



# Raymond Sanford Dennis

AUG 16, 1929 - JAN 18, 2026



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# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Events</b> .....	Page 6
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 8
<b>Media</b> .....	Page 14



# Raymond Sanford Dennis

AUG 16, 1929 - JAN 18, 2026

## R aymond S. Dennis Obituary & Donations (In lieu of flowers)

### DONATIONS

Raymond S. Dennis was a proud Alumni of Tuskegee University. You can make a donation to Tuskegee University Endowment fund In honor of his legacy and memory.

<https://fundraise.givesmart.com/e/K2vt6g?vid=loelqn>

### OBITUARY

The Life and Legacy of Raymond Sanford Dennis August 16, 1929 – January 18, 2026

#### Early Life and Foundations

Raymond Sanford Dennis was born on August 16, 1929, in St. Louis, Missouri, to Moses and Alberta Dennis. He was raised in The Ville, a historic African American enclave of self-determination and excellence. Growing up on Pendleton Avenue, Raymond's character was forged by the neighborhood's vibrant churches, schools, and Black-owned businesses.

Faith and community were central to his youth at Antioch Baptist Church, where he discovered a lifelong love for music, singing in the youth choir alongside contemporaries like Chuck Berry. While a student at the legendary Sumner High School, Raymond took a job at O.D. Tailoring. Although he began by sweeping floors, this early exposure to precision craftsmanship laid the foundation for his eventual vocation as a Master Tailor.

#### Academic Excellence and Military Service

A disciplined scholar-athlete, Raymond graduated from high school early in 1947 and continued his journey at Tuskegee Institute. At Tuskegee, he played football, sang in the choir, and proudly



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pledged Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated in 1949, embracing its lifelong mandate of achievement. He graduated in 1951 with a degree in Trade and Tailoring and a minor in Sociology.

Three days after graduation, Raymond was drafted into the United States Navy. Despite the systemic challenges of segregation, he persevered, rising to the rank of Yeoman Third Class and serving as a Recruit Petty Officer in charge of 31 men. He concluded his service with an honorable discharge in San Diego, California.

### **A Visionary in Design**

From Hollywood to Paris Post-military life led Raymond to Los Angeles, where he briefly pursued professional football with the Los Angeles Rams, reaching the final tryout rounds. Redirecting his focus to creative mastery, he enrolled in Trippon's School of Advanced Fashion Design in Hollywood, earning the title of Master Tailor.

Raymond's innovative designs soon drew citywide acclaim. He made history as the first African American to enter the prestigious I. Magnin Fashion Design Competition. His award-winning work was showcased at the flagship Wilshire Blvd store, earning him a trip to Paris, France. What began as a week-long stay became a fourteen-month immersion at La Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne, where Raymond gained fluency in French and refined a world-class couture eye.

### **A Season of Service and Entrepreneurship**

In 1957, Raymond returned to St. Louis to care for his ailing mother, choosing family over a groundbreaking offer to design for Fox Brothers Studio. Transitioning into education, he served as a teacher and later an administrator at Pruitt Elementary, inspired by its namesake, Tuskegee Airman Wendell Pruitt.

In 1960, he launched Belle & Beau Tailoring, running schools by day and building his enterprise by night. His commitment to excellence eventually led him to pursue entrepreneurship full-time, building Belle & Beau into a respected national and international brand for over 40 years.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Raymond's business acumen was formally recognized by the city's most prominent institutions. He received numerous awards for excellent business performance, highlighted by being named a Top Business Leader in St. Louis by The St. Louis American and The St. Louis Sentinel—the two most influential African American-owned newspapers in the



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region. Through his vision, he employed dozens of local residents and became a cornerstone of the St. Louis economy.

### Family and Faith

In 1964, Raymond met Frances Robbins at Antioch Baptist Church. They were married in December 1967, beginning a devoted 58-year union. As a father, he instilled values of hard work and dignity in his sons, Raymond and Sanford. The family later joined Cote Brillante Presbyterian Church, where Raymond served as a trustee, choir member, and dedicated youth mentor.

In retirement, Raymond delighted in his role as a grandfather, traveling between Atlanta and Chicago to support the next generation. His later years were defined by the same wisdom, determination, and grace that guided his 96-year journey.

### Survivors

Raymond is survived by his loving wife, Frances; his sons, Raymond II (Carla), Sanford (Ernnia), and Haze; eight grandchildren: Maya, Raymond III, Amber, Elise, Brielle, Kendall, Elisha, and Jordan; and a host of extended family and friends who were enriched by his enduring presence. He was preceded in death by his parents, Moses and Alberta, and his brother, Wallace.



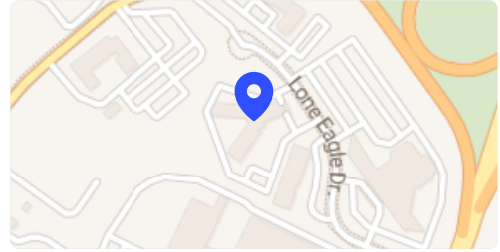
Hotel Room Block

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

3:00 PM - 11:59 PM CT

Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Louis Airport
11237 Lone Eagle Drive, Bridgeton MO 63044

https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?
ctyhocn=STLESES&groupCode=CES91D&arrivaldate=2026-02-
03&departuredate=2026-02-
06&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT

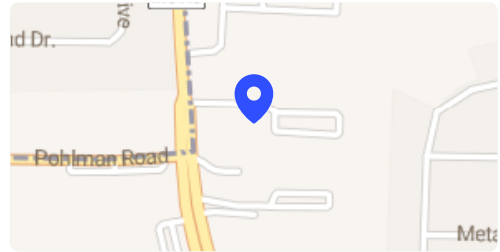


Visitation

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM CT

McClendon Mortuary and Cremation Services
12140 New Halls Ferry Road, Florissant MO 63033

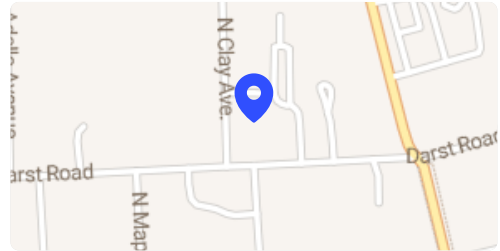


Visitation

Thursday, February 5, 2026

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM CT

Cote Brilliante Presbyterian Church
401 Darst Road, Ferguson MO 63135

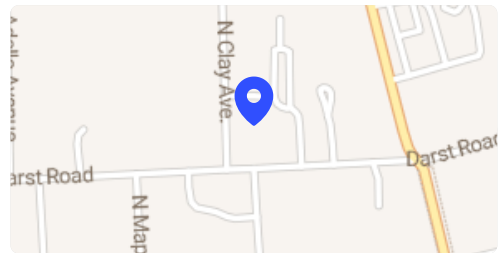


Service

Thursday, February 5, 2026

11:00 AM - 12:30 PM CT

Cote Brilliante Presbyterian Church
401 Darst Road, Ferguson MO 63135



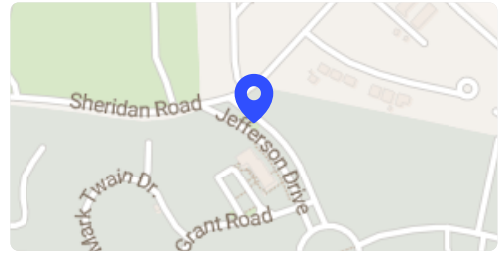


**Burial**

📅 **Thursday**, February 5, 2026

🕒 1:30 PM - 1:45 PM CT

📍 **Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery**  
2900 Sheridan, Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery MO 63125

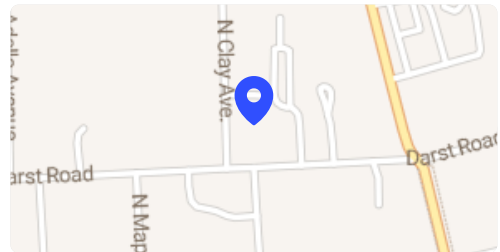


**Repast**

📅 **Thursday**, February 5, 2026

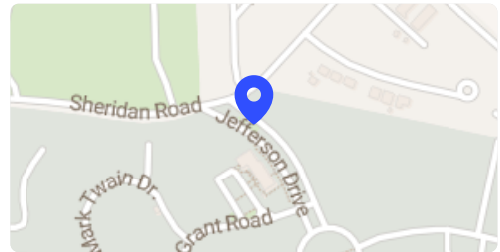
🕒 2:30 PM - 5:00 PM CT

📍 **Cote Brilliante Presbyterian Church**  
401 Darst Road, Ferguson MO 63135



**Cemetery Details**

📍 **Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery**  
2900 Sheridan, Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery MO 63125





# Tribute Wall

## Raymond Sanford Dennis

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**Carol Alexander** posted:

A giant tree has fallen. We will always remember and appreciate the quiet strength Raymond brought to the family. From the first memory of when he came to Brewton for his wedding to "Teenie", to every single family event, Raymond was an encourager! May we all emulate his example of excellence and encouragement! Rest in Peace. Love and Hugs to my family, Frances, Ray Jr., Sanford, and all of his beautiful grandchildren. Carol Woods Alexander

February 6 at 10:00 AM



**Kent Hill** lit a candle in honor of Raymond.

Although I only had a brief conversation with Mr. Dennis, he made a lasting impression on me through his quiet dignity and persona... instantly recognizable as an exceptional individual. I'm very grateful to have had those few, unforgettable minutes with him.



February 5 at 5:30 PM



**Willée Diallo** lit a candle in honor of Raymond.

Rest peacefully Mr. Dennis

February 5 at 11:06 AM



**Stephanie Braggs** posted:

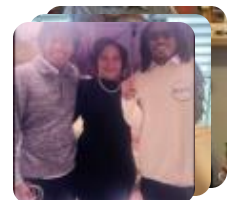
Remembering my Uncle who led by example. You taught by action and words that impacted us all. You always showed us how to carry ourselves with the upmost respect with a lil razzle dazzle. Your influence will live on in us. Rest well Uncle.

February 5 at 1:52 AM



**Stephanie Braggs** shared 3 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

February 5 at 1:38 AM





# Tribute Wall

**Raymond Sanford Dennis**

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**Loren Madden** lit a candle in honor of Raymond.

I love you, Dennis Family. -Always, Loren M.

February 4 at 2:09 PM



**Love, Destiny & Erica** sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Dennis family.

February 3 at 11:49 PM



**Anonymous** sent an Emerald Garden Basket to the Dennis family.

February 3 at 4:21 PM



**The Moses And Riley Families** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Raymond.

February 3 at 4:21 PM



**Kimberly Johnson** posted:

In loving memory of Uncle Raymond. A man of strength, kindness, and wisdom, whose presence brought comfort and laughter to our family. His love will remain in our hearts forever, and his legacy will continue through the lives he touched. His life was a blessing, and his memory will be our treasure. With love and prayers, John & Sue, Kimberly, Ben, Tyler & Nika

February 2 at 9:36 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Sweet Sincerity to the Dennis family.

February 2 at 8:02 PM





## Tribute Wall

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**The Hayes Family** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Raymond.

February 2 at 8:02 PM



**Love, Candy & Tiffany** sent a Beautiful Dreams to the Dennis family.

February 2 at 6:32 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Dennis family.

February 2 at 6:25 PM



**The Lilly Family** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Raymond.

February 2 at 6:25 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Dennis family.

February 2 at 3:22 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Lavender Reflections Spray to the Dennis family.

February 2 at 12:08 PM





# Tribute Wall

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**L Burns** posted:

Raymond's presence was unforgettable-his sharp-style, warm laugh, and genuine kindness left a lasting impression on everyone he met. He was a trailblazer and paved the way for many, but it was his love for family and passion for personal growth and empowerment that truly defined him. He will be deeply missed and fondly remembered. We are keeping his family in our prayers. With love, Irena & Linda Burns, Derek & Gena Lewis

February 2 at 11:39 AM



**Carla Dennis** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

With Ray and San, circa 1971



January 31 at 10:10 AM



**Briana1024@Aol.Com** posted:

We Will Always Love And Appreciate You You Will Be Greatly Missed But Never Forgotten Our Hearts Hurt But We Know You Ok Now Love You Forever Mr Dennis ❤️❤️❤️

January 30 at 9:56 PM



**Briana1024@Aol.Com** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.



January 30 at 8:54 PM



**Briana1024@Aol.Com** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.



January 30 at 8:33 PM



# Tribute Wall

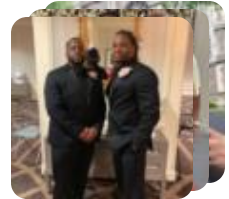
**Raymond Sanford Dennis**

AUG 16, 1929 - JAN 18, 2026



**Briana1024@Aol.Com** shared 3 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

January 30 at 8:31 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Dennis family.

January 29 at 4:16 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Dennis family.

January 28 at 1:42 PM



**Nancy D.** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Raymond.

January 28 at 1:42 PM



**Denise G.** planted a grove of 5 Memorial Trees in honor of Raymond.

January 27 at 10:40 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Florist Choice Bouquet to the Dennis family.

January 27 at 10:29 AM





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**Management, Marketing, & Logistics Dept** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Raymond.



January 27 at 10:29 AM



**Ernnia Dennis** shared 4 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Sharing recent loving memories with Raymond Dennis in 2025. Thanking God for the love and wisdom he gave to us all! Love, The Dennis's (Georgia)



January 25 at 4:45 PM



**Ernest Simmons** posted:

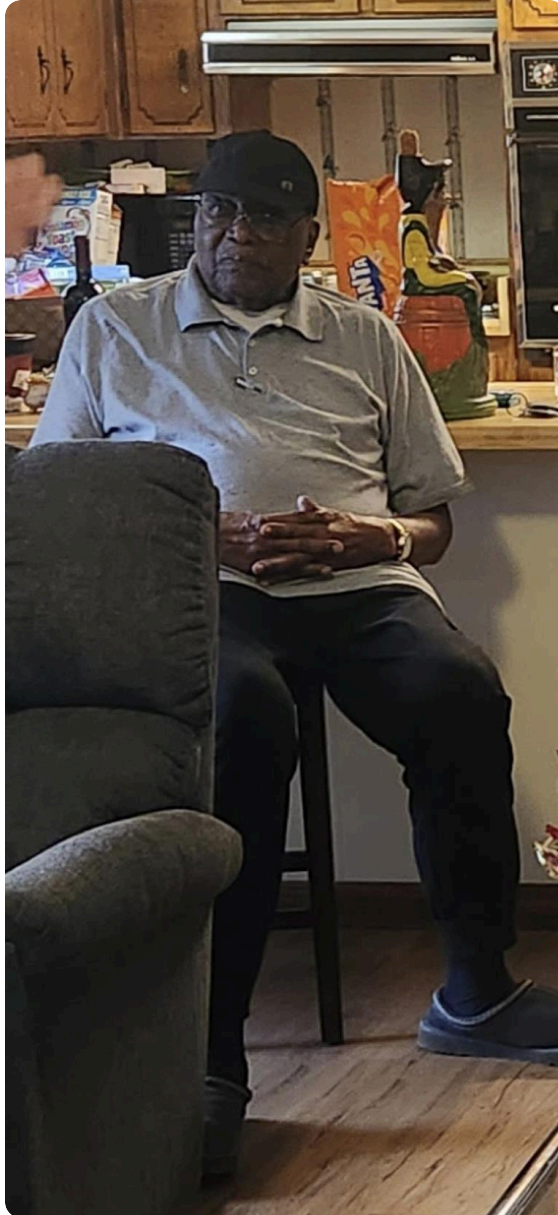
My son's name is SANFORD!!! 😄 😊 😌 😁

January 25 at 4:45 PM



Stephanie Braggs shared 3 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

February 5 at 1:38 AM





# Media

**Raymond Sanford Dennis**

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## Media

**Raymond Sanford Dennis**

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**Carla Dennis** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

January 31 at 10:10 AM





# Media

## Raymond Sanford Dennis

AUG 16, 1929 - JAN 18, 2026



Briana1024@Aol.Com shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

January 30 at 8:54 PM





## Media

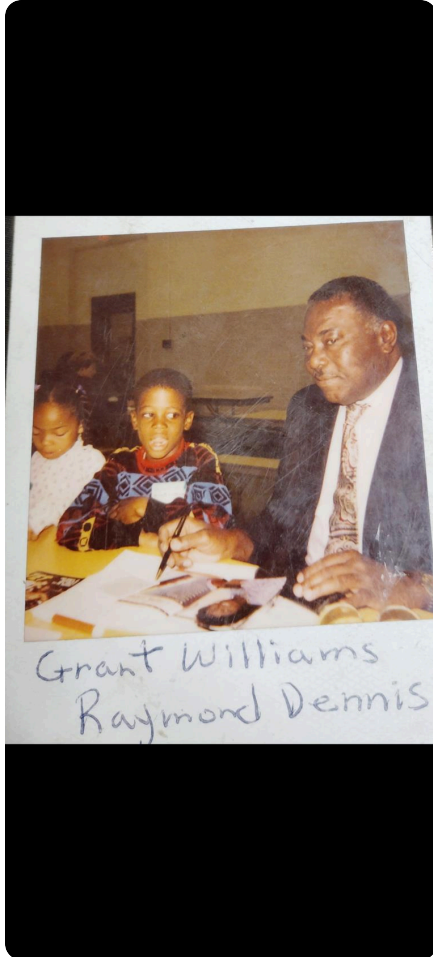
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Briana1024@Aol.Com shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

January 30 at 8:33 PM





## Media

**Raymond Sanford Dennis**

AUG 16, 1929 - JAN 18, 2026



Briana1024@Aol.Com shared 3 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

January 30 at 8:31 PM





**Media**

**Raymond Sanford Dennis**

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Ernnia Dennis shared 4 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

January 25 at 4:51 PM





## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Raymond by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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