



Dennis Milton Harke

January 15, 1943 - September 23, 2025

Dennis passed away peacefully on September 23rd in Greenville, SC, after a valiant journey with acute myeloid leukemia.

Dennis is survived by his loving wife of 61 years, Phyllis; his children, Todd and wife Alli of Atlanta, GA, Jane Payne and husband Davis of Greenville, SC, Lynne Perry and husband Jay of Charlotte, NC; his grandchildren, Allison Housley and husband Wilson, Lydia Payne, McRae, Zach, Max and Jane Campbell Perry, Reid and Olivia Harke; great-grandson, Bryson Housley; and brother, Ron Harke, of St. Louis, MO.

Born on January 15th, 1943, in St. Louis, MO, Dennis graduated from Lindbergh High School in 1961 and Southeast Missouri State University in 1965. Shortly after graduation, he attended Officer Candidate School in Quantico, VA, and in May 1966 was commissioned a second lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. Upon commissioning Dennis attended Naval Flight Officer School in Pensacola Fla., Basic Jet Navigation School at Glynco, GA, and Bombardier Navigator School in Sanford, FL. In April 1967 he earned his wings and was designated a Naval Flight Officer. Upon completion of training at Cherry Point, NC, he was assigned to the Republic of Vietnam, where he participated in counter-insurgency operations with the First Marine Aircraft Wing, Chu Lai, and the Third Marine Division, Dong Ha. Upon returning from Vietnam and after a short stint with the Marine Reserves,

Dennis returned to active duty with the Second Marine Aircraft Wing where he held multiple command positions. During his 26-year career in the Marine Corps, Dennis served in Washington, DC, Iwakuni and Okinawa, Japan, and Cherry Point. He rose to the rank of Colonel in May 1989 and retired in June 1992.

In 1973 Dennis and Phyllis found a home in New Bern, NC, while serving in the Marine Corps. Dennis was very active in the community, notably at First Presbyterian Church. In June 1992 Dennis became General Manager of Eastern Building Components, from which he retired in 2009.

Dennis loved living in the historical town of New Bern, raising his family there and enjoying the outdoors and all his friends. Thank you, Lord, for a wonderful wife, family, and friends.

A celebration of life will be held at 11:00am on Saturday, September 27, 2025, at John Knox Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC. A memorial service will be held at 11:00am on Friday, November 7, 2025, at First Presbyterian Church, New Bern, NC, his final resting place.

The family requests donations in memory of Dennis Harke be directed to John Knox Presbyterian Church, 35 Shannon Drive, Greenville, SC 29615 or First Presbyterian Church, 400 New Street, New Bern, NC 28560.

Online condolences may be made at www.thewoodmortuary.com.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

SEP 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

John Knox Presbyterian Church
35 Shannon Drive
Greenville, SC

Tribute Wall



“ Dear Phyllis, Cathy and I were in 3rd LAAM Bn when Dennis was our CO. He made a lasting impression on me, and his style of leadership inspired me throughout my career. I'm so sorry for you loss but wanted you to know that yet another person (of so many) deeply respected your husband. Cal and Cathy Peters

Cal Peters - January 21 at 11:27 AM

RR

“ Mrs. Harke,

There are no words that can ease the pain of losing someone you love; Colonel Harke was a leader who had an enormous sense of humor. He was my battalion commander at 3D LAAM Bn in 1987 and our Wing G-2 in 1988 in Okinawa.

Robert Parker MSgt USMC Retired - November 29, 2025 at 10:13 AM

DB

“ Dennis touched many lives through his years as an active duty Marine. Mine was one of them. Memorial gift made to First Pres., New Bern.
Dave Bena

David Bena - October 01, 2025 at 12:42 PM

RB

He darn sure did Dave. Great memories of our time in the Corps. Our gift likewise to First Presbyterian in New Bern. Semper Fi Dennis, and we will be in New Bern for your final services. Bones and Miss Rae.

Raymond Burns - October 09, 2025 at 01:08 PM

DD

“ My sincere condolences to Phyllis and family at this difficult time. I remember Dennis from the Rotary Club of New Bern Breakfast and enjoyed the chance to get to know him even if only briefly. I share one of my special thoughts at these times: "Perhaps they are not really stars, but tiny holes in heaven through which our loved ones shine a light to let us know they are fine and still with us." Certainly Dennis is one of the brightest stars.

Deedra Durocher - September 29, 2025 at 04:06 PM

DF

“ Dylan Jenkins and family purchased the America the Beautiful for the family of Dennis Milton Harke.



Dylan Jenkins and family - September 27, 2025 at 11:49 AM

HM

“ Phyllis - He was a good man. It will be tough for a while for you but it will get better. Good that you have such a strong family. Remember that you will see him again somewhere, sometime and all will be happy. Hugh McC, MD

Hugh McCullough - September 26, 2025 at 05:01 PM

RM

“ Dennis was such a smart, caring, funny, fun-loving, and downright good person. We are lucky to have known him and have never laughed so hard playing cards and games.
He'll be missed by so many. Our sincere condolences go out to the entire Harke family.

Robin, Becky, Mike and Ela McElroy

Robin McElroy - September 26, 2025 at 09:21 AM



“ Joyful Memory was purchased for the family of Dennis Milton Harke.



September 26, 2025 at 09:16 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dennis Milton Harke.

September 26, 2025 at 09:16 AM

KC

“ Ken & Lisa Capps purchased the Lily and Rose Tribute Spray for the family of Dennis Milton Harke.



Ken & Lisa Capps - September 25, 2025 at 07:22 PM

MB

“ Dennis and Phyllis were dear friends of ours for many years. We will miss him and that huge broad smile he had. RIP our brother in Christ. Mike and Rae Burns

Mike and Rae Burns - September 25, 2025 at 03:51 PM

KM

“ Kathleen, Lauren, Karen and Mike Musick purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Dennis Milton Harke.



Kathleen, Lauren, Karen and Mike Musick - September 25, 2025 at 02:34 PM

KM

“ Kathleen, Lauren, Karen and Mike Musick planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dennis Milton Harke.

Kathleen, Lauren, Karen and Mike Musick - September 25, 2025 at 02:34 PM

CC

“ Cherry Point Bridge Club purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Dennis Milton Harke.



Cherry Point Bridge Club - September 25, 2025 at 11:08 AM

CC

“ Cherry Point Bridge Club planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dennis Milton Harke.

Cherry Point Bridge Club - September 25, 2025 at 11:08 AM

YF

“ Your K2 Family purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Dennis Milton Harke.



Your K2 Family - September 25, 2025 at 09:10 AM

RS

“ Dottie and I extend our sympathies to the family. He had such a great sense of humor! He will be missed.

Robert L Sylvester - September 24, 2025 at 05:28 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Dennis Milton Harke.



September 24, 2025 at 04:52 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dennis Milton Harke.

September 24, 2025 at 04:52 PM

TK

“ *The Kirwans lit a candle in memory of Dennis Harke*



The Kirwans - September 24, 2025 at 04:10 PM

CH

We are neighbors of Todd & Alli Harke and their wonderful family. We didn't know Dennis personally but want to express our condolences to the family and express our prayers for a life well lived.
Carol & Major Hammell

Carol Hammell - October 20, 2025 at 06:35 PM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dennis Milton Harke.*



September 24, 2025 at 01:51 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dennis Milton Harke.*

September 24, 2025 at 01:51 PM