



## Bernard R. Tennes

November 15, 1937 - August 25, 2019

Dr. Bernard Robert Tennes, 81, of Charlotte, died peacefully surrounded by his family on Sunday morning, August 25, 2019. Bernie was born November 15, 1937 in Mt. Carmel, IL, the son of Martin Simon and Katherine Marie (Kieffer) Tennes. Growing up in rural southern Illinois on a farm, he was the 9th of 10 kids born to descendants of German immigrants and the first in his family to attend college after serving in the Army. Earning his bachelor's degree at the University of Illinois he met his wife Ann Stalls. While raising his children and working for the US Department of Agriculture he earned his masters and doctorate degrees in Agricultural Engineering from Michigan State University. He went on to create several patented agricultural inventions involving mechanization and robotics that are still used to this day. In 1970, Bernie and Ann sold their East Lansing home to move to an 80-acre apple orchard & cider mill, The Country Mill. After losing his wife Ann of 33 years, Bernie was blessed to meet and marry, Beverly Callaghan Tennes. Bernie has enjoyed the past twenty years of life with his wife, Beverly. She has faithfully cared for him. Bernie was known for teaching his children and co-workers the value of hard work. He is preceded in death by his parents, and siblings Simon, Marie, Norman, Clair, Loretta, Florence, Irene and Leroy. Also, he is preceded in death by his granddaughter, Katie Tennes and his first wife, Ann.

Bernie is survived by: his son; Michael (Diana) Tennes and their children Rebecca, Elizabeth, Ryan, Anna and John Tennes; his daughter; Toni, formerly "Eunice" (Casey) Gragg and their children Sophia, Cameron, Carl, Sacha and Capra Gragg; his son; Chris (Kira) Tennes; their children Luke, Nick and Grace Tennes, and his son; Steve (Bridget) Tennes and their children Brianna, Mary, James, Joseph, Faith and Aaron. He is also survived by his wife of 20 years Beverly Callaghan Tennes and her son, Doug (Diamantina) Callaghan, grandson Dennis Callaghan and daughter, Cheryl (Lewis) Jones and granddaughter Dr. Amanda Jones.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 29, 2019 at St. Mary Catholic Church with Rev. Fr. Dwight Ezop officiating. A Rosary will be prayed at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 28, 2019 at Pray Funeral Home, with visitation from 1:00-3:00 and 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., also on Wednesday. Bernie was passionate about engineering, in lieu of flowers please send memorial contributions to St. Mary School Robotics Club, 905 Saint

Mary's Blvd, Charlotte, Michigan 48813. Friends and family are asked to share memories of Bernie on his Tribute Page at [www.PrayFuneral.com](http://www.PrayFuneral.com). The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte.

# Cemetery

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## Benton Township Cemetery

3775 E. Vermontville Hwy.

Pottersville, MI, 48876

# Events

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**AUG** **Visitation** 01:00PM - 03:00PM

**28**

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Pray Funeral Home

401 W. Seminary St., Charlotte, MI, US, 48813

**AUG** **Rosary** 05:30PM - 06:00PM

**28**

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Pray Funeral Home, Inc.

401 W. Seminary St., Charlotte, MI, US, 48813

**AUG** **Visitation** 06:00PM - 08:30PM

**28**

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Pray Funeral Home

401 W. Seminary St., Charlotte, MI, US, 48813

**AUG** **Funeral Ceremony** 11:00AM

**29**

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St. Mary's Church

807 St Marys Blvd., Charlotte, MI, US, 48813

# Comments

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“ A tribute video has been added.



**Pray Funeral Home** - August 27 at 10:29 PM

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“ Condolences to the Tennes Family from Highfields, Inc.

**Deanna Rowen** - September 06 at 11:20 AM

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“ So sorry to hear of Bernie's passing. Our condolences to all the Tennes family.

John and Carolyn Beck

**carolyn beck** - September 03 at 12:08 AM

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“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



August 28 at 12:24 PM

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“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



August 28 at 08:57 AM

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“ 47 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Pray Funeral Home** - August 27 at 10:19 PM

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“ I walked into a band room for drum lessons in the summer of 1984. There I met friends like Chris that would help shape my life forever. Not just those friends, but their families. Little did I know then how influential the Tennes family would be for me. In order for Chris and I to go have fun, work first had to be done. What started as helping out so Chris could be finished, turned into a job on the family farm. To this day I credit my work ethic to Bernie. I wouldn't be who I am or where I am without his part in my life. I am truly saddened to hear of his passing and send my condolences to the entire Tennes family.

**Clay Folsom** - August 27 at 01:29 PM



“ Thanks Clay.

**Chris** - August 27 at 03:50 PM



“ How true it is. Well stated. I remember being the third wheel on those occasions.

**Steve Tennes** - August 27 at 11:33 PM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



August 27 at 12:43 PM

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“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



August 27 at 12:39 PM

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“ I worked with berney last few years at the country mill and he was happy

**Stephen Godin** - August 27 at 10:42 AM

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“ Our family loved your presence in our lives! Sending love to you, Bernie. You will be missed, and love to your family.

**Catherine Chin Schwartz** - August 27 at 10:16 AM

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“ Chad & Carol Walker lit a candle in memory of Bernard R. Tennes



**Chad & Carol Walker** - August 27 at 10:09 AM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



August 27 at 07:24 AM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



August 26 at 11:47 PM

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“ My family has known Bernie a long time and have great memories working with him. Lots of great stories of duct tape, the bee suite , Christmas trees ,special treats saved for him in the kitchen and many more. Those days where the best days when the Root crew was all working. With krystal, Kyndra, kaleb and my nieces Shelley and Krystin and nephew Tyler and of course Jody and Me. Bernie just knew things would get done. He was a hard worker and appreciated hard work from others. We will always have those great memories to keep in our hearts . My heart goes out to u Bev and we miss you both lots! This time of year is always a special memory of Bernie and the mill, it was always our favorite time of the year with our family which included Bernie and Bev . Our thoughts and prays are with you.

Doreen

**Doreen Root** - August 26 at 11:13 PM



“ That's such a nice tribute Doreen. He really loved having you all working there. You were a great detective and a very hardworking lady. I love and miss all of you!

**Beverly Tennes** - August 27 at 12:06 AM

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“ 13 files added to the album Grandpa Tennes



**Chris** - August 26 at 08:55 PM

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“ Being in my mid to late 50s when I met Bernie. I found that his vast knowledge was very keen. I soon realized that I was not too old to learn. Bernie has taught me so much in the years I got to know him. I will surely miss him but he will never be forgotten within my heart.

Randy Sherwood - August 26 at 08:40 PM

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“ When my original dad passed away, I thought our family was forever broken. He was gone too soon, devastating my family and especially my Mom, Bev Tennes.

After some time, my mom began venturing out into the world again. I kidded her about joining a church group for people who had lost their spouses, calling it the "grief-stricken widows club" with a wink and a smile.

It turned out to be a good move - that is where she met, and later married, Bernie Tennes.

I referred to Bernie as my "second dad."

I was so happy for my mom; she had found a great companion and really seemed to enjoy working at The Mill. She was always busy, especially during the Fall, and adjusted well to being a "farm wife." Even though I didn't see her as often, I knew she was happy and busy.

Bernie was one of the most caring and intelligent men I have ever met. He knew exactly how to win my mom's heart - just dote on her granddaughter, Amanda! He would try to make this city girl into a farmers' assistant by driving the wagon, helping in the donut shop or just getting on a GIANT TRACTOR and driving around the field. We all preferred the golf carts or gators.

It was wonderful to watch all the new additions to Bernie's grandchildren and Bev was right there with him, encouraging him to "stop and enjoy the family" as often as possible. It was a long process to transition the farm to his son, and to get Bernie to enjoy the fruits of his labor.

He was always "working," even when relaxing. Always asking questions (usually the engineering kind) and my daughter and I used to return a blank face quite often. He did so much for me; put in a new furnace, installed a garage door opener, and always, always got me the most "unique" Christmas presents.

One time he got one of those tool pouches that go over a 5-gal bucket. At the time, I responded, "thank you," not thinking I would EVER need it. But I'll tell you what, I STILL have that and it is right inside my garage door with all the handy tools.

Another time, he gave me a set of micro screwdrivers. A whole bunch of them in a plastic, slotted case. I thought they were cute and all, but.... And yes, I use those things ALL THE TIME. They are "on top" in my kitchen junk drawer!

Bev and Bernie enjoyed their place in Florida in recent years, and couldn't wait to get down there every Fall. I'm so sad the he will not make it this year; but am grateful we all went there last Christmas to spend time with them.

I'm grateful for the time we all had with this unique soul, and will miss him dearly. Rest easy, Burn-Dog (that's what I called him after he caught a field on fire), you will be forever missed and never forgotten.

**Cheryl Jones** - August 26 at 06:21 PM



“ Awww love this tribute. Thank you Cheryl!

**Bridget** - August 26 at 09:56 PM



“ Very sweet!!! Burn-dog!!

**Diana Tennes** - August 26 at 11:12 PM



“ I have only known Bernie for a few years but he has left me with lasting memories. So many good times shared in Florida with him and Bev. His many stories of his beloved apple orchard. I am still in awe of all he accomplished. I don't think there was anything Bernie couldn't design and build. We made it to the orchard one time and I have to agree his donuts were the best. We will miss you Bernie. May you Rest In Peace.

**Yvonne Warner** - August 26 at 03:18 PM



“ I am here remembering all the wonderful times we had together in Florida. I will definitely miss our "pie" Monday's & lobster rolls. Bernie was so kind to me including Friday nights at the club & giving me a gift at Valentine's Day after my John passed away. I will certainly miss you Bernie. Rest In Peace my dear dear friend.

**jan Warzocha** - August 26 at 12:01 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



August 26 at 10:50 AM



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“ From: The Mooney, Yeager and Schulz families. purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



From: The Mooney, Yeager and Schulz families. - August 26 at 10:07 AM

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“ 50 files added to the album Dad



Michael Tennes - August 25 at 09:59 PM



“ As an Irishman, it was always my understanding that you cried at a Birth, and Celebrated at a Funeral. Everyone needs to be more Irish.

The life of Bernie Tennes certainly calls for celebration!

I knew Bernie for just short of 20 years, not enough in my opinion. I do believe I knew the best version of Bernie though. This was the culmination of a soldier, Professor, Farmer, Businessman, Husband, Father, Grandfather, and Friend.

A person meets few people that are bigger than life, I would think this is the best way to describe Bernie. When Bernie was let loose in a crowd of strangers, in an hour he would be back to tell you who the Farmers, Engineers, and Teachers were (where they were from blah blah blah). He did give up collecting Business cards at some point (someone may find boxes of these, unless they have been taken care of already).

Some called him opinionated, well, that is simply a man that has lived and considered the topic (at some point), and is sharing his opinion.

Some people say he talked too much, well, yes, he did.

In our conversations I had the advantage being from the Auto industry, he wasn't. This just means I didn't get a lot of "opinion", but I did get a lot of questions. Bernie was very interested in where Cars are going in a technological sense. He also wanted to know the Towing Capacity on everything. Which I gladly provided.

I think if you were to consider a conversation you have had with him where you disagreed, you will find more often than not, most of his points were valid (maybe even right). I would chalk it up to stubbornness, but on who's part?

Once a person leaves us, there are no new conversations. No new disagreements. Only the memory of the conversations we did have. And the rest of "our" lives to reflect on them. You may even conclude at times, "he was right".

Having few people to look up to in my life, Bernie was one that I did, and will continue to.

I consider myself blessed for the opportunity to know him.

Goodbye Friend.

**Lew** - August 26 at 11:35 AM



“ That was really nice!

**Cheryl Jones** - August 26 at 02:15 PM



“ Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Bernard R. Tennes.



August 25 at 06:08 PM