



Bunnie Bruce McCosar

April 26, 1938 - October 12, 2025

Bunnie Bruce McCosar was born on April 26, 1938, at Claremore Indian Hospital to Matthew and Nellie (Cornell) McCosar. He was the third of thirteen children—seven girls and six boys—raised in the Holdenville area. His siblings include Shirley Almerigi, Matthew McCosar Jr., Sandra Johnson, Eugenia TwoTwo, Rita Richards, Paula Willits, Victor McCosar, Winford McCosar, Josie Sapien, Larry McCosar, Thomas McCosar, and Beverley Dennis.

Bruce attended Jones Academy starting around the 4th grade and later graduated from Chilocco Indian School (1952–1956). His years in boarding school taught him independence and resilience, traits that would serve him well during his 22-year career in the United States Marine Corps.

Inspired during the Korean War, Bruce enlisted at age 18. He trained at Camp Pendleton, California, and initially served in the infantry before transitioning to helicopter maintenance and becoming a crew chief. He served three tours in Vietnam and was stationed in California, North Carolina, and aboard ships. He also spent three years as a Marine Corps recruiter in Albany, Georgia. Bruce retired in 1978 with the rank of Master Sergeant.

During his military service, Bruce married Martha Howard. The couple, along with their son Bruce, lived in Georgia. After retiring from the military, he worked in industrial maintenance and used the GI Bill to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Tennessee in 1986.

Bruce was a lifelong learner and creative spirit. He was an avid reader and gardener, created Native American ceramic art, painted, did beadwork, and

had a deep passion for genealogy. He traveled extensively to visit mound sites across various states, eager to learn about their role in tribal cultures. He also spent time learning to sing Creek hymns and improving his fluency in the Creek language.

In later years, Bruce became the primary caregiver for his wife Martha, who passed away after a long battle with Alzheimer's. He returned to Oklahoma in 2014 to be closer to his siblings and his roots. He was interviewed for the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress, where his story is preserved in the Bunnie Bruce McCosar Collection. At the time of his passing, five of his siblings survive him: Shirley Almerigi, Paula Willits, Josie Sapien, Thomas McCosar, and Beverley Dennis. Bruce will be remembered for his service, artistry, deep cultural pride, and love for family and heritage.

Viewing will be from 12:00PM - 6:00PM, Thursday, October 16, 2025 at the McClendon-Winters Funeral Home Chapel.

Arrangements and cremation services have been entrusted to the McClendon-Winters Funeral Home of Okmulgee, Oklahoma. Memories, condolences, photos and videos may be shared with the family on Bunnie's Tribute Page of our website. www.mcclendon-winters.com

Previous Events

Viewing

OCT **16.** 12:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - Okmulgee

303 E. 7th Street

Okmulgee, OK 74447

(918) 756-1677

info@mcclendon-winters.com

<https://www.mcclendon-winters.com>

Memorial Service

NOV **1.** 11:00 AM (CT)

Many Springs Baptist Church

7375 E. 137 Rd.

Holdenville, OK 74848

Tribute Wall



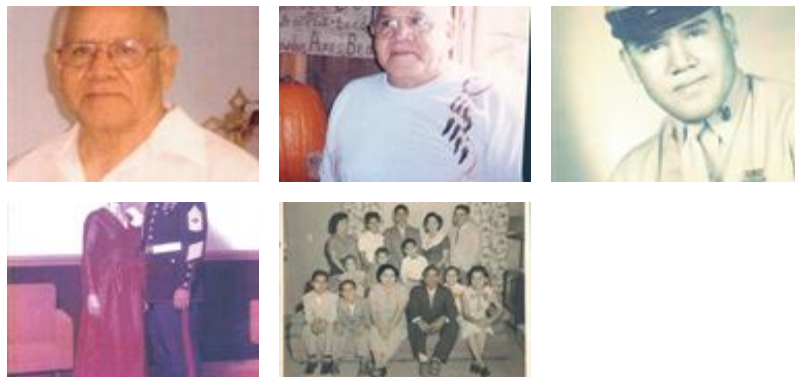
“ McClendon-Winters Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of *Bunnie Bruce McCosar*



McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - October 15, 2025 at 06:14 PM



“ 13 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - October 15, 2025 at 06:11 PM

KL

“ KoKo Lowe lit a candle in memory of *Bunnie Bruce McCosar*



KoKo Lowe - October 15, 2025 at 03:27 PM

SA

“ He was a Christian and tried to help the homeless and hungry when he moved back from his home in Georgia after his wife, Martha died. He retired from the US Marine Corps after more than 20 years as a helicopter mechanic. As his oldest sister and with our sister, Sandra, we visited many years with him and Martha in Georgia. He studied art and crafts and passed his works on to our family. He was my favorite Marine! I will always remember him as that little boy who had a mischievous smile and liked to play a game called thumper, which called for thumping others on their hands if they lost the game! He was proud of being a Marine.

Shirley A. Almerigi - October 15, 2025 at 12:16 PM

HH

“ When I married Bruce Howard McCosar, I was fortunate to have Bunnie become my father-in-law. After a few years, he was no longer Bunnie, but Dad. A thinker, a reader, an artist--he had a playful spirit, loved a good joke, and was always up for a game of Scrabble or cards. When you marry someone, you don't just get a spouse, you also get a family. I was very lucky to have Bunnie as my family, and to call him Dad.

Hannah Mae Hamilton - October 14, 2025 at 07:50 PM

EG

“ Elizabeth GUY lit a candle in memory of Bunnie Bruce McCosar



Elizabeth GUY - October 14, 2025 at 03:05 PM

MH

“ *Marlyn Harris lit a candle in memory of
Bunnie Bruce McCosar*



Marlyn Harris - October 14, 2025 at 11:45 AM