

Duane "Blue" Dice

December 30, 1943 - July 16, 2023



Duane Dice was born in Danville, Illinois on December 30, 1943 to Myron Lloyd and Nina Boatman Dice.

They lived on an 800 acre farm in Veedersburg, Indiana. Four years later, Duane's brother Donald was born. Both boys learned at a young age the trials and tribulations of working hard on their family farm, helping their parents in every way they could. His youths spent working the farm with his father, grandfather and several uncles. He described his childhood as everything a boy could ever want. Duane was called Dude for unknown reasons when he was little, probably because he was a handsome little dude with piercing blue eyes and a head full of curls. His Indiana friends and family still call him Dude.

Dude attended the small county schools and after Fountain County High School, he married his high school sweetheart, Jean. Dude worked full time and attended Purdue University full time which put a strain on his young marriage and soon they parted ways. He moved home and built a car with his brother Don to help get through this difficult time. After receiving his BS in Agriculture, he joined the Army, was sent to Fort Benning, attended Officer Candidate School and found his love of flying. He became Captain Dice, trained in flying CH47 Chinook helicopters. Soon he was sent to Viet Nam where he spent the duration of his service flying every chance he got. He quickly received the nickname Blue, not only because of his blue eyes but also because he continually told the only dirty joke he could remember about an old dog named 'Blue". Blue loved flying more than anything. Unlike many Army Officers, his experience in Viet Nam was a positive one. Even when his brother Don joined the Army, he refused to return home. He always felt it was an honor and a privilege to serve his country and if called, he would do it again.

After his tour of duty, he returned home disappointed to find he had little opportunities for a career in flying.

At a Platoon reunion in Panama City Beach Florida, he met Diana Pratt. After a two year steamy romances flying back and forth from Fort Bragg, NC, Diana proposed and they were married by Eugene Pickett at UUCA in 1974.

Soon after, Blue left the Army and having a degree in agriculture helped him land a job with Deere & Company. The new Dice family was transferred to Orangeburg, SC where in 1976 their daughter, Jaime Laine Pratt, was born. Blue was a doting father but he continued to travel internationally, selling farm equipment in the US, Germany and Venezuela. Blue was proud to introduce the first four row cotton picker in Germany. With promotions came more international traveling and less time with his family. An opportunity was presented to him and he left John Deere to purchase the largest John Deere Dealership in South Carolinas just outside of Charleston. Years later it became clear The Dealership was in financial trouble and the previous owner had committed fraud. Sadly, the Dices left Charleston and Blue's dream of owning a dealership was lost.

The Dices moved back to Atlanta and settled in Lilburn. Blue soon found a job in sales and training at Bobcat of Atlanta. He became quiet and sullen and after much family discussions, Dice Trucking, 'Loaded and Rolling' was born and his spark returned and 5 trucks later the fleet was doing well. With encouragement from daughter Jaime, he got certified in Cessna 2-seater plane and started flying again, every chance he got. Nothing could compare to flying through the clouds!

Blue Dice was a natural salesman, not the swarmy kind but the kind that is naturally friendly. He never met a person who didn't like him right away. He was also a private person and preferred to spend time at home over anything else. He was loyal and honest, sometimes to a fault. He was musical. He played the trumpet in High School, the guitar in his young adult years serenading Diana and played Banjo at many homes and events around church. He sang, taught Jaime all his favorite Blue Grass songs, and he was award-winning toy model tractor maker, creating Mack trucks from scratch in his shop and winning trophies at toy shows.

Following in his grandfather, aunt and father's footsteps, Blue started showing early signs of dementia. The VA took excellent care of him and he was able to continue working and enjoying life for the last 10 years. About 5 years ago, the disease progressed and he was no longer allowed to fly or drive his trucks. He did make the best of it and recognized friends and family up until six months ago. The VA transferred his care to the Bronze Group at Emory University. He was well cared for and he was able to live at home up until a few months ago.

Diana took care of Blue in his final years, when he was no longer able to care for himself. He will be remembered by all for his charm, his amazing Banjo picking, his contagious laugh, his patriotism and the genuine smile he gave when he shook your hand.

Blue took his last breath on July 16th, 2023.

Duane 'Blue' Dice is survived by his loving wife of 49 years, Diana Pratt Dice of Lilburn, daughter Jaime Pratt Dice Moore (Travis Adam), Grandson Montana Blue Moore of Winterville, Ga, Brother

Donald Dice (Karen) of Mooresville, Indiana, niece Megan Jean Dice Seifker Luke) of Charleston, SC, niece Kathryn Pratt Gaston (David) of The Woodland, Texas, Christopher R. Pratt (Julia) of Chattanooga, Tn. Blue will be laid to rest in Veedersburg, Indiana.

Memorial service will be at UUCG (Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett) on August 26, 2023 at 2 pm at 12 Bethesda Church Rd, Lawrenceville, Ga

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to The Alzheimer's Association, 41 Perimeter Center E., #550 Atlanta, Ga 30346 or UUCG 12 Bethesda Church Rd, Lawrenceville, Ga 30044.

Our OC 20-69 Memorial Fund has made a donation in Duane's memory to the Alzheimer's Association of Atlanta, GA.