



## Robert David Rish

September 21, 1947 - June 5, 2023

Captain Robert David Rish, U.S. Navy (Retired), 75, of Summerville, SC, passed away unexpectedly at home on June 5, 2023.

Robert was married to his soul mate Joyce (Black) Rish for (just one week short of) 53 years. Every morning he serenaded her with “Let Me Call You Sweetheart” in his booming baritone. She sometimes rolled her eyes at him, but they always shone with love.

The oldest of four boys, Robert was born on September 21, 1947, in Pelion, SC, to Bennett and Annie Belle (Steele) Rish. He graduated from Pelion High School in 1965, where he served as the Chapter President of the Future Farmers of America his senior year. After high school, he was elected State FFA President and then later the National FFA Vice President from the Southern Region.

Robert held a Bachelor’s degree from the University of South Carolina and a Master’s degree from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. He served in the United States Navy from 1970 until his retirement in 2000. He spent a large part of his Naval career on nuclear submarines and was the commanding officer of USS James Madison (SSBN-627) and USS Kentucky (SSBN-737). In 1997, Robert assumed command of the Naval Weapons Station in Charleston, SC. After retiring from the Navy, he went on to work as

a senior consultant at GeoLogics Corporation in Charleston until he officially retired in 2009.

If you knew Robert, you know he never met a stranger. He loved to tell people stories of his time in the Navy and to brag about his family and his grand-dogs. He also loved collecting stories from friends and neighbors to share.

Robert loved to fish, he loved to make things in his wood shop, he loved to grill, he loved to read thrillers that had him fighting bad guys in his dreams, he loved his dogs, and he loved, loved, loved his family.

He also enjoyed whiskey, having a swig most nights while he grumbled at the nightly news. If you're so inclined, have a shot of whiskey in honor of Robert ... he would've liked that.

Besides his wife Joyce, he leaves three children: Jocelyn Rish of Summerville, SC, Brian Rish of West Columbia, SC, and Joanna Rish of Greenville, SC. He is also survived by his brothers Derwin Rish (Marjorie) and Edwin Rish (Dorothy), sister-in-law Mary Ann Crout (Danny), nieces Danielle Bryson and Crystal Frazier, nephews Jason Crout and James Rish, eight grandnieces and grandnephews, and four adoring grand-dogs. He is preceded in death by his parents and brother James Rish.

A celebration of life for Robert will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations made in his memory to either Building Homes for Heroes ([www.buildinghomesforheroes.org](http://www.buildinghomesforheroes.org)) or your local animal shelter.

Fair winds and following seas, Captain Robert.



# Previous Events

## Gathering of Friends & Family

JUL 15. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

James A. Dyal Funeral Home  
303 S. Main Street  
Summerville, SC 29483  
(843) 873-4040  
<https://www.jamesadyal.com>

# Tribute Wall

JP

“ It is my prayer that the Rish Family experience the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit in a special way during this difficult season of mourning, bereavement and beyond. Captain Rish leaves an enviable legacy of leadership that began when he served as president of the Pelion FFA Chapter. His leadership in the FFA continued as he served as president of the South Carolina FFA Association and Vice President of the National FFA Organization. And Captain Rich served with distinction as an officer in the US Navy for many years prior to retirement. I am honored that I had the opportunity to know Robert and count him as a friend. John W. Parris, State Director of Public Affairs, SC FFA Association and Agricultural Education, retired, Columbia, South Carolina.

John W. Parris - July 01, 2023 at 04:24 AM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Robert David Rish.



June 30, 2023 at 11:25 AM

JB

“ I am so sorry for your loss. I have always admired his personality, dedication to family and career accomplishments. May he rest in peace. Jeanne Rish Berkley

Jeanne Berkley - June 16, 2023 at 04:41 PM