



Bruce R. Carpenter

December 11, 1929 - April 13, 2025

Bruce R. Carpenter, the best dad any child could hope for, entered soul sleep on Sunday, April 13, 2025. Bruce, 95, of Eaton Rapids and formerly of Charlotte, was born on December 11, 1929, in Aurelius Township to Reuben and Jean (Mallory) Carpenter. He was raised on the family farm during a time when traditional methods, such as using a team of horses and a plow, were still in practice. When the family acquired their first tractor, Bruce took on the responsibility of operating it, as his father remained committed to the values embodied by the older ways of farming.

Following his graduation from Eaton Rapids High School, Bruce was drafted into the United States Army. On June 5, 1951, he married his high school sweetheart, Dorothy Gray. Bruce served honorably in the military until his discharge in 1953.

After returning to Michigan, he resumed work at Fischer Body, where he built a successful career, retiring in 1982 as a Final Repair Inspector. Bruce and Dorothy shared 52 meaningful years together before her passing in 2003. Later, Bruce found companionship again and married Wilmena "Billie" Gardner (Lyons). Together, they created cherished memories during the later stages of their lives.

A true tradesman and farmer, Bruce was known for many skills. Chiefly among them were general construction, electrical, and woodworking. One tour of the family home humbly displayed his woodworking talents. Over the years,

he constructed his dream home on the family farm, contributed to the building of the Charlotte Adventist Christian School, and played a key role in numerous other construction projects for both church and community. His dedication to community was evident through his work as the building and electrical inspector for Onondaga Township, as well as his service as a firefighter with the Onondaga Township Fire Department.

After relocating to Charlotte, Bruce continued his commitment to service by volunteering with Eaton Community Palliative Care and the Meals on Wheels program with his wife. A man of deep faith, Bruce often credited his relationship with the Lord as the foundation of his character and values. He was a devoted member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Charlotte. Bruce also had a passion for travel, having visited nearly all 50 states, including a memorable trip to Alaska with his wife in their motor home. Of the several photo albums left in his family's care, at least two are chock full of their travel adventures.

Bruce is survived by his daughters, Catherine Kallioinen, Cris Carpenter (Ken Christopher); daughter-in-law, Diane Schwab; grandchildren, Jeremy (Rebecca) Mortenson, Michael Mortenson, Amanda Evans, Malinda (Johnathan) Durner, and Nathaniel (Ashley Everett) Heinrich; and 4 great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his first wife, Dorothy; son, Michael Carpenter; sister, Eleanor Daggett; son-in-law, John Kallioinen; and his parents.

Of his second wife, Billie; he is survived by Cindy (Dennis) Kempl, Dean Gardner, Todd (Lynette) Gardner, Julie Matyasic and numerous, lovely, cherished grandchildren.

Friends are encouraged to support Bruce's family by attending services or sharing memories on his Tribute Page at www.prayfuneral.com. Funeral services are Friday, April 18, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Charlotte with Mickey Nickless officiating. Visitation will be held just

prior to the service from Noon until 2:00 p.m. The funeral will be webcast to any computer, smartphone, or mobile device that has internet access. Go to www.prayfuneral.com, click on Bruce's tribute, then click on Photos and Videos from your computer (or Media from your smart phone). If desired, the family suggests memorial contributions to the Charlotte Adventist Christian School in lieu of floral arrangements.

The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte.

Cemetery Details

Oakwood Cemetery - Hamlin Twp

8985 E. Spicerville Highway
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 18. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Charlotte Seventh Day Adventist Church
1516 S. Cochran
Charlotte, MI 48813

Funeral

APR 18. 2:00 PM (ET)

Charlotte Seventh Day Adventist Church
1516 S. Cochran
Charlotte, MI 48813

Burial

APR 18. 3:00 PM (ET)

Oakwood Cemetery - Hamlin Twp
8985 E. Spicerville Highway
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

Tribute Wall



“ Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Webcast in memory of Bruce R. Carpenter



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - April 18, 2025 at 09:41 AM



“ Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Tribute Video in memory of Bruce R. Carpenter



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - April 16, 2025 at 01:32 AM

MW

“ Bruce was very important to our church. One thing I remember that demonstrates that happened a long time ago. Our church wanted to have our school at the church location rather than where it had been on High Street. At a church business meeting, the pastor was urging us to buy portable units to use for classrooms. After much discussion, which seemed to be in agreement with the pastor, Bruce spoke up. He said he was against the idea and gave his reasons why. He said he could not support it with his money or his time. The discussion abruptly changed directions. If Bruce thought it wasn't a good idea then we shouldn't do it. No question about it! People had great respect for Bruce, for his wisdom, and common sense. As a result, we have a nice school behind the church instead of old portable classrooms that would have decayed long ago. I'm so thankful for the leadership Bruce gave to our church for so many years.

A few years ago when Bruce was no longer in a leadership position in the church that put him on the church board, we knew we were going to miss him. We made the decision to put him on the board as an extra member. We knew we wanted the benefit of his years of experience and sound judgment. What a blessing he was!

Melissa Whitaker - April 24, 2025 at 09:06 PM

CO

“ I am so very sorry to have just learned of the passing of my dear friend Bruce. He and my late husband worked together at Fisher Body for many years. I stopped at his home in Charlotte quite awhile ago and met the new owners of his beautiful home. They could not tell me where Bruce had gone. Should have tried harder to find him. I want you girls to know that I send my best wishes for comfort to both of you and the grand children. Your forever friend Carol.

Carol Oliver - April 22, 2025 at 09:22 PM

CC

Carol, I searched the internet for you and found a phone number and called. I fear the person who answered thought I was a spam call. So sorry I wasn't successful. Dad live at Island City Assisted living the last few years.

Cris Carpenter - April 22, 2025 at 09:29 PM

CO

Thank you for answering. If I would have known I would have been a constant visitor. If you girls ever need to contact me my home number is 663 8244, cell 202 5041.

Carol Oliver - April 22, 2025 at 10:00 PM

RC

“*Bruce Carpenter was a very special person to my family and me. It seemed he always had a smile on his face and words of wisdom to share. Here are a few of my memories:*

-Bruce giving countless hours to serve his local church in Eaton Rapids and Charlotte.

-Bruce's many classic stories, such as the one about nailing Mikey's pants to the roof, as well as the one about running into the mailbox on his bike, with its practical lesson for both biking and life: Fix your eyes on where you want to go, not on the obstacle you want to avoid.

-Bruce caring capably for Dottie during her many diabetic crises.

-Bruce finding love a second time in life with the vivacious Billie – and proving his penchant for redheads!

-My favorite memory is of Bruce and Mike building the addition on our house when I was a kid. Not every builder would let a 5-year-old, an 8-year-old, and a 10-year-old try to pound nails into the plywood that would become the floors of their new bedrooms. But Bruce did. And we were duly impressed that Bruce's last name matched his occupation!

A true Carpenter at heart, Bruce spent his life not just building homes but building up other people. I'm grateful to have known him for most of my life.

—Rachel Cabose

Rachel Cabose - April 22, 2025 at 08:48 AM

RA

“ *Cathy and Chris - Your dad was always kind to me and had a gentle spirit about him. I am honored to have been a loyal friend to your brother Mike. I don't know what tomorrow holds, but I do know who holds tomorrow. Bless you both. Rocky*

Rocky Aldrich - April 20, 2025 at 07:48 PM

BF

“ *My husband, David, always enjoyed talking with Bruce when he would go to pick up our co-op food order at the SDA church. They would talk about "fixing things", whether physical or spiritual. Bruce will be remembered as a helper to many.*

Brynda Filkins - April 16, 2025 at 07:12 PM



“ *2 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - April 16, 2025 at 11:42 AM

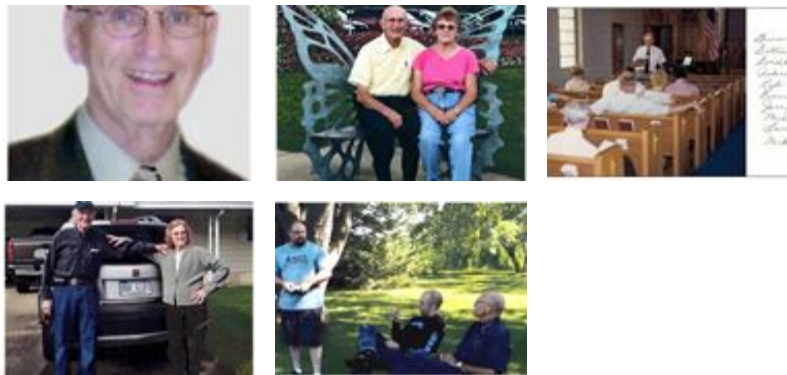


“ *In loving memory of my father, whose wisdom may not have always come from books, but whose common sense was unparalleled. He taught me more through his actions and his quiet, practical approach to life than any textbook ever could. His ability to navigate challenges with grace and simplicity left a lasting impression on all who knew him. Dad's unique brand of intelligence—blending experience with deep intuition—guided me through life in ways I will forever cherish. Though he may no longer be with us, his steady voice of reason and unwavering presence will always remain in our hearts.*

Cris Carpenter - April 16, 2025 at 10:09 AM



“ *43 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - April 16, 2025 at 01:29 AM

KS

“ *Such fond memories of Bruce. My favorite was from a church canoe trip many years ago. Dottie didn’t want to paddle, and I needed a partner. Hannah was maybe three, and she rode with Bruce and me. Both of us were experienced—me from many summers of weekly trips down the Au Sable, and Bruce from a lifetime of adventures. I was a little uneasy taking the bow, as I’d always paddled in the back, but we put Hannah in her little chair right in front of me. I placed my legs on either side of her, and we made great time.*

The trouble came just after we crossed through a wild patch of water. We knew a lot of people would be taking a bath there, so we pulled over to watch the show. Bad idea—before we could blink, we became the show. Hannah shot off down the river, as the current was pretty strong. I took off after her while Bruce worked on righting the canoe and gathering our stuff.

Not surprisingly, Hannah was a bit traumatized. Someone (I can’t remember who) took the bow, and I changed Hannah into dry clothes. I’d brought everything but dry socks. She and I then sat in the middle, and I sang “Angels Are Watching Over Me” while she cried, “My sockies are wet!”

Neither Bruce nor I had ever tipped before, so we razzed each other for years about who was responsible. When Bruce and Billy got married, I gifted her a life jacket. When Larry and I got married, Bruce returned the favor and gave Larry one.

Such a fun memory. Bruce will be missed!

Klaudia Staples - April 15, 2025 at 09:50 PM



“ *Cris Carpenter lit a candle in memory of
Bruce R. Carpenter* ”



Cris Carpenter - April 15, 2025 at 09:29 PM