



Dennis W. Dawson

November 13, 2025

Dennis W. Dawson, 76, died on November 13, 2025, at Saint Mary Home in West Hartford. Born in Hammond Indiana on November 19, 1948, he was the beloved son of Ruth M. Dawson and husband to Noreen Grice.

Dennis was an enthusiastic astronomer and astronomy educator. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Astrophysics from Indiana University and a Doctorate in Astronomy from New Mexico State University. His career included professorships at Wesleyan University, Alma College, Franklin and Marshall College, San Diego State University and Central Michigan University. He retired in 2025 from Western Connecticut State University after 37 years, where he was a Full Professor of Astronomy and the Director of the WCSU Observatory and Planetarium.

Dennis cared deeply about providing opportunities for his students and co-authored scientific papers with them. He mentored students and took many of them on research trips to Flagstaff Arizona where they gained hands-on experience at the National Undergraduate Research Observatory (NURO).

Dennis was always an avid reader and life-long learner. He authored scientific papers and the astronomy book, *Out of the Classroom: Observations & Investigations in Astronomy*, used by college students nationwide. Dennis enjoyed long drives, visiting new places, attending holiday events and fairs

with his wife, and watching episodes of his favorite science fiction series, Dr. Who.

He is survived by his loving wife of 37 years, Noreen Grice.

A graveside service will be held on Friday, November 21st at 11:00 a.m. in the East Cemetery, East Center Street, in Manchester. Memorial contributions may be made to the Ruth M. and Dr. Dennis W. Dawson Endowed Scholarship, Institutional Advancement Department, Western Connecticut State University, 181 White Street, Danbury, CT 06810

Previous Events

Graveside Service

NOV **21**. 11:00 AM (ET)

East Cemetery
East Center St
Manchester, CT

Tribute Wall

DP

“ Noreen:
*I just found this in my inbox sent by my daughter.
My greatest condolences. It is too bad you both were located so far
away from us here in the Pac NW.
At 91 I guess I am the last member of the original Pearson family to
be alive.
With best wishes.
Don C. Pearson, MD, JD.*

Don C. Pearson - December 17, 2025 at 06:41 PM

AL

“ *Professor Dawson was a kind person. I learned a lot from him
during my years at WCSU. Thank you professor for all the years of
dedication and support. I'll always remember our trip to Flagstaff
and all the Astronomy knowledge you shared with me. Rest in
peace.*

Alberto - December 01, 2025 at 08:51 AM

KB

“ *Dennis was an awesome educator. I went on a couple of trips to
NURO with him. They were so fun and educational. He was kind,
funny and always so encouraging, wanting his students to have the
best educational opportunities possible. I learned so much from him,
not only astronomy but how to be a good teacher. RIP Dennis!! ❤️*

Karolyn Baumgartner - November 23, 2025 at 06:29 PM

CM

“ Dennis was a gentle soul. I always enjoyed it when He and Noreen visited. So sorry to hear of his passing! He touched so many lives including mine and my families. Rest in peace Brother in law.
Love,
Connie Grice Moore

Connie Grice Moore - November 20, 2025 at 01:33 PM

AC

“ Angela C. purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Dennis W. Dawson.



Angela C. - November 18, 2025 at 02:25 PM

AC

“ Angela C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dennis W. Dawson.

Angela C. - November 18, 2025 at 02:25 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dennis W. Dawson.



November 17, 2025 at 02:05 PM

FJ

“ From Ken and Monika Janes planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dennis W. Dawson.

From Ken and Monika Janes - November 17, 2025 at 02:05 PM

TS

“ The Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dennis W. Dawson.



The Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society - November 17, 2025 at 12:36 PM

TS

“ The Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dennis W. Dawson.

The Middle Atlantic Planetarium Society - November 17, 2025 at 12:36 PM

MG

“ When my daughter turned 8, I asked Dennis if we could hold her birthday at the planetarium at WCSU. He not only said yes, but he also put together a "Spring Stars" show for the kids, let them see the big telescope, and created a bunch of astronomical photos for them to color in using the computers. At the same time, he explained what the images represented (nebulae, etc.). It was a fantastic and memorable party, and his kindness in making it happen was so memorable to both Elly and me. It was clear he loved what he did and wanted others to love it as well. We share your sorrow and send you our sympathies.

Maribeth and Elly Griffin

Maribeth Griffin - November 17, 2025 at 08:30 AM

MZ

“ Dennis was such a monumental part of my career and was a true mentor and friend.

Michael



Michael Z - November 16, 2025 at 09:26 AM

NO

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Noreen - November 14, 2025 at 08:24 PM