



Terry J. Ernst

August 13, 1950 - January 11, 2026

Terry J. Ernst, 75, of Perryville, Missouri passed away Sunday, January 11, 2026 at Independence Care Center.

He was born August 13, 1950 in Cape Girardeau, MO to Weldon and Wilberta "Birdie" (Bohnert) Ernst and raised on crop/livestock farm near Biehle in Perry County.

He received his high school diploma in 1968 from St. Vincent's College Seminary.

Terry had one of the most diversified careers that anyone could imagine. He began with a stint in the Seminary in California and then left for the Peace Corps. He then came back to Missouri and went to Southeast Missouri State where he earned a degree in Business. After school, he sold encyclopedias for a short time, worked at a juvenile detention center, and even substitute taught as well as serving on the Perry County School board. Later, he became an insurance representative for Farm Bureau. His career took another turn and he became a journalist/photographer for several papers in the area including the Southeast Missourian in Cape Girardeau as well as the Dexter Statesman. He wanted a change again and had an unsuccessful run for a State Representative seat. He didn't sit still for very long as he signed on to be an over-the-road truck driver for Celedon and saw first-hand nearly every state in the U.S.

With a competitive and free spirit, Terry loved amusement parks and rides. He welcomed the offer to play cards and games with anyone who wanted to match his gamesmanship. He excelled at chess, pitch and cribbage were his favorites but he was at his best when playing bridge. He was a grand master and had many partners across the U.S. and played both in person and online to maintain his top status.

Terry liked a round of golf with family and a good book, fiction or non-fiction. He was well-read and prided himself on staying current on what was going on in the world around him.

Terry will be missed by many of those who crossed paths with him over the years.

Survivors include two sisters, Suzette (Wallace) Schilling, Vickie (Douglas) Epley; many nieces & nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Warren Ernst, Von Ernst.

Visitation will be from 8:00 am to 10:15 am on Monday, January 19, 2026 at Ford & Young Funeral Home in Perryville.

Funeral Mass will be at 11:00 am Monday, January 19, 2026 at St. Maurus Catholic Church in Biehle with Rev. Michael Benz officiating.

Burial will be at St. Maurus Catholic Cemetery in Biehle.

Memorial contributions may be given to Riverside Regional Library, St. Maurus Catholic Church or Journey Hospice.

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

Ford & Young Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Cemetery Details

St. Maurus Catholic Cemetery

Biehle, MO

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 19. 8:00 AM - 10:15 AM (CT)

Ford and Young Funeral Home
110 S West Street
Perryville, MO 63775

Funeral Mass

JAN 19. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Maurus Catholic Church
10198 Hwy. B
Biehle, MO

Tribute Wall

MA

“ I had the pleasure of meeting Terry on the meals on wheels route when he received meals and he was a pleasure to speak with and always so polite

Marlene - January 19 at 09:58 AM

LG

“ I had the pleasure of getting to know Terry on line through our mutual love of the game of contract bridge. We played together as partners from time to time and as opponents from time to time. His work as a long distance trucker took him all over the country. While he was working away from home, I had the pleasure to meet Terry in person once as he was passing through Northeastern Pennsylvania where I was working at the time. We stopped for dinner and to chat. Being from the Midwest, Terry had never had the experience of eating fresh oysters. He absolutely hated them but was up to the challenge of trying them in the local seafood house not too far from where I was living. Terry stopped playing on line for some reason and in the ten years or so since I met him in person, I had received one contact from him. He had indicated that his health was failing at that time (the call must have been about three years ago now). Unfortunately I never heard from him again. Recently I had been in contact with another person who played with Terry from time to time and we were sharing recollections. Terry came up in our conversation which we had about a week and a half ago. We both wondered what became of him. I am very sorry to hear that he passed. I remember him fondly. We were not close and steadfast friends but I remember him and appreciate the games we shared on line and the opportunity to meet him. He was a unique individual- bright, a little headstrong at times but I believe a very good person in his heart. I am sorry for everyone's loss. May he rest in peace.

Leon Goliger - January 16 at 01:41 PM

LG

“ I had the pleasure of getting to know Terry on line through our mutual love of the game of contract bridge. We played together as partners from time to time and as opponents from time to time. His work as a long distance trucker took him all over the country. While he was working away from home, I had the pleasure to meet Terry in person once as he was passing through Northeastern Pennsylvania where I was working at the time. We stopped for dinner and to chat. Being from the Midwest, Terry had never had the experience of eating fresh oysters. He absolutely hated them but was up to the challenge of trying them in the local seafood house not too far from where I was living. Terry stopped playing on line for some reason and in the ten years or so since I met him in person, I had received one contact from him. He had indicated that his health was failing at that time (the call must have been about three years ago now). Unfortunately I never heard from him again. Recently I had been in contact with another person who played with Terry from time to time and we were sharing recollections. Terry came up in our conversation which we had about a week and a half ago. We both wondered what became of him. I am very sorry to hear that he passed. I remember him fondly. We were not close and steadfast friends but I remember him and appreciate the games we shared on line and the opportunity to meet him. He was a unique individual- bright, a little headstrong at times but I believe a very good person in his heart. I am sorry for everyone's loss. May he rest in peace.

Leon Goliger - January 16 at 01:39 PM

AF

“ Aunt Frances Bohnert & Family purchased the Enduring Grace for the family of Terry J. Ernst.



Aunt Frances Bohnert & Family - January 14 at 07:35 PM