



Dennis McClary

1958-2020

Dennis Roy McClary 62, of East Windsor, NJ, passed away on Friday, July 31, 2020, at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, NJ.

Son of the late Charles and Virginia McClary, Dennis was born in Indianapolis, Indiana. After graduating from John Marshall High school in Indianapolis in 1976, Dennis attended Purdue University earning a BS degree in Electrical Engineering in 1980.

Following College Dennis joined RCA SelectaVision VideoDisc Division in Indianapolis, then moved to RCA Laboratories in Princeton NJ working in television electronics research. He participated on project teams including the design of HDTV Test Equipment which won Sarnoff a group Emmy Award. In addition to electronics, he worked on business development, sales and customer services, resolving highly technical customer inquiries. His time at David Sarnoff Research Center prepared him to form his own consulting company Hawthorne Associates LLC with his wife Cathy, also an engineer.

Dennis' love of community led him to become a member of many professional and charitable organizations. A licensed Radio Amateur (KC2IMI), he served as president of the David Sarnoff Radio Club for 15 years. The club held numerous training exercises and assisted the Red Cross during 9/11 and other emergencies. It was after his volunteer work on 9/11 that Dennis decided to become more involved with Ham Radio, becoming a member of the Mercer County Amateur Radio Emergency Service. He frequently was part of the safety communications team for the NJ State Triathlon, and co-organized the club's annual American Radio Relay League Field Day station. He also coordinated radio fundamentals study and licensing sessions for the Boy Scouts of America and as part of the Trenton Computer Festival. Dennis even-keel and cheerful demeanor were especially valued in difficult times, such as those that we sometimes face in crisis management in our radio service efforts. His talent was in organizing to include everyone.

He served 10 years on the board of Better Beginnings Child Development Center in Hightstown, four as chairperson. He was a dedicated, committed volunteer who believed families and children should be provided every opportunity to reach their full potential. When a friend from Sarnoff, the late Liston Abbott, introduced Dennis to Better Beginnings' mission; Liston spoke of Better Beginning's "PennyDrive" fundraiser. Immediately Dennis showed up holding jars of pennies, his "lucky" pennies.

That was the start of his commitment to Better Beginnings. During his tenure, Dennis became the source of expertise for the center's technical department. Dennis was Better Beginnings' Mr. Fix-It! During the temporary closure of the center due to the Covid-19 virus, - Dennis, rebuilt and donated computers for the benefit of families who were in need of computers. His acts kindness were infinite.

Better Beginnings staff will miss his kind nature, his dedication, his many talents, and ability. Often, we would reach-out to Dennis with our issues or need of repairs, before we would hang-up the phone he would be at our doorway with toolbox in hand. His last act of kindness – we expressed our concerns about re-opening the center and how office personnel were worried about having electronic sign-in machines on their desks and how to maintain social distancing. Dennis came in after hours and when we came in the next day, he had re-located the machines to another location, away from the desk and staff – he wanted to contribute to the safety and well-being of the center. Dennis also introduced his lovely wife Cathy to Better Beginnings, she too quickly became a volunteer, who has provided numerous valuable services including tutoring Better Beginnings school age children. Better Beginnings' staff were asked to provide one descriptive word for Dennis. "selfless". That is just who he was.

He will be deeply missed by the love of his life and wife, Cathy Tsao. His family included Diana and Tom Connors -- his sister and brother-in-law and Dean -- his brother, and his late brother Donald. Also survived by nieces and nephews -- Pat, Kari, late Nathan, Christina, Betty, Tammy, Richelle, and Tiffany.

Visitation Aug 7, 2020 04:00 PM-6:00 Eastern Time. zoom link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86828694348?pwd=TjQrMm5xcVhWWVRoRWNPYnBXaE9QQT09>

Celebration of Life Aug 8, 2020 02:00 PM Eastern Time. zoom link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83471862405?pwd=Sm9XbHlROUM1TkpiTlFoaXdmZmYzdz09>

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Better Beginnings, 318 North Main Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520

Celebration of Life of Dennis McClary

Saturday, August 8, 2020

via Zoom

Opening: Rev. Charlie Dieterich

Welcome and Zoom Rules

Welcome everyone. I'm Charlie Dieterich, retired minister and retired engineer and friend of Dennis and Cathy's

We will be doing today's service entirely on Zoom. I hope you can see me, and, if you select "gallery view" you can see a group of those attending.

As is typical with Zoom, you need to know about a few controls:

- mute
- turn off video
- stretch, get water
- you may message others in chat, but please don't message all.
- at the end we will have a reception where you will be invited to talk with others in small groups.

If you have a problem with your zoom, go down to the bottom of your screen and click "Chat" send a one word request "Usher" to everyone... or find

Perhaps you are wondering is this is like a funeral Mass...

This is a Celebration of Dennis McClary's life, a service traditional to UU...

- We will have one unison prayer,

Welcoming Family

WE welcome

Cathy Tsao.

Sister Diana and her husband Tom Connors

Brother Dean McClary.nieces and nephews --

Pat,

Kari,

Chistina,

Betty,
Tammy,
Richelle, and
Tiffany.

And we welcome the memory of his parents: Charles and Virginia McClary, and his late brother Donald

We welcome
Cathy's sister Patricia and her husband David Kitmony
and the memory of Cathy's parents:

Reading "The Choir Invisible" George Eliot

I thought I would begin our celebration with a poem from 19th century poet George Eliot "The Choir Invisible" The poem describes an existence after death in a cosmology which has no heaven or hell. Instead, it imagines that people who have inspired others to do positive things join The Choir Invisible, a choir which still sings the minds and hearts of others.

I have edited out about half the poem, and also changed words and phrases to move it closer to 21st century language. Think of this as an invitation to find and read the original poem.

The Choir Invisible, by George Eliot:

Oh, may I join the choir invisible of those immortal dead who live again

- In minds made better by their presence;
- live In pulses stirred to generosity,
- In deeds of daring rectitude,
- in scorn for those miserable aims, that end with the self,
- In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,

Memories which urge us to search -- to vaster issues.

So to live is heaven:

That soul shall live till human Time Shall fold its eyelids

Time made more glorious For us who strive to follow.

May I reach That purest heaven, --

to be to other souls

The cup of strength in some great agony,

Encourage generosity,

feed pure love,

Create in others smiles that have no cruelty,

Be the sweet presence of a good thing done...
And in the doing == ever more intense!
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

Celebrating Dennis McClary

On Friday, July 31st, Dennis Roy McClary joined the Choir Invisible, sixty-two years after his birth in Indianapolis Indiana to Virginia and Charles McClary.

9 years after entering the bond of marriage with Catherine Tsao

And 40 years after beginning his career with a degree from Purdue.

And yet, in death, he lives on, as George Eliot wrote:

“In minds made better by their presence; “

Dennis McClary lives on “In pulses stirred to generosity,”
and “deeds of daring rectitude,”

This afternoon you will hear stories of the many lives Dennis touched, the many works he did and the way he did them.

Even if you thought you knew him, you may be delighted by the revelations today, as we explore the whole tapestry of life Dennis created.

Dennis was the youngest of four children, his brothers and sister were a decade older, and, with his mother, they provided a sense of “home.”

I met Dennis when we both worked for RCA on the VideoDisc project, designing a way to play movies from a 12” disc, similar to a long playing audio record. I was based in Princeton at the RCA David Sarnoff Research Center, and Dennis worked at RCA on Rockville Road, Indianapolis.

I had developed some technology with an engineer at Rockville Road, and flew out to Indy to implement the system. Dennis was part of the team, though we worked so seamlessly, I don't remember what part he worked on.

I was impressed with his skills – he was quick, he was accurate, and he was thinking about how to make things work better.

When RCA decided to shut down the VideoDisc division in the mid 1980s, managers worked to find alternative employment for their best engineers.

His supervisor contacted us to see if we had any openings, and we created one for Dennis.

And so Dennis moved to New Jersey and a life at RCA Laboratories.

We shared an office, and frequently we were on the same projects. Dennis was adopted by a team of engineers and implementers, including Pierre Williams, John Carrol, Jeremy Pollack and a half dozen others.

Together they made sure our team efforts were successful. Dennis made sure he knew all the administrative assistants in the building and this helped us get things done.

Pierre and John and others got Dennis interested in Amateur Radio as well, though Dennis was not a Morse code Ham radio operator and did not enjoy operating ham radio contests. He resisted getting a license until 9/11/01. The radio club's assistance to the Red Cross in the days that followed showed him that there was a serious public service side to Amateur Radio. He got his first license later that month.

Fellow RCA technician Jeremy Pollack advertised Friday night "Adult Social Volleyball" games in the summers, which the Pollacks, Jeremy and Marcia would host in their back yard. We would both attend these, though nobody was very good.

Over his 25 or so years our Television Research Laboratory evolved to do Advanced Television. We had a series of "Once in a Lifetime Opportunities" to work overtime advancing the art of broadcasting.

Dennis was keenly aware of how all nighters, travel, and other sacrifices impacted the lives of technicians and support engineers. He also was aware of the use of our products and whether that work was humane.

Dennis' way was to sit me down and start a conversation about fairness, about compensation, about the impact on those with families, or society. His way was very kind, but he made his points clearly and thoughtfully.

If those in the Choir Invisible perform deeds of daring rectitude, this was one of them. Although we were all salaried, the way overtime was compensated changed to a fairer system.

Later years at Sarnoff involved creating test equipment for DIRECTV, and at least one short-notice trip to Japan to help get their DIRECTV system on the air. We also created commercial test equipment for broadcasters, creating a product for Hewlett Packard.

Around 2005 work on Television wound down, our group shrank. I went off to seminary, and Dennis did consulting. On November 11, 2011, Dennis married Cathy Tsao, who

he had met back at Sarnoff. Soon after they formed a consulting company, and worked together for the next eight years.

In addition to consulting projects, Dennis spent his recent years on volunteer work. A friend from RCA and from the ham radio club, Liston Abbott, introduced Dennis to Better Beginnings Child Development Center in Hightstown, where, in recent years, Dennis could be found at all hours.

When not volunteering on the Board of Better Beginnings or fixing things there, Dennis could be found organizing Ham Radio projects. As "David Sarnoff Radio Club" president, he found joy working on emergency preparedness and organizing meetings as the Club President. Dennis also could be seen at local Engineering meetings, or Ham Radio "Hamfests" or helping with license classes.

His most recent project was raising money for repairs to the club's emergency transmitter.

May Dennis join the Choir Invisible.
may we long remember
how our minds have been made better by his presence; "
How he stirred us to generosity,
And showed us all what true love could be.

His was a shining example
of a joyous and moral life.

Aspects of Dennis' Life (Introduction Rev. Charlie Dieterich)

Cathy has asked several people to speak on their relationship to Dennis, and so I've asked three of us to spend a few moments describing aspects of his life.

Diana Connors is Dennis' sister, and lives in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Michael Isnardi, *Distinguished Computer Scientist* at SRI International, Dr. Isnardi was a co-worker and later Dennis' supervisor at SRI- Sarnoff

and

Luz Horta is Executive Director at Better Beginnings Child Development Center.

Cathy Tsao also wrote words about Dennis as a Husband... and these will be read by friend and fellow Radio Club member, **Rebecca Mercuri**.

Growing up - Diana Connors

Work at RCA/Sarnoff - Michael Isnardi

Volunteer at Better Beginnings - Luz Horta, Executive Director

As a Husband, words of Cathy Tsao - Read by Rebecca Mercuri

“Life as a Tapestry” A time for sharing single short memories of Dennis.

Our speakers have each provided the major threads of Dennis McClary's life. Now is the time to fill in the tapestry a bit.

Each of us carries stories of moments we shared with Dennis. Maybe a funny situation,
maybe a conversation,
Maybe a surprise encounter.

Our lives are made up of memories like these,
and recalling some of these moments can help fill in the tapestry of his life
for all assembled.

We have a little time to share some of these moments together. If you do not have time to share, you may write your memory in the Tribute wall on the Simplicity funeral services website. Or stay for a breakout session where we will have a few minutes for small group sharing.

We'll start with a few short memories from close friends, and then open it up to folks who raise a zoom-hand in the reactions menu. I'll tell you when, and those with clear user names will be called on first.

- Jeremy Pollack
- John DeGood
- *Rebecca Mercuri*

Raise your hand (zoom Reaction) to speak briefly, telling a story from their life with Dennis.

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(Sharing 15 minutes)

“Dennis lives on in Us” Rev. Charlie Dieterich

Thank you all for your stories. This service is being recorded, and Cathy and the McClaryies can go back and listen to what you all said.

One thing is certain.. Dennis McClary lives on in our lives. His deeds, his thoughts, his love has shaped our lives, and, if you are like me, from time to time you will pause and say “I wish Dennis were here to share this!”

It seems fitting to end our time together with a prayer.

Those of you with a Christian background, or a public school background, will know the Lord's Prayer, perhaps by heart.

You are invited to keep mute on, but join in as I recite one version of the New Testament reading. AND, you may wish to consider how Dennis was an instrument of grace in your life.

our father

who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven
Give us, this day, our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptatioin, but deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever amen.

May you each go forward with the memory of Dennis,
with a bit of his life within yours
with the blessing of the time you shared

and from the book of Numbers 6:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Amen

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Announcements and thanks.

In a few moments those who want to stick around can break into small discussion groups.

I want to remind everyone that it is a Mitzvah, and act of kindness to make a contribution to
Better Beginnings Child Development Center, details are in the obituary.

Thank you to the speakers and to our husher-ushers.

Coffee Hour Groups (divide those remaining into groups of about 5 attendees and talk for 15 minutes)

explain...

Final Goodbyes, and Zoom end.

Dennis' wife, Cathy, asked me to read her recollections about him and their life together. My apologies if I have some of the pronunciations incorrect.

My Dennis

I always say that Dennis is the gift God gave to me. We started our own company shortly after we married. Since we worked from home most of the time, we almost were being together all of the time. We work together, shop together, go to meetings together, volunteer together, and even go to see Doctors together. Once I had to stay home – both the receptionist and Dr. asked “where is your wife?”

Girls say “He treats me like a queen”. But a queen wouldn’t get the love Dennis rained on me. Dennis thought I was flawless and spoiled me rotten. When I woke up in the morning, the first thing I saw was his smiling face -- and then he would say “I truly love you very, very much” in both English and Chinese, and told me he would never stop saying so.

We have a “DaTou club”. DaTou in Chinese means to let others take advantage of you. It is negative, but we took it a positive way, thinking that to help people without payback is totally OK with us. Rebecca is a member, we call her “New Jersey CSI”. Dennis told me his friends Pierre and Marietta so kindly changed their Christmas party to January, since he went home to Indiana for Christmas in December. We visited Pierre and Marietta every weekend when they were in nursing home. Dennis played Morse code to Pierre and they played like a couple of happy kids.

Dennis can’t help helping others. When he saw a person sitting next to a car on a parking lot, he always said “what is she or he doing?” and would drag me there to help the person fix the problem. If we saw someone pulled over changing a tire, we would stop to see if the person needed help. When we go shopping, he always remembered to buy something for Kids. He played silly games with kids, especially with mentally challenged kids, and never got tired of it.

We remodeled our forever home. Made every tiny tiny things our way. I liked an antique hallway light fixture, so Dennis went through all the trouble to get old obsolete sockets and rewire the circuit for me. He always would say “what XiaoBaoBei (that is what he called me) wants, she’ll get it”. He meant literally. We had just put Dennis' radio antenna on the roof, he was so happy to play with his “toys” (Ham gear) on the radio corner we lately set up.

We never had one fight since we married. Even if I was wrong, Dennis would not criticize me a bit, until I made a huge apology. We both were very good on that too. Dennis' friends became our friends, they are all such good people. I told him: "good person gets good friends". Every one of my friends liked him and told me he was a very rare person, that I'm so lucky to have him. They were amazed how good his Chinese was too.

No words can express how much I miss Dennis, my DaBaoBei. However, we promised to each other, if only one of us is left in this world, he or she will live happily. I don't know how just now, but I will honor our promise in my life. – **Cathy**

On the Tapestry of Dennis' McClary's Life

Rebecca Mercuri

Charlie asked us to reflect on Dennis' life as a tapestry. I've seen many tapestries in museums but wanted to look up the definition – the NY Metropolitan Museum of Art gives this: “Think of a tapestry as a grid composed of threads that are fixed on a large frame. The vertical threads are known as warps, and the horizontal threads are known as wefts. The wefts are actually a collection of lots of separate pieces of wool or silk threads, all in different colors. Because the colored wefts entirely cover the warps, the figurative design they've built up will be visible on the front and back of the tapestry.”

My initial thought about this was that “Dennis' tapestry has a lot of gold weft threads.” You've heard about some of these gold threads already today, and many of you have experienced and shared them with Dennis. His commitment to engineering and doing good work. His love of Kids which was expressed through the many years with Better Beginnings. The DaTau club that he shared with Cathy. (By the way, I didn't know I was a DaTau member with a special club name until 2 days ago, but I'm honored to be a part of it.)

Some of the words describing Dennis' gold threads stand out. The Better Beginnings folk call him “selfless.” Members of the David Sarnoff Radio Club call him “a good man.” “Kind,” “Caring,” “Loyal,” “Trustworthy,” and “Peacemaker” are descriptors of other gold threads woven throughout his life's tapestry.

I worked with Dennis in numerous capacities since the mid-1980's – first at RCA's David Sarnoff Research Center, and later with the David Sarnoff Radio Club and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. One thing I observed was his Reliability. If Dennis agreed to do something, you never had to remind him, he'd often go above and beyond, and always without complaining.

There were a lot of things that Dennis did that nearly nobody knew about. He really appreciated the mentoring he received at the Sarnoff Labs from the older staff members and made sure to stay in touch with them years after they had retired. Liston Abbott, John Carroll, Pierre Williams, and Bernie Lechner (all passed now) were among these. Not only did he visit them from time to time, but he gave them rides to professional meetings and group reunions so they could continue to attend. Dennis kept track of his many other friends and colleagues and enjoyed sharing news about their accomplishments. He was the one who knew wherever Charlie moved in his ministry, and even sent us links to videos of his sermons.

After my Father had to go to a nursing home, Dennis helped me and my brother pack up some 50 years of family possessions from the big house in Glenside PA. These were long days, often I'd drive out from NJ early and Dennis would drive over to PA later. We'd usually leave at the same time in our separate cars. One night, after I crossed the Trenton toll bridge, I realized that Dennis was still driving behind me, even though there was a shorter and faster way for him to get home. Clearly he knew I was exhausted and wanted to make sure I got home OK. We never talked about this, but that was the sort of quiet, unrewarded kindness that Dennis would do for a friend.

So, in thinking about this now, I realize that all of the colorful and visible patterns on the wefts in Dennis' tapestry are hung upon the warp threads that were the people in his life. His wife and family first of all, but also the many colleagues and friends that he cherished and wove his life around. We were lucky to have known him. Good bye, my friend. You will be missed.

Dennis McClary Friend of a friend

Luz Horta

Welcome families and friends, we gather here today in disbelief and with deep sorrow at the loss of Dennis McClary...A gentle soul who will be remembered for his many acts of kindness, and for believing, "that we should all be provided with the opportunities to reach our full potential.

We, at Better Beginnings first came to know Dennis when our dear departed friend, Liston, introduced him to Better Beginnings. Liston shared with us that he would often talk to Dennis about Better Beginnings' purpose. One day he mentioned to Dennis that Better Beginning's was holding a "PennyDrive" fundraiser. The next day Dennis was at Liston's office doorway holding jars of pennies, his "lucky" pennies. That was the start of his commitment to Better Beginnings. During his tenure, Dennis became a source of expertise for the center's technical department. Dennis was Better Beginnings' Mr. Fix-It guy!

Dennis was a generous and giving person. During the temporary closure of the center due to the Covid-19 virus, - Dennis, rebuilt and donated computers for the benefit of families who were in need of computers. His acts kindness were infinite.

Although we will never know, because Dennis never said so but we were a spoiled bunch, probably over dependent, that all we needed to do was to reach-out to Dennis and he would be quick to respond to address our concerns. His last act of kindness – we expressed our concerns about re-opening the center and how office personnel were worried about having electronic sign-in machines on their desks and how to maintain social distancing. Dennis came in after hours and when we came in the next day, he had re-located the machines to another location, away from the desk and staff – he wanted to contribute to the safety and well-being of the center.

I want to express our gratitude to his wife Cathy who, too, generously supported the staff, families, and children. Together with Dennis, Cathy wrote programs to make our jobs easier. You could set your watch by Cathy as she would silently enter the center and go into the Super:BBs classroom where she was tutoring the individual children in math.

Just yesterday I thought to post Dennis obituary on our website only to remember that Dennis was managing our webpage – "Oh, no," I thought, "who is going to do this for

us now! Actually, even though these darkest days, Cathy thought to ease my worries by letting me know that she will be there to help with IT issues.

I, we, will look-up and no longer will Dennis be standing in our doorway asking if everything was ok, did we need him to do something. No longer could we pick up the phone, at any time of the day and yell, help! No longer could we send him an email and expect that he would quickly remotely connect to our server and fix the issues. No longer could I call him to vent, complain or ask his opinion. It is at a time like this that I am reminded sometimes underestimate the power, of a kind word, a smile, or a listening ear. But I will continue to believe that while his earthly presence is no longer, "Mr. Dennis" will always will be here – eternally."

The words of the Staff to describe
Our beloved,
Mr. Dennis,
Chairperson of the Board
Friend, Coworker, and Volunteer.
Our hearts will miss you
– Your memory will forever be with us:



Kind
Sweet
Generous
Approachable
Compassionate
Friendly
Gentle man
Considerate
Giving
Respectful
Nice
Helpful

