

# Mrs. Rose E. Terreri: A Life of Service, Dedication and Compassion

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Rep. Holly Jones and Mrs. Terry Jacoby

**BORN IN FEBRUARY 1924**, Mrs. Rose E. Terreri, affectionately known as “Terry,” has led a life marked by her unwavering commitment to serving her country and community. As World War II loomed, the United States faced a critical shortage of nurses, with grave concerns over who would care for civilians and returning injured soldiers. Rising to the challenge, Terry answered the nation’s call in 1943 by joining the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps, a program that united over 120,000 U.S. women from various ethnic groups and experiences to ensure hospitals remained operational during the war.

The U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps offered its members a stipend, a uniform, and free nursing education in exchange for their commitment to serve until the war’s end. This initiative proved essential, with approximately 80% of hospital nurses at war’s end coming from the Corps. Today, fewer than 5,000 of these remarkable women remain,

their legacy etched in history.

After the war, Terry continued her nursing career at the Cleveland Clinic for seven years. While there, she married James Jacoby and started a family. Balancing her nursing career with raising seven children, running a household with her husband frequently away on business and moving five times, her family finally settled in St. Louis, MO. Terry worked at Missouri Baptist and Mercy St. Louis (formerly St. John’s) until her retirement in 1976.

In retirement, Terry and James relocated to Florida, where she volunteered as a nurse with EMT. Following James’ passing, she returned to the St. Louis area to be closer to family. At 100 years old, Terry thrives in her retirement community now, actively participating in daily morning exercises, crafts, games, cards, and field trips. She serves on the Welcoming Committee for new residents and reads several books a week. Once an avid golfer, she only recently hung up her clubs. She does not enjoy cooking though. After cooking for a large family for many years, she has happily relinquished her kitchen duties these days.

Throughout her career, Terry’s passion lay in pediatrics, especially pediatric orthopedics, and on the Med Surg floor. Reflecting on her long career, she notes the most dramatic advancements in ICU care and technology. From managing 4-5 ICU patients with basic equipment to witnessing the advent of sophisticated machines these days,

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Terry is amazed at technological advancement in medicine. Despite the progress, she believes there is still work to be done in improving nurse pay, a cause she remains hopeful for.

Terry and one of her sons, Paul Jacoby, advocate for recognizing the remaining Cadet Nurse Corps members with veteran benefits, highlighting their service to their country and their vital role in maintaining the U.S. healthcare system during and after WWII. The U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps remain as the only uniformed service members from that era not officially recognized as veterans. The U.S. Nurses Corp Recognition Act of 2023 aims to provide honorable discharges, medal privileges and burial benefits to these nurses. On December 18, 2024, Missouri State Representative Holly Jones presented Terry with a State Resolution and a letter from Governor Parsons, honoring and recognizing her significant contributions to the state and nation. 💡