



## Melvin Thomas Tahtinen

October 13, 1944 - May 20, 2016

MELVIN T. Tahtinen

WILLIAMSBURG – Melvin “Mel” Thomas Tahtinen, age 71, passed away Friday, May 20, 2016 at his home in the loving care of his family after a 17 month battle with Pancreatic Cancer.

Mel was born October 13, 1944 to Alfred and Effie (Hietala) Tahtinen in Ontonagon, MI. Mel enlisted in the United States Navy in 1962 and served aboard the USS Vance in the Vietnam War. Mel worked for Wolverine Tractor and Equipment Company for 38 years prior to his retirement in 2004. Mel enjoyed hunting, fishing, and spending time with his grandchildren. He also dedicated 26 years to the church’s AWANA program, both in Grand Rapids and Traverse City, MI.

Survivors include his wife of 47 years, Sharon (Docter) Tahtinen; children: Mark (Teresa) Tahtinen of Missouri City, TX; Todd Tahtinen of Williamsburg, MI; Kathy Tahtinen of Traverse City, MI; and Juliana Bowers of Williamsburg, MI; Grandchildren: Brandy (Michael) Swearingen of Houston, TX; Teresa Gonzalez of Humble, TX; Jesi (Brandon Weatherholt) Tahtinen of Traverse City, MI; Dominic Farmer of Traverse City, MI; Brittany Tahtinen of Flushing, MI; Malachi Farmer of Traverse City, MI; Nathanael Bowers of Williamsburg, MI; Crystal Bowers of Williamsburg, MI; Dustin Tahtinen of Bellaire, MI; Autumn Tahtinen of Bellaire, MI; Nicholas Frye of Williamsburg, MI; and unborn baby Frye; Great-Grandchildren: Ruby Gonzalez and Benjamin Gonzalez. Also surviving are siblings: Donna (Don) Hall of New Castle, WA; Ron (Sandy) Tahtinen of Jenison, MI; Sally (Mike) Dillenbeck of Jackson, MI; Karen (Bill) Malick of Largo, FL; Audrey Head of Burlington, WI; and Augie (Vickie) Tahtinen of South Lyon, MI; sister-in-law, Audrey Tahtinen, whose husband, Gordy, has preceded his brother in death. Also preceding Mel in death are his parents and grandson Alexander Frye.

A memorial service in Mel’s honor will take place on Tuesday, June 7, 2016, at East Bay Calvary Church, where friends may greet the family beginning at 4:30 p.m. until the time of the service at 6:00 p.m., military honors will immediately follow the service at the church.

Please direct memorial contributions to East Bay Calvary Church AWANA Equipment Fund, 2225 E Hammond Rd, Traverse City, MI 49686, or Heartland Hospice of Traverse City, 4020 Copper View, Traverse City, MI 49684, or to the family.

Please visit the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home website <http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com> to share your thoughts and memories with the family.

# Events

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**JUN**   **Visitation**                      04:30PM - 06:00PM

**7**  
East Bay Calvary Church  
2225 Hammond Road East, Traverse City, MI, US, 49686

**JUN**   **Memorial Service**    06:00PM

**7**  
East Bay Calvary Church  
2225 Hammond Road East, Traverse City, MI, US, 49686

# Comments

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“ Still missing Mel and know he is enjoying Heaven and being with his Savior.

**Ron Tahtinen** - May 30, 2020 at 12:06 PM

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“ My heart is saddened by the news of Mel's passing. I worked with Mel at Tom's in Acme when he was employed there. He and Sharon invited a group of fellow employees to share the Christmas play at The Opera House one year . It's a very fond memory and an example of his generous heart and kindly soul....he also shared his fishing trophies with many of us there. Rest in peace my friend....my condolences to Sharon and the rest of his family. The world has lost a kind and gentle soul today.  
Judy Anderson Williamsburg

**Judy Anderson** - June 05, 2016 at 10:38 AM

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“ Sending our thoughts and prayers for Sharon and the family. Mel was a wonderful man and always so kind. May God give you peace and comfort at this time, Joel and Caryl Hautala

**caryl hautala** - May 30, 2016 at 11:35 AM

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“ I am thankful to have Mel as a brother. Many memories go all the way back to childhood, Mel's love for fishing started early. He loved to trap and hunt, the outdoors. He was fearless in many areas and was;t afraid to take chances. It was a blessing to see Mel mature in his relationship with Christ and become so involved in teaching in Sunday School and AWANA. Many more memories! Our prayers go out to Mel's entire family. We will miss you Mel, but see you again some day.

**Ron Tahtinen** - May 30, 2016 at 09:31 AM

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“ I knew the Tahtinen family for many years. Growing up by them and going to church with them as my Dad was their pastor. Such a wonderful family. It has been so great to catch up with them in these last few years. Ron and Mel brought deer for my husband Bob to process for them. I already miss Mel's poke's on facebook. What a wonderful testimony these last months for Christ and all of his life. To all of the family Sorry for your loss. Heaven has gained!!! Bob and Elizabeth (Stover) Moore

**Elizabeth Moore** - May 24, 2016 at 06:51 PM

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“ I only knew him because of my friend Audrey and because Mel and I BECAME message and Facebook friend and because I am a christian counselor how does grief and loss. I started praying for him 17 months ago.I feel through texts I have gotten to know the family.I learned of his deep love for his family ,especially his grandsons and his unstopping praise of his lord and savior. I will miss his posts and his families posts.love you all to the moon and back.

**Diana Bentz** - May 23, 2016 at 08:31 PM

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“ It is a privilege to be part of the Tahtinen family. I remember the times staying at the house in Grand Rapids and making great memories. Going up to Traverse City to fish with my dad and uncle Mel. The times we would talk about the Red Wings. We will surely miss uncle Mel, but Praise The Lord he is no longer in pain. Uncle Mel was a huge blessing to me and a great example of how to live a true Christian life. His testimony will live on forever. Well done, good and faithful servant!

Corey, Renee, C.J., Dylan, Esa, and Ame Jeanne Tahtinen

**Corey Tahtinen** - May 23, 2016 at 08:09 PM

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“ Our humble beginnings in Ontonagon, MI hold memories that we have shared with each other in our adult years. Mel was the brother just ahead of me in the family line-up of 8 being only 15 months older than I. During those years in Ontonagon and Mass City, our family was introduced to Jesus Christ, the Bible, church attendance; following our parents' profession of faith in Jesus Christ, several of us also asked Jesus to be our Lord and Savior. Our faith has also given us strong bonds. Mike and I moved to Traverse City after Mel and Sharon did so we shared the location and fellowship for 26 years. Mel and Mike became fishing buddies when Mike retired and they shared their tree-cutting experiences together; Mel is very much a "brother" to Mike. We treasure the memories and the family he and Sharon created!  
Sally and Mike Dillenbeck

**Sally Dillenbeck** - May 23, 2016 at 07:37 PM

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“ I first met Mel at Cherry Knoll Elementary School. He was always present picking his grandsons up from school and at the assemblies. As the years passed he took my son fishing and was always praying for my daughter. We could all learn from his compassion and kindness for others. Hugs and prayers to his amazing family.

**Kris Ruckle** - May 23, 2016 at 06:38 PM

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“ Mel was a humble man with a sincere love for God. He always had a friendly handshake for those he greeted. Mel built a lasting legacy through his devotion to the children of East Bay Calvary Church in his service to the AWANA program. His faith is carried on by the young lives to whom he ministered.

**Ken Bell** - May 23, 2016 at 05:27 PM

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“ I worked with Mel at Wolverine Tractor in a Grand Rapids, his calm demeanor during that time with everything that was happening there was a true display of his spirit, he didn't have to preach God's word to me he lived it. Thank you Mel for being the hands and feet of Jesus!!

**Jeff Nestell** - May 23, 2016 at 05:19 PM

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“ Sharon, Kathy and family, you are blessed to have had such a great man in your life! May God comfort you all till you see him again...our prayers are with you.  
Love, Don and Jill Hanna

**Jill Hanna** - May 23, 2016 at 05:05 PM

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“ Mel, we will miss you. We will go on loving your family as they are our family as well. We sorrow, but not as those without hope. We have loved you and will love the memories we have. Ron

**Ron Tahtinen** - May 22, 2016 at 07:14 AM



“ Many memories and so thankful for them! Thankful for Mel's love for the Lord and knowing he is cancer free and pain free and with His Savior and loved ones gone before! Thoughts and prayers are for family left behind for their comfort and strength in the difficult days ahead. Thankful we have a God who can and will sustain them and us until we are reunited with our Savior and those who have gone on before!

**Audrey Head** - May 30, 2016 at 09:31 AM



“ I worked with Mel at Wolverine Tractor in Traverse City. I remember his stories of growing up in the UP. He was a good man. Blessings to his family.

**Cindy Edmonson** - June 07, 2016 at 08:08 AM