset Memorial Estates Cemetery of Waynesville.

Memorial contributions may be made in memory of Don Ripley and may be left at the funeral home.

Cemetery Details

Sunset Memorial Estates Cemetery

Highway 17 South
Waynesville, MO 65583
(573) 774-6111
memorialchapels@embarqmail.com

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 4. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville/St. Robert
202 Historic 66 W.
Waynesville, MO 65583
(573) 774-6111
memorialchapels@embarqmail.com

Masonic Service

DEC 4. 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville/St. Robert
202 Historic 66 W.
Waynesville, MO 65583
(573) 774-6111
memorialchapels@embarqmail.com

Service

DEC 4. 1:00 PM (CT)

Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville/St. Robert
202 Historic 66 W.
Waynesville, MO 65583
(573) 774-6111
memorialchapels@embarqmail.com

Tribute Wall



“ *SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*

January 28, 2023 at 06:53 AM



“ *Prayers to the family. Was always a pleasure to chat with him at the Sunshine Café during breakfast.*
Daniel & Lorie Cerda



Daniel & Lorie Cerda - December 03, 2015 at 08:28 AM



“ *Dyan (Swift) York sent a virtual gift in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Dyan (Swift) York - December 02, 2015 at 11:21 PM



For My friend Margaret. I have never forgotten you! (Dyan Swift).I send you all my warmest regards to you and your family during this time of loss

Dyan (Swift) York - December 02, 2015 at 11:36 PM

DY

“ *Dyan (Swift) York sent a virtual gift in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Dyan (Swift) York - December 02, 2015 at 11:20 PM

DY

For the Family My Condolences ~

Dyan (Swift) York - December 02, 2015 at 11:25 PM



“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



Rick Lepard - December 02, 2015 at 03:30 AM



“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



Rick Lepard - December 02, 2015 at 03:30 AM



“ *The best Mason/Man I ever met, he mentored me through the chairs at lodge, not to mention other advice I asked of him about the Shrine Club. Saddens me terribly. He would be the King of the Shrine Club and Masonic Lodge if there were one. He did more For Masons than anyone I know.
I looked to him like a father.. I will miss Don, wish I could come from Arizona, but I can't.*

Rick Lepard - December 02, 2015 at 02:47 AM

PG

“ *We pray that family members and friends will be comforted and able to share feelings with one another during this season of bereavement, being assured that no matter the trials, God Cares for each one of us.*



PULASKI COUNTY CAMP GIDEONS - December 01, 2015 at 07:26 PM

WC

“ *Warren & Karin Carney lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Warren & Karin Carney - December 01, 2015 at 07:17 PM

BR

“ *Barbara Roberson lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Barbara Roberson - December 01, 2015 at 06:44 PM

CB

“ CSM (Ret) Harold And Brigitte Burleson lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley



CSM (Ret) Harold and Brigitte Burleson - December 01, 2015 at 05:53 PM

DW

“ Don And Nancy Witt lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley



Don and Nancy Witt - December 01, 2015 at 05:29 PM

DW

I always enjoyed Don when we would visit...and he was a real hoot when we attended Agriculture school together...many moons ago.....Donald Witt

Don and Nancy Witt - December 01, 2015 at 05:33 PM

RA

“ Roger Anglin lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley



Roger Anglin - December 01, 2015 at 02:31 PM

SC

“ *SUSAN COVERT sent a virtual gift in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



SUSAN COVERT - December 01, 2015 at 01:23 PM

MS

“ *Marge Scott lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Marge Scott - December 01, 2015 at 11:36 AM

RA

“ *It was an honor to have been one of his son-in-laws.*

Colonel (Ret) Roger Anglin



Roger Anglin - December 01, 2015 at 11:12 AM

DA

“ *Donald helped with our father's Masonic rites in 2010 and it was very meaningful to us for him to be there.*

Deb Anglin - December 01, 2015 at 11:11 AM

MM

“ Mike Moeller lit a candle in memory of SGM
(Ret) Donald E. Ripley



Mike Moeller - December 01, 2015 at 10:51 AM

BO

“ Margie, Marty and the entire Ripley family, our
condolences are with you. We wish we could
be there for the service.
Bill and Jean O'Dell



Bill O'Dell - December 01, 2015 at 08:55 AM



“ Donald will be sadly missed but greatly
remembered. It was an honor to have met
and cared for Donald.



Kelly Bott - December 01, 2015 at 03:59 AM

MG

“ Martel Goldman lit a candle in memory of
SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley



Martel Goldman - December 01, 2015 at 02:45 AM

JO

Rest in Peace. Phil and Joy.

Joy123@windstream.net - December 01, 2015 at 02:02 PM

Cj
Basham

“ *Cj Basham lit a candle in memory of SGM
(Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Cj Basham - November 30, 2015 at 08:40 PM

RH

“ *Ron Hawk lit a candle in memory of SGM
(Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Ron Hawk - November 30, 2015 at 08:01 PM

CS

“ *CONNIE SHREWSBURY lit a candle in
memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



CONNIE SHREWSBURY - November 30, 2015 at 07:50 PM

MF

“ *Marie Farias lit a candle in memory of SGM
(Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Marie Farias - November 30, 2015 at 06:46 PM

CE

“ *Charles English lit a candle in memory of
SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Charles English - November 30, 2015 at 04:20 PM

RY

“ *Rick And Donna Young lit a candle in memory
of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Rick and Donna Young - November 30, 2015 at 03:04 PM

EW

“ *So sorry to hear of Don's passing. He was great gentleman and it
was a pleasure to have known him.*

Ed Warden - November 30, 2015 at 02:01 PM

RJ

“ *Richard And Mary , Rachael Jensenn lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



richard and mary , rachael jensenn - November 30, 2015 at 01:44 PM

MS

“ *IN HONOR AND MEMORY OF HIS SERVICE TO OUT COUNTRY. PRAYERS GO OUT TO HIS FAMILY AND LOVED ONES. MARLIN STEVENS*



MARLIN STEVENS - November 30, 2015 at 01:40 PM

JR

“ *J P And Beverly Richardson lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



J P and Beverly Richardson - November 30, 2015 at 01:27 PM

MQ

“ *Marlene & Archie Quick lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Marlene & Archie Quick - November 30, 2015 at 12:28 PM

RH

“ *Rick & Robin Hoffman lit a candle in memory of SGM (Ret) Donald E. Ripley*



Rick & Robin Hoffman - November 30, 2015 at 11:54 AM