



William Lee Bortel

October 01, 1934 - December 07, 2024

William Lee Bortel of Caro, age 90, passed away to be with his Lord on Saturday, December 7, 2024 at Primrose Retirement Home in Midland. He was born on October 1, 1934 in Britton, the son of the late Virgil and Edna (Carothers) Bortel. Bill was raised on a farm, attended a one room grade school, participated in sports in high school, and showed livestock at county and state fairs. He attended Michigan State University receiving BS and MS degrees. Bill served with the U.S. Army and was stationed in Germany.

Bill had a career with MSU Extension service for thirty-four years in Livingston, Gratiot, and Tuscola counties. After Extension, Bill helped MSU with an Animal Initiative Project. He worked with Monitor Sugar for twelve years, and additionally served on an advisory board for Chemical Bank of Caro. Bill was also known to have been representing agriculture in Washington, DC on 9/11.

Bill's education, experience, and passions afforded him numerous service and leadership positions. These included the Jaycees, Rotary, the Tuscola Economic Development Commission, Caro City Planning Commission, and others with an agricultural focus. He is credited for initiating the Michigan AgroExpo and was awarded national recognition for his leadership in Agriculture Extension; numerous state awards in the field of agriculture, education and 4H were received. Bill also arranged over forty educational agricultural tours throughout the US and forty-four countries. He attributed his life successes to many great colleagues he had worked with and to favor from his Lord. Bill also served on numerous committees as a fifty-year member of the Caro United Methodist Church.

Dad prioritized and valued his family. He is survived by his lovely bride of 65 years, Nancy (Campbell) Bortel from Fowlerville, Michigan; two sons, David Bortel, MD (Leslie Schutz, MD), and Kirk Bortel, MD (Dawn); grandsons, Campbell (Sierra) Bortel of Kansas City, Missouri, and Quinton Bortel of Columbus, Ohio, as well as granddaughters Gabriella Bortel of Grand Rapids, Michigan and Alexandria (Chase) Wahl of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

A funeral service will be held on Saturday, December 14, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. at the Caro United Methodist Church. Rev. Robert Demyanovich will officiate with the burial held privately at Greenwood Cemetery in Fowlerville. Bill's family will be present to receive visitors at church on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until the time of his service. In lieu of flowers, those planning an expression of sympathy are asked to consider memorial contributions to the Caro United Methodist Church Samaritan Fund or Michigan 4H.