



In Loving Memory of
Mary Jane Rice

August 29, 1919



July 17, 2019

The tide recedes, but leaves behind
bright seashells on the sand.
The sun goes down, but gentle warmth
still lingers on the land.
The music stops, and yet it echoes
on in sweet refrains...
For every joy that passes,
something beautiful remains.

M.D. Hughes



Service

Tuesday, July 30, 2019 – 2:00 pm
Bethel Lutheran Church
Willmar, Minnesota

Officiant – Pastor Jon Dahl

Musicians

Lois Dahl and Jane Kochis

Prelude	
Hymn #408	<i>Come Thou Almighty King</i>
Gathering	Page 279
Thanksgiving for Baptism	Page 280
Greeting and Prayer	
Sharing Memories	Melissa Redetzke, Matt Jaeger
<i>Seek Ye First</i>	Kate Redetzke
Scripture	Psalms 121; Isaiah 43:1 Justin Schwarz
Message	
Hymn #581	<i>You Are Mine</i>
Apostles' Creed and Prayer	Page 282
The Lord's Prayer	
Commendation and Blessing	
Hymn #785	<i>When Peace Like a River</i>
Postlude	

*After the service, please join us in Luther Hall
for a time of fellowship.*

Mary Jane Rice, 99, died peacefully on July 17, 2019, at Compassionate Cottage in Willmar, Minn.

Mary Jane was born to Agda and Guy Leasman in Hector, Minn., on August 29, 1919. She married John L. Rice on February 14, 1946, in Willmar, Minn. Together they raised two daughters and established themselves as prominent fixtures in the field of aviation.

Mary Jane's lifelong passion for flying began as a teenager. She earned her private pilot's license in 1940 and soon became one of the first women in the state of Minnesota to hold a commercial pilot's license. As a new pilot, Mary Jane was the only female member of the Hector Flying Club and a charter member of the Minnesota chapter of the Ninety-Nines (International Organization of Women Pilots).

In 1945, Mary Jane and John founded Willmar Air Service, Inc. Together they managed the airport and operated their business, with Mary Jane ultimately logging 63 years in the office. In 1964, Mary Jane's contributions to local aviation earned her the first "Mrs. Aviation" title from the Minnesota Aviation Trades Association. Later, Mary Jane was inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame. She ultimately joined the ranks of Amelia Earhart and the Wright brothers with an induction into the International Forest of Friendship, a living memorial dedicated to the world history of aviation, in Atchison, Kansas.

Beyond her love of flying, Mary Jane was drawn to water. She spent countless hours combing the beaches of Sanibel Island, Florida, with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. At home, she cherished her time at Green Lake.

Mary Jane will be remembered for her pioneering nature, deep curiosity and keen interest in the world around her.

Mary Jane was preceded in death by her husband. She is survived by her daughters and their spouses, Janet and Bruce Jaeger, Laurie and Steve Schwarz; grandchildren and their spouses, Melissa and Ron Redetzke, Matt and Jacquie Jaeger, Justin Schwarz; great-grandchildren, Kate and Lauren Redetzke, Tobey and Joy Jaeger; and special friends Pat and Elaine Curry, Andrea and Dennis Pieske, and the late Barb Ellingboe.

Mary Jane's family extends a heartfelt thank you to the caregivers at Compassionate Cottage and the many friends who offered steady companionship during Mary Jane's final years.

Harvey Anderson
& Johnson
FUNERAL HOMES

Celebration of Life

In Loving Memory



Mary Jane (Leasman) Rice

August 29, 1919

Hector, Minnesota

July 17, 2019

Willmar, Minnesota