

Decatur Daily Democrat (IN), October 24, 1991

Robert J. Rice, 80, route 1, Decatur, died at 10 a.m. Wednesday in Adams County Memorial Hospital of complications from diabetes.

He was born on December 30, 1910 in Root Township to David M. and Harriet Evans Rice and married Estella M. Kitchen on September 29, 1939. She survives.

He spent his entire life on the family homestead that was settled in 1829 by his great-grandfather, John K. Evans, who became the first judge in Adams County. The county was created in 1836.

Mr. Rice, who earned a law degree, worked at Fort Wayne's Phelps Dodge plant, then was employed by labor unions from 1945-1955. He became president of the United Electrical Workers local in Fort Wayne and was also the local's international representative.

In 1932, he founded and played saxophone in a 10-piece orchestra that performed for a number of years in surrounding states. In 1937, he chartered Musicians Union Local 607 in Decatur and served as its secretary for 52 years, retiring in 1989. ... (unable to read copy) He sold real estate until retirement... is now operated by his son.

He was a member St. Mark's United Methodist church, the Adams County Golf Club of which he was president, and the Adams County Chapter of the American Diabetes Association. He was a member of the Fort Wayne Chess Club and spent 17 years as its secretary.

He was a longtime activist of the Democratic party and served as the party's West Root precinct committeeman.

Other survivors are a son, David Rice, route 1, Decatur; three daughters: Mrs. Gerald (Nancy) Reau, Lima, Ohio; Mrs. Ronald (Harriet) Highland, New Haven and Rebecca Thilem (hard to read), Hoagland; a sister, Florence VanOrder, Decatur and nine grandchildren. Deceased are twin daughters Carolyn and Marilyn who were stillborn; three sisters: Salome Fuhrman, Edith Crawford, and Mary Rice; five brothers: Clyde, Benjamin, David, Otto and Ralph Rice and a granddaughter.

Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Saturday in St. Mark's United Methodist Church with Rev. Lynn Soughan officiating. Burial will be in Evans Cemetery on the Rice family farm north of Decatur. Pallbearers will be Gerald Reau, Dough Highland, Ronald Highland, Vernon Ginter, John Ginter and Bud Kemp, Jr.

Visiting hours at Zwick, Sefton and Jahn Funeral Home are 7-9 p.m. today and 2-5 and 7-9 Friday. There will be visitation from 9-10 a.m. Saturday in the church. Preferred memorials are to the Adams County chapter of the American Diabetes Association or the music department of St. Mark's United Methodist church.