



Fred Bernard Carpenter, Jr.

September 30, 1927 - August 15, 2025

Fred “Bernard” Carpenter, Jr. passed away peacefully at home in Woodbury, New Jersey on August 15, 2025 at the age of 97. He was born, raised and spent most of his life in Sparta, New Jersey. The first child of Lillian McMickle and Fred Bernard Carpenter, Sr., he was born on September 30, 1927. He grew up at 15 Springbrook Trail in Sparta and spent his early years around Lake Mohawk, at his grandfather McMickle’s farm (later the grounds of Tomahawk Lake) and at the Van Kirk farm in Sparta with his cousins.

After graduating from Newton High School, where he played baseball, Bernard joined the U.S. Army in 1946, served stateside and then in post-World War II Germany until 1947 when he was honorably discharged.

Upon returning home to Sparta, Bernard began working for his father in the family-owned business, Fred B Carpenter Construction, where he developed a passion for operating heavy equipment. One of his favorite jobs was when they were hired to move the Lake Mohawk stables from their original location near the boardwalk up to Pine Cone Lane. Old photographs show him on top of one of the buildings on the lookout for low hanging wires as they are moving the stables through the plaza.

In 1956, Bernard and his brother, Ernest, branched out on their own, forming Carpenter Brothers Excavating, a heavy earthmoving business utilizing bulldozers, scrapers, excavators, front end loaders and other heavy equipment. Their first job was at Aeroflex airport in Andover for Fredrick Hussey, a man Bernard admired, and a worksite he would periodically revisit with pride. Over the years they built roads, dams, lakes, ponds, and completed site work for residential and commercial properties and athletic fields throughout northwestern New Jersey including the football fields at High Point Regional High School and Sussex County Technical School in Sparta. He once hauled a bulldozer over the George Washington Bridge and completed work on a commercial property owned by Mr. Hussey at Times Square in New York City. He was known for his passion for hard work and his high sense of integrity, and he was liked and well respected by customers and employees as the business grew over the years.

Bernard met his future wife, the love of his life, on Beach 2 at Lake Mohawk when they were children; she, a “city girl” from Brooklyn, spending the summers with her family at the lake and he a “country boy” from Sparta. When he returned to Sparta from Germany, their paths crossed again at the lake. They married in 1952 and celebrated 72 years of marriage in October 2024.

Bernard had a love for all animals, including an injured crow that was taken in by their family during his childhood, but his favorite was his German shepherd, Dusty, who for many years accompanied him to jobsites throughout New Jersey.

As a father, Bernard could be found in the backyard throwing the football and hitting high fly balls to his children and their friends. He always had an eye for nice cars, and hopping in the car for a long ride throughout Sussex County was a favorite thing to do on many a Sunday afternoon. A map was not needed, as he knew the roads like the back of his hand.

In the 1970’s when the tennis boom hit, he became an avid tennis player, and after a couple years brought home a bulldozer and scraper to build a clay court in his own backyard. After that came golf and biking and trips down south during the winter to Florida and South Carolina. His mind was never idle. He was always figuring out how to build something or fix something. It seemed that there wasn’t anything he couldn’t do.

Bernard will be loved and remembered for his hard work, his entertaining stories, his commitment to family and his recollections of the old days of Lake Mohawk and Sussex County.

Bernard is survived by his wife of almost 73 years, Marion (Bronaugh), his daughter, Holly Barry (Bruce), of Pilesgrove, N.J., his son, Bruce Carpenter (Holly) of Madison, N.J., five grandchildren, Nancy Boucher (Jimmy), Andrew Nieradka (Liz), Zach Carpenter (Kat), Julie Carpenter (Andrew), and Matt Carpenter; seven great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews. Preceding Bernard in death are his son, Evan Carpenter, and brothers Ernest Carpenter and Melvin Carpenter, and sister, Joyce Younkens.

Service will be private.

For condolences, please visit www.boucherfuneralhome.com