



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Richard John Berens

WHO WAS BORN

August 10, 1934 - Milbank, South Dakota

AND CALLED TO HIS ETERNAL HOME

February 27, 2026 - Milbank, South Dakota

MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL

Wednesday, March 4, 2026 - 10:30 a.m.

St. Lawrence Catholic Church
Milbank, South Dakota

CELEBRANT

Father Tom Hartman

MUSICIANS

Nancy Johnson, Accompanist
Laura Berens, Soloist
St. Lawrence Funeral Choir

LECTORS

Jessica Eidem | Tricia Berens

GIFT BEARER

Sullivan Eidem

PLACING OF THE PALL

Barb Berens | Tom Berens | Tim Berens
Bob Berens | Lori McCann

CASKET BEARERS

Austin Berens | Brandon Berens | Brady McCann
Jameson Eidem | Lance Eidem | Dustin Bengston

MILITARY HONORS

American Legion Birch-Miller Post #9
V.F.W. Grant County Post #3486
V.V.A. Northeast SD Chapter #1054
D.A.V. Chapter #19
Sons of American Legion Post #9

INTERMENT

St. Lawrence Cemetery
Milbank, South Dakota

APPRECIATION

Dick's family is grateful for your attendance at this service. Your expressions of kindness and love are deeply appreciated. Following the graveside service, please join the family for a time of fellowship and luncheon in the church dining room.

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be **ALWAYS**
at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face.
And the rains fall soft upon your fields,

*And until
we meet again,*

May **GOD** hold you in the
palm of His *hand.*

Please use this QR Code to view
Dick's online obituary, tribute video, and guestbook.



Mundwiler Funeral Home - Milbank, South Dakota

Richard “Dick” John Berens lived a life defined by hard work, entrepreneurial vision, deep community pride, and an unwavering devotion to his family. He was born on August 10, 1934, in Milbank, SD, to John “Jack” and Rosella (Englert) Berens. He attended St. Lawrence Grade School, graduating in 1948, and Milbank High School, graduating in 1952.

After high school, Dick began farming—a calling he pursued for 17 years. He raised both grain and livestock, starting with a Farmers Home Administration loan before later working with local banks. In 1953, Dick became the second man to join the National Guard’s 740th Transportation Division in Milbank, proudly serving for seven years.

Dick married the love of his life, Deanie, on May 30, 1953, and together they raised five children: Barb, Tom, Tim, Bob, and Lori. Family remained at the heart of everything he built.

In 1970, Dick transitioned from farming to the recreational industry, working for D.D.I. in Golden Valley, MN, and Apollo in Chanhassen, MN. Four years later, he built his first roller-skating rink in Milbank, called “The Playhouse”, which he later converted into Berens Warehouse Groceries. He also built and operated roller rinks in Scottsbluff, NE, and Watertown, SD. Dick applied urethane floors to multiple rinks in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska.

In 1977, Dick purchased 27 acres of bare land in east Milbank and transformed it into a 62-lot residential development, installing water, sewer, and streets to bring the neighborhood to life. That same year, he and Deanie formed Berens Enterprises, Inc., bringing their five children in as shareholders.

Over the next several decades, Dick built, bought, sold, and developed an extraordinary range of properties and businesses across South Dakota, Nebraska, and Minnesota—each one reflecting his instinct for opportunity and his drive to build things that lasted. His ventures included roller rinks in multiple states, grocery stores in Milbank and Winner, SD, restaurants such as Pizza Plus and later, The Steak House and Hangar Lounge, commercial buildings, storage facilities, and residential developments. Dick built a 10,000-square-foot spec building for the Grant County Industrial Development Corporation, developed storage units in Ortonville, MN, and constructed a 7,200-square-foot commercial building he later leased as an auto and sports center, currently Midwest Power Sports. He also played a key role in transforming 30 acres of Berens Inc. land into a commercial addition to Milbank, overseeing annexation, infrastructure, and lot development. His ability to see potential in land or an empty building long before others did became a hallmark of his career.

Dick’s business interests were always intertwined with family. In 1986, he became president of Berens Inc., a family corporation owned by his mother and siblings, guiding its land holdings and development projects. That same year, he was appointed County Commissioner, a role in which he served with dedication, practicality, and a deep sense of responsibility. Voters recognized his commitment, electing him to four additional terms.

Dick’s creativity and curiosity led him down many paths—sometimes practical, sometimes simply for fun. In 2003, he bought a 38-foot stretch limousine with the idea of shuttling hunters to local establishments and renting it out for weddings and events. He hired four drivers and delighted in the novelty of the venture.

Reflecting his zest for life, Dick’s hobbies included: flying his own plane, golfing, snowmobiling, and woodworking. Flying was his greatest passion—one he learned from his father at age 16 and continued until he was 85 years of age.

Dick was known for his humor, his quick wit, and the way he could light up any coffee shop with a joke. He often said, “Today is the best day of my life,” a phrase now lovingly echoed by his grandsons.

A life-long Milbanker, Dick was deeply proud of his community and even prouder of his family. Those who knew him often said, “When they made him, they threw away the mold”—and in Dick’s case, it couldn’t be truer.

Left to cherish Dick’s memory are his wife of 72 years, Deanie; his children: Barb Berens of Chandler, AZ; Tom (Linda) Berens of Corona, SD; Tim (Elizabeth) Berens of Stillwater, MN; Bob (Michelle) Berens of Milbank, SD; and Lori McCann (Gary Stevens) of Chandler, AZ; 10 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren; brother, David (Delores) Berens of Monument, CO; along with many nieces and nephews.

Preceding him in death were his parents; and siblings: Rita (AJ) Ferri, Beverly Boerger, Phyllis (Bob) Spanton, Jerry Berens, and John “Jack” (Gladys) Berens.

I N L O V I N G
Memory



Dick Berens

1934 - 2026