



# Walter A. Ringger, Jr.

NOV 18, 1922 - AUG 18, 2018



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# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 5



## **Walter A. Ringger, Jr.**

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**W**alter A. Ringger, Jr., was born November 18, 1922, in Tunica, MS; and passed away on August 18, 2018. He is survived by his much-loved wife, Edith Ringger; his four children, Joyce Burk, Paul Ringger and wife Cathy, Connie Ringger and husband Scott Beam, and Clair Ringger; his three grandchildren, Paul Ringger, Chris Burk and wife Selena, and Edie Ringger; and two great grand-children, Devereux and Desaix Ringger. Walter attended Messick and Memphis Technical High School. He built his first radio in junior high school, and became a ham radio enthusiast for life. At the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, he was a member of the fraternity, Delta Tau Delta. He met his future wife, Edith at a fraternity party. For part of college, he alternated quarters at the University with those working at the Memphis Firestone plant. During college, he hitchhiked to Fort Wayne, Indiana to take the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) license exam. With his license, he worked at WBIR and then WNOX, where he was responsible for keeping the station on air; at the same time, he also took a full course load of electrical engineering classes. After graduating with a degree in electrical engineering, he married Edith on June 6, 1944. They moved to Washington DC, after he was inducted into the Navy as a Chief Specialist. He worked in the research division of the Naval Ordnance Lab on radar, and helped developed machines that were precursors to the first computers. After WWII, he and his young family moved back to Memphis. He was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church of downtown Memphis as a child and remained a member throughout his life. On his first job at Memphis Light, Gas, and Water (LG&W), he envisioned the need for better street lighting. While working at LG&W, he also drew architectural plans and taught night classes at the then local branch of the University of Tennessee. He invented a circuit board where the photo-electric cell would respond to gradually changing light levels resulting in automatic street lights, the first non-mechanical switch for street lights. He then started his own company, American Electric, which specialized in outdoor lighting and continued to grow. Eventually the company moved to Southaven, Mississippi, where the company's water tower was one of the first to have a daisy on it. He obtained his pilot's license and enjoyed flying small planes. When



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he hurt his back in his later years, he had the company of a cat, Teddy Bear, while he was laid up in bed, and became an avid cat person for the rest of his life. He enjoyed art work, and was on the Board of the Brooks Art Museum at one time. He also enjoyed listening to music from Johnny Cash to Ray Charles. The weekend before he died, he was still telling his wife that she was “the most beautiful woman in the world.” Even as vascular dementia robbed him, he recognized and would light up when he saw his wife of 74 years. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Walter may be made to Trinity Lutheran Church or the Memphis Humane Society. The family will receive friends from 5-7 p.m., Tuesday, August 21 and funeral services will be held at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, August 22 at Memorial Park Funeral Home. Burial will follow in Memorial Park Cemetery. Click the link below to view Mr. Ringger’s memorial tribute

video. <https://www.tributeslides.com/tributes/show/P6CCMJT7WDZT2TJ7> Arrangements have been entrusted to Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38119 (901) 767-8930. “Celebrating Life... Behind the Stone Wall”.



## Tribute Wall

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**Laverne D Jones** posted:

We can look forward to the time when all sickness, suffering, and death will be gone forever.  
Revelation 21:4 You have my sympathy. I am sorry for your loss.

August 21 at 8:40 AM



# **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Walter by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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