

# Sergeant/Doctor Richard Stewart “Rick” Rhodes S-90 (1938-2025)



Rick was born on September 23, 1938 in Piedmont, West Virginia to Raymond David and Eloise Gwendolyn (Stewart) Rhodes. He was born atop one of the Blue Ridge mountains in a home owned by great uncle, James Aubry Stewart, who was killed in action at the Battle of the Bulge. The home is now on the National Registrar. By his 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday, his father moved the family to Madisonville. Rick attended Withrow High School where he was the quarterback for their reserve football team. He graduated in 1956.

Rick joined the United States Army on October 7, 1957. In Germany, he completed Non-Commissioned Officers School in August 1958. He completed Demolition School in Murnau, Germany in February 1959 and served in the Engineers as a demolition expert and mine field plotter. Specialist 4 Rhodes was honorably discharged on September 12, 1959 with a Good Conduct Medal.

When he returned home, Rick topped the entrance examination for Cincinnati Police Cadet and was appointed the 48<sup>th</sup> Cadet and 1<sup>st</sup> black Cadet on January 11, 1960. He was assigned to Central Station (city jail in City Hall). Four months later, on May 31, 1960, he entered the Department's 38<sup>th</sup> Recruit Class. He was promoted to Patrolman on September 11, 1960, issued Badge 556, and assigned to District 7 (813 Beecher Street). Patrolman Rhodes was rotated to District 4 (7017 Vine Street) in February 1962. He completed the prestigious Homicide Seminar at the Kettering Laboratory in November 1964. On December 13, 1964, he was assigned to the Vice Control Bureau (City Hall).

On February 27, 1966, he was one of the first Patrolmen promoted to the new rank of Police Specialist and issued Badge PS-102. On March 24, 1971 he was honored at the annual Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce Police Appreciation Awards Banquet with their valor award for a shootout during a raid on June 7, 1970 at a West End liquor store. On July 2, 1972, Specialist Rhodes transferred to District 6 (3295 Erie Avenue) Investigative Unit. By 1979, he founded the Sentinels organization. On June 10, 1984, the University of Cincinnati awarded him a diploma as a Doctor of Education. Specialist Rhodes completed the one-week Instructors Development Course held by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in June 1985. In 1987 he received a letter of commendation for entering a burning building and saving residents therein.

He was promoted to Sergeant on May 22, 1988, issued Badge S-90, and assigned to District 4 (by then at 4150 Reading Road). On February 26, 1989, he transferred back to District 2 (old District 6). His commanders assessed his performance due to his various assignments and experiences as consistent performance with administrative duties and field supervision. Sergeant Rhodes retired on his 52<sup>nd</sup> birthday, September 23, 1990, with 32 years of service to our country and community and 22 letters of appreciation and/or commendation.

Sergeant Rhodes also held a high degree black belt in karate. He was a professor at the University of Cincinnati for more than twenty years at the College of Education and Humanities and Criminal Justice. He was a manager and bodyguard to the late Redd Foxx. Sergeant Rhodes also founded his own security company, Amalgamated Security Services, Inc. And he was a Mason and former Master of the Elisha Lodge #106.

Beginning in 1997, Sergeant Rhodes began researching and unearthing government documents regarding the massacre of 11 prisoners of war from the 333<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, including his aforementioned great uncle James Aubry Stewart, 53 years earlier in Wereth, Belgium on December 17, 1944. He completed his mission 13 years later in 2010. Finally, Sergeant Rhodes authored four books including, *Why?*, *Gun, Badge & Cuffs* (2011), *Blanket: A Boy and His Dog: A Series of Short Stories* (2016), and *Who Said That: Writings from an Empty Room* (2023). His interest and research in military history preceded his appointment as Commander, State of Ohio for *Concerned Veterans of Vietnam*.

Sergeant Rhodes was diagnosed with Stage 4 Cancer. When he entered hospice care at Hospice of Cincinnati, he mentioned to an aid that his one regret in life was not having been photographed in his doctoral gown. On May 19, 2025, his caregivers gave him that opportunity. Sergeant Rhodes died at home under hospice care during the morning of June 5, 2025 at the age of 86.

He was predeceased by his sons, Darryl Rhodes and Dusty Rhodes, and grandson, Jerris Williams. Sergeant Rhodes was survived by his wife, Gwen; children, Renata Rhodes, Ricky Rhodes, Gregory Rhodes, Larry Rhodes, Brian Rhodes, Erik Robinson, and Maurie (Stephanie) Robinson; bonus children, Tiffany Hinton and Marvin; 15 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren.



A visitation was held on June 27, 2025 at Zion Baptist Church at 630 Glenwood Avenue. Masonic and FOP services were also held and coordinated by Fraternal Order of Police Memorial Committee member and Cincinnati Police Sergeant Clifford Bell (Retired). Then a funeral service. Speakers included Cincinnati City Councilman and Cincinnati Police Officer Scotty Johnson (Retired), Judge and former Police Officer Cheryl Grant, former Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell, and Cincinnati Assistant Police Chief Ronald Twitty (Retired). Honorary pallbearers included Cincinnati Police Sergeant Freddie Stonestreet (retired) and former Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society Memorial Committee member and Cincinnati Police Lieutenant Joseph W. Hall (Retired).