



Lavern "Vern" Dean Welch

May 7, 1953 - July 21, 2025

It is with deep sorrow that we announce that Lavern "Vern" Dean Welch of Fountain, MI passed away in a Grand Rapids hospital on July 21, 2025 at the age of 72. For the past several years he had battled multiple health issues, finally slipping peacefully into the presence of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Born on May 7, 1953 in Kamakwie, Sierra Leone, West Africa to his missionary parents, Rev. and Mrs. Melvin (Norene) Welch, of Mears, MI. Lavern was almost 2 years old when the family returned home to Mears. When he was 7 years old, his family moved to Marion, IN where Vern's talents in music, acting, and art blossomed. Vern was the Right Guard/Lead Trumpet in Marion High School's international award-winning Marching Band, First Chair Violin in Orchestra, a member of Madrigal Singers, and performed the leading role in the musical "Little Mary Sunshine". Having been born in

Africa of American parents, when he came of age he chose to be a citizen of the USA.

Vern's keen mind and management abilities were great assets in several positions he filled, but his true passion was with nature and farming as he loved raising animals, vegetables, and fruits. Rounding out his life, he also took an active advocate role in local politics.

Vern is survived by his wife Carla, son Joel Eric (Cecilia) Welch, daughter Julie Erin Welch, son John Edward (Angela) Welch, son Joseph Edgar (Delena) Welch, son Jeffery Snyder (Kristina) Welch, sister Carol (Max) Brown, brother Mark (Lori) Welch, Father-in-law Curt Jones, Mother-in-law Linda (Mike) Sagers and their children, 12 grandchildren, Aunts Jill Jeffries and Marilyn Heersema, and numerous cousins. He was preceded in death by his mother, Velma Norene (Jeffries) Welch, Father Melvin Welch, Step-mother Ione (Marshall) Welch, and Step-mother Arlynn (Herzog) Welch.

A Celebration of Life for Vern is planned for October 18, 2025 at 11 a.m. at Way of Christ Church (formerly West Golden Church), 2752 N 34th Ave, Mears, MI 49435. In lieu of flowers, the family requests money for final expenses and a memory garden in his

honor. Send to: Family of Vern Welch, 1925 Audubon Hill Pl., Lincoln, CA
95648. Vern

will be deeply missed by many family members and friends.

Cemetery Details

Bachelor Cemetery

5940 E Sugar Grove Rd
Fountain, MI 49410

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

OCT 18. 11:00 AM (ET)

West Golden Wesleyan Church
2752 North 34th Avenue
Mears, MI 49436

Tribute Wall



“ Vern Welch was my father. My first memory of him was him beating me senseless at age two. He put me in a coma when I was 17 years old. I'm sick of the lies about him as a dad. He was AWFUL.

Julie Erin Welch - April 19 at 10:45 PM