



## Julie Bishop Weatherington Rice

July 14, 1948 - January 26, 2025

Dr. Julie Bishop Paynter Weatherington-Rice, PhD, age 77, of Worthington, Ohio, gently and unexpectedly passed away at home due to heart failure on the afternoon of January 26, 2025.

Her parents' families settled in parts of Wisconsin and Illinois. Her parents, Charles Paynter and Margaret Bishop, met each other while enrolled at Northwestern University. Charles and Margaret married and lived in Chicago before becoming parents. On July 14, 1948, Julie was born in Springfield, Missouri, the first of three daughters. Soon, Jill Reese joined the family, and later, their youngest sister, Natalie Endsley. The family lived in the Chicago area and then settled in rural Indiana.

The Paynter household was filled with music from old jazz records, folk music, and a collection of instruments played by everyone. The family enjoyed summers visiting family in Wisconsin, fishing, playing cards, and telling stories. Julie developed her love of nature and the environment through countless hours spent exploring the woods and wetlands around her home in Indiana. Her father, a trained chemist, moved the family to Bexely, Ohio when

Julie was in the 10th grade.

Moving to Columbus, Ohio was a big change for the family. It was also the start of many lifelong friendships and relationships for Julie. With the exception of a few years, Julie called central Ohio home for almost 60 years. She met Craig Weatherington and the two were married in 1968 for more than 10 years. Along the way, they enrolled at The Ohio State University (OSU) and met a cast of colorful characters and roommates. During these years, Julie learned to cook for an army, and never was able to adjust her recipes for a smaller group. Her chest freezer was often well-stocked with deliciously crafted homemade meals.

Inheriting her father's scientific mind, she enrolled in OSU's teaching school and earned a BS in Science Education. Her student teaching was at Worthington's then new experimental high school, Linworth. Teaching ended up being her entry point into the field of earth sciences. While she was a formal teacher for only a short time, these skills served her well throughout her long career.

Coming of age in the budding environmental movement, she helped to organize the first Earth Day celebration in Barberton, Ohio. Deciding her passion was for science, she enrolled in OSU's School of Geology and was the second woman to graduate from the program.

While she worked on her bachelor's and master's degrees, she was employed at the main library on campus. She spent nearly 10 years working at the library making friends, learning new things, and reading countless books. Her home library contains thousands of books. As she often said, "Some people have big houses and fancy cars. We have degrees and lots of books."

In the late 1970s, she and Craig parted ways. Soon after, her dear friend Gloria arranged for Julie to go on a date with Edward Lloyd Rice. Ed was also a bookworm, and an avid rock hound. He was recovering from the unexpected loss of his wife, Ellen. He and Julie found they were just what the other had been searching for, and together they helped to heal one another. After a brief courtship, they were married, and were together for nearly 40 years until Ed's death in 2017. They had three children, Adam Augustus Paynter Rice, in 1980; James Edward Arthur Rice, in 1983, who only survived five weeks; and Susan Alice Rice, in 1984.

The family moved to Worthington, Ohio, in 1982, and into Julie's last home. Julie's experience with the schools and the community's New England roots appealed to her. She was the family historian, memory keeper, storyteller, and loved genealogy. She was very pleased to trace her roots back to the Plymouth Colony and further back to England.

Julie's desire to give back to her community took many forms over the years.

She helped to set up the Worthington Farmers Market, which is one of the oldest and largest of such markets in Ohio. She served for many years on the Walnut Grove and Flint Cemetery Advisory Board. Over the years, she offered her time and expertise to elected officials, grassroots organizations, and clients trying to figure out how to protect their communities and waters. She worked tirelessly to help protect the people of Ohio from environmental destruction and deceitful practices. She began her career working for Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (1978-1979), Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District (1980-1983), and private practice with Leslie Thompson and Associates (1983-1986).

In October of 1986 she started her long journey with Bennett & Williams Environmental Consultants, an engineering firm specializing in hydrogeology. This small and mighty family firm became a second family to Julie. She and her peers spent countless hours traveling around Ohio, working to improve landfill siting and investigate landfill impacts, siting water supply wells for municipalities and investigating ground water contamination from many sources. She spent many Friday nights in the office with Linda and crew, while Adam and Susan enjoyed pizza and video rentals in the conference room.

Julie was an excellent example of slow and steady progress. She was 30 when she got her driver's license, 32 when she became a parent, and 42 when she started her PhD program at OSU. Taking one class a quarter, while working full-time and helping to raise two teenagers in school, the task was a marathon rather than a sprint. During this time period she balanced work, school, and involvement with her kids' lives. She attended as many of her children's events as she could. She devoted her limited energy and time to

make sure her kids were supported as they finished school and entered adulthood.

After 14 years of hard work and effort, she officially became Dr. Weatherington-Rice. Earning this degree opened up a new line of work as an expert witness for court cases centered around water quality issues. Her work, and love of travel, took her to nearly every U.S. state and almost every county in Ohio.

As she slowly entered into (semi) retirement, she kept very busy. With a tablet or computer always nearby, she was often writing reports and letters to help her many organizations. A “perfect week” would have featured gardening, crocheting, jewelry making, jigsaw puzzles, enjoying tea time with Susan, discussing various topics with Adam, spending time with her grandchildren, watching old movies, cooking large meals, listening to classic rock, video calls with various community groups, and reading books into the wee hours of the night while petting a cat.

She was full of confidence, determination, and energy right up until the end. She was the “old timer” who wanted to retire, but was also committed to making sure important things were being worked on. She used to joke that the only way she could ever retire would be to move out of Ohio. The truth is, she would have found, or started, other groups to continue to fight to protect the environment and the people.

As she often said of environmental protection, social services, mental health awareness, and affordable housing “it’s all connected and it’s all important.” We can only begin to express how much she cared about ALL of us.

Julie was preceded in death by her parents, Charles and Margaret; son, James; and husband, Ed. She is survived by her daughter, Susan; son, Adam, and daughter-in-law Jamie; grandchildren, Allan and Calvin; sisters, Jill and Natalie; many cousins; and numerous “adopted” protégés.

#### SAVE THE DATE

Public visitation hours will be held on Friday, July 25, 2025, from 5:00 - 7:00 pm at Rutherford-Corbin Funeral Home, 515 High Street, Worthington, Ohio 43085.

Julie’s Celebration of Life for family and close friends will be on Saturday, July 26, 2025, at 10:00 am at Flint Cemetery, 8187 Flint Rd, Columbus, Ohio 43235. A large public celebration will be held in early 2026 in Columbus, Ohio. More details to come.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made in Julie's name to Buckeye Environmental Network, Association of Ohio Pedologists, ACLU, PBS, NPR, Planned Parenthood Action Fund, or another environmental nonprofit organization of your choice.

<https://benohio.org/give/>

[https://www.ohiopedologist.org/store/p21/Donation\\_to\\_AOP.html](https://www.ohiopedologist.org/store/p21/Donation_to_AOP.html)

<https://action.aclu.org/give/support-aclu-ohio>

<https://www.pbs.org/about/about-pbs/support-pbs/>

<https://www.npr.org/donations/support>

<https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL **25.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford Corbin Funeral Home  
515 High Street  
Worthington, OH 43085

## Graveside Service

JUL **26.** 10:00 AM (ET)

Flint Cemetery  
8187 Flint Rd.  
Columbus, OH 43235  
(614) 885-5033

# Tribute Wall

VC

“ As far as I know, I was Julie's second adoptee. We met in January of 1968 at OSU. I was sitting on a chair in the hallway outside a classroom, waiting for it to empty so I could go in. Julie sat next to me (there were only a couple of chairs in the hallway) and we started talking. After that we would talk before and after class and soon Julie was inviting me to the tiny apartment she lived in with her first husband. She would often make spaghetti because we were all poor and it could feed a bunch of people. We talked about books, music, movies and TV much more than we talked about school. We told funny stories and laughed so much. I loved every minute of it. I have too many stories to tell but she was my family always and luckily, to her husbands and kids, I was family, too. I will miss her as long as I live.



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**Vivian Coulter** - July 27, 2025 at 06:52 AM

AR

*Thanks Vivian we love you too.*

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**Adam Rice** - July 29, 2025 at 05:26 PM

JL

“ I met Julie through her son Adam. I'll never forget her being there for me after my car accident, particularly the first night in the hospital — her strength and support, along with her family's in the coming months, set the tone for my recovery.

*As we gather months later to celebrate her life, I find myself reflecting on how much she inspires me on how to live: being fearless, passionate, and wholly herself. She is deeply missed.*

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**Jennifer Lai** - July 24, 2025 at 11:46 AM

AR

*Mom really liked you and wanted only the best for you.*

**Adam Rice** - July 25, 2025 at 09:09 PM

MB

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Michael Francis Brett** - February 11, 2025 at 01:39 PM

MB

*I first met Julie from working at the OSU Main Library phone center in the 1970's. She was a great supervisor, one of the kindest people that I have ever met and a great person. After she met Ed, I later became the best man/witness at their wedding and afterwards we celebrate by opening a bottle of champagne from the back porch of my university area apartment. It was a small but memorable affair. She is 4th person from the right on the photo tribute I uploaded. My condolences to Adama and Susan but always remember that she lived a life that had a huge positive impact on a great number of people. Michael Brett*

**Michael Francis Brett** - February 11, 2025 at 01:48 PM

AR

*Thanks for sharing Michael.*

**Adam Rice** - July 29, 2025 at 05:27 PM

JK

“ *I express my sincere sympathy to the family of Julie Bishop  
Weatherington Rice,*

*James Wayne Kerr  
retired  
Professional Soil Scientist*

*i express*

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**James W. Kerr** - February 05, 2025 at 04:20 PM

RO

“ *Julie was my mentor and friend. She not only shared her social consciousness, but also her kindness. She made a positive difference for her short time on this planet. We all were lucky to have known her.*

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**RON OCONNELL** - February 04, 2025 at 06:44 AM

MP

“ *A life well lived.*

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**Malcolm Pollard** - February 02, 2025 at 07:48 PM

BK

“*Julie and I crossed paths periodically on environmental trails in the past 5-7 years. I appreciated her cautious wisdom, offering what she knew and didn't know. She listened to people like me, who never had a formal education in geology or climate/weather studies and was always welcoming to people who were interested in the only world we have. I am glad to be counted in her circle of friends.*

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**Bob Krasen** - February 02, 2025 at 12:05 PM

CK

“*My deepest sympathy to Julie's family. Julie was such a wealth of irreplaceable, invaluable knowledge which she willingly shared. She was such a positive, generous person. I'm grateful to have known Julie and so appreciative for all the scientific research and contributions she made.*

*Connie Kline*

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**Connie Kline** - February 01, 2025 at 08:13 PM

JH

“*Julie spent many years volunteering on our Cemetery Advisory Committee, that researches the maintenance and future planning of Walnut Grove and Flint Cemeteries. She spent many hours researching soil and water conditions and identified soil types around the Ozem Gardner Homestead where Flint Cemetery is. We all had such respect for her and appreciation for her vast knowledge. Despite many health problems, she always "soldiered on," setting an example we all would like to be able to follow. She will now join Ed at Flint, and eagerly tell him all her adventures of the past few years. We miss you, Julie!*

*John and Steffanie Haueisen*

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**John and Steffanie Haueisen** - February 01, 2025 at 05:58 PM

DG

“ Susan, Adam & Family - My deepest condolences to you during this extremely difficult time. The sudden passing of your mom was such a shock.

*I'm so fortunate to have known her as your neighbor these past 17 years. Your mom was always a pleasure to speak with and nearly every conversation eventually turned toward discussing the local plant or animal life found in our yards. I always learned something! I'll miss our little "over the fence" or "across the driveway" chats. May she rest in peace.*

*My thoughts and prayers are with you all.*

*Dominic Guglielmi*

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**Dominic Guglielmi** - January 30, 2025 at 08:03 PM

MA

*Julie and I were collaborators and friends on dozens of projects, field trips, and talks. We sometimes differed in ideology but always valued each other's opinion and friendship. I can hardly hear the words till fractures and hydric soils and a dozen other phrases and not think of her instantly.*

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**Mike Angle** - July 23, 2025 at 01:38 PM