

David “Richie” Richardson

It is with much regret and disbelief that I must let you know that David “Richie” Richardson has passed away. He was the “Man Behind The Curtain” on the MAD website. He had privately battled an illness for a while, and it suddenly turned South recently. He passed peacefully in a Jacksonville, Florida Hospital on Wednesday January 23rd. At his request, a private memorial service will be held in Jacksonville, his home since he left the Navy. He will be cremated and laid to rest beside his beloved wife, Judy, and her parents in the Jacksonville Military Cemetery.

Richie grew up in Hinton and graduated from HHS in 1965. He married the love of his life, Judy Pullen from the HHS Class of 1967. Richie was a career, Navy Officer. In 2012, Judy passed. They lived in Jacksonville, Florida. We started the Making A Difference group at the end of 2012, with our first Project. This writer felt that we should start a website to show transparency as to what the group was doing in the community, and what was happening to the funds that we were raising. (To date, we have raised \$300,000+) With no website experience, I started this website in 2013. In 2014, Richie reached out to me, and I hooked him into “helping out”. He had IT experience in the Navy, was meticulous, was eager to help, and wasn’t afraid to let me know when I screwed up. Then, something unbelievable happened. We just kept brainstorming and adding more and more things to the website. Looking back, I do not know how two hillbillies from a small Southern West Virginia town accumulated so much information. Richie and I worked many, many late nights and then again early mornings, putting things together. The folks from our beloved Summers County community provided us with thousands of pictures and stories from our past. The MAD site has become a digital encyclopedia about Summers County, West Virginia. We created Frankenstein’s monster. Richie’s pet Project these last few years has been gathering all the obits from HHS graduates. He, along with Fred Long and Leila Ellison Bragg have gathered an astonishing 97% of the obits or newspaper articles, dating back to the HHS Class of 1911! Wowser!! Each morning, Richie scanned the two funeral homes and the Beckley newspaper, looking for folks who had passed. He posted their picture and obit in Our Passed Classmates section on the website. He then updated the HHS Class information with their picture and obit.

The way our website was constructed is that Richie did all the posting on the site. I gathered information, cleaned up the pictures, wrote many of the articles, then sent them digitally to Richie. He would scrutinize everything, and he loved to correct my “errors”. “No charge to friends,” he would say. Next, he formatted the added information and posted it on the website. He would go to Facebook and post that the latest information was waiting on our website. We “ham and egged” it constantly. I was not on Facebook, and he had no cell phone. (He ran a website but did not use a cell phone! He did have a burner phone for emergencies.) He called cellphones, PADs.(Personal Annoyance Device) Somehow, we got the job done. We knew our job and did not step on each other’s toes. It has truly been a labor of love, and a real honor to work beside him. He will be missed tremendously. This could not have happened without him. Rest in peace my friend. It has been an awesome, inspiring 10 years. Love you brotha!

Richie asked if anyone wanted to honor his life, to simply donate to the cause that he loved so much. To donate to the Making A Difference fund, which now annually funds Summers County grants through a perpetual fund, you may donate to the Hinton Area Foundation/Making A Difference. Instructions are below. Each annual funding donation to these community grants is deemed a Project. We just completed Project # 30.

David “Richie” Richardson – March 27, 1947 - January 23, 2024

Jimmy Noel - 540-271-3840

- If you are interested in helping maintain this website, please reach out to me for a conversation. The site is “built”. It just needs to be maintained. The daily requirement would be to update the obits. Additional pics and information would be added to the sections already in place. jimnoel1925@hotmail.com

1. Donate online via the Hinton Area Foundation (HAF) web site:

- a. Go to www.hintonareafoundation.org;
- b. Select the “Donate Now” button on the left side of the page;
- c. Type “Making A Difference” or “MAD” in the “Donor’s Fund Choice” block;
- d. Select “Donation Amount” or enter custom amount in the “Other” block;
- e. Select “Donation Frequency”, one time, annual, semi-annual, etc.;
- f. Fill in “Contact Information” blocks;
- g. Fill in your Credit Card information;
- h. Complete the remainder of the form, verify entries, then select the “Donate Now” button.

2. Mail check payable to: **“Hinton Area Foundation”** with **“Making A Difference”** in the memo field to; P.O. Box 217 Hinton, WV 25951.

3. Phone Hinton Area Foundation at 304-309-5502.

4. Hand deliver your donation to Hinton Area Foundation at: 104 James Street Hinton, WV 25951.