



Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin

October 20, 1959 - February 3, 2017

Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin was born October 20, 1959, at St. Joseph's Hospital in Orange County, CA, to Joe and Barbara Perrin. Benny was the younger of two sons. He was 18 months younger than his brother, Braxton Perrin. When Benny was in elementary school, Joe's retirement from the military landed the Perrins in Decatur, AL. Benny found his love for sports at The Boy's Club. He attended Decatur High School, where he stole the stage with his extraordinary talents in baseball, basketball, and football. He was a quarterback and defensive back for the late coach, Earl Webb, at Decatur. He earned High School All-American and All-State Honors in football in 1976 and 1977. Decatur made the Class 4A State Semifinals in football in his junior and senior years. Decatur went 20-5 in Benny's two years as starting quarterback. He was named All-State in baseball and basketball in 1977 and 1978. He was a starting guard for the basketball team in 1977 - 1978 season. That year, Decatur made it to the semifinals in the class 4A State Tournaments under Coach Earl Morris. He also started at shortstop for Decatur's baseball team for four years.

After high school, Benny played football and baseball at The University of Alabama. He had the honor of playing under the legendary Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant from 1978 - 1981. Benny's two interceptions against Auburn in 1981 helped the "Bear" reach his 315th record-breaking win. He was Defensive Player of the Year for Alabama, and played in the 1982 Senior

Bowl. During this time, Benny had to ask permission from Coach Bryant to marry his high school sweetheart, Debbie Morris Halbrooks.

Perrin was drafted in the third round of the 1982 NFL Draft by the St. Louis Cardinals, and played four seasons in the league. He was the first player to win Defensive Player of the Week in his first ever start as a rookie. In addition, he was an alternate to the 1982 Pro Bowl. He played in 48 games, had 9 interceptions, and 1 touchdown. He was Defensive Captain as a rookie, and had numerous game balls. After a routine physical detected a cervical fracture, Benny was forced to retire from the NFL.

The Perrins then returned to Decatur and opened BB Perrins BBQ. They gave birth to three wonderful children, Jesse (Anna Marie), Mary Caitlin Brown (Alex), and Sara Beth. On February 2, 2007, Benny married his wife, Courtney. They have had 10 years of marriage and a lifetime of memories together. He was fortunate to experience the birth of his first grandson, Brooks Bennett Perrin, on July 4, 2016. Benny spent his free time assisting his son, Jesse, coaching freshmen and JV baseball for the Hartselle Tigers. Coaching was a passion he loved dearly. More than anything else, Benny enjoyed spending time with his family. They were his love and his priority.

Benny's success from football didn't come without a price. Throughout his football career he suffered several concussions. The past few years he silently fought a battle he ultimately could not overcome, although he tried with all his might. Benny suffered from chronic migraines, ringing in the ears, blurred vision, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and insomnia that he could not escape. His family witnessed his mental health declining. Despite seeking medical help, Benny took his own life on February 3, 2017. Our family is determined that neither his pain, nor his death will not be in vain. We will fight to shed light on Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy and the effects of multiple concussions on the brain. It is for this reason, the family requests

that, in lieu of flowers, monetary donations be made to the Sports Legacy Institute. Donate online by visiting <https://trusted.bu.edu/s/1759/2-bu/giving> or write checks to: "Trustees of Boston University" with "BU CTE Center" in the memo line, and mail to: Boston University School of Medicine, 72 East Concord ST, L-219, Boston, MA 02118.

Benny had a relationship with Jesus Christ, and because of that we know that we will see him again. We want to encourage everyone to continue his legacy by loving, serving, and caring for others the way he always did. Please join us on Sunday, February 12, 2017, at 5:23 p.m. at Epic Church to celebrate the life of our hero, our number 23!

Tribute Wall

GC

“ I was a friend of Benny's older brother Braxton (in grade school his nickname was "Tony" and when I would visit "Tony" at his home in The Burningtrees area of Decatur his younger brother "Benny" was often a bit of a pest. In my early 20's I was at a disco in Huntsville Alabama and the person I was with pointed to Benny and asked me if it was THE Benny Perrin that played football at Alabama, and I replied that yes it was. I then asked my companion if he would like to go and speak with him to which I replied "I have known him since he was a young child and that me and his older brother had a bit of trouble with him when he was a child. My companion didn't believe me so I walked up to him and said "Benny. How have you been doing?" I wish that I had a photographer there to take a photo of how happy he was to see me again! This was before he started playing football in the NFL. After I got married my wife and I would occasionally eat at his BBQ restaurant in Decatur. The food there was actually quite good. I was saddened to hear that he was dead and the USA lost a good man when he died.

George Cassimus - December 29, 2025 at 09:18 PM

AB

“ Andy And Lisa Bunn lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Andy and Lisa Bunn - March 13, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KC

“ *Kathleen Alred Cox lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Kathleen Alred Cox - February 20, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KC

“ *I became aware of Benny's death last weekend while visiting Decatur. I would like to offer my sincere condolences to Bobbi ,Braxton, Courtney, Debbie, Jesse, Mary Caitlin and Sarah. I pray that Benny is at peace.*



Kathleen Cox - February 20, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ *The Spragues lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



The Spragues - February 14, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ *Matt Ragland Family lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Matt Ragland family - February 10, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ Dear Friends, We are so sorry for your loss and are covering you in prayer as many others are doing. May our Abba Father hold you all in His arms and give you peace.



Don and Yolanda Smith - February 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM

ES

“ A TRADITION AND SPLENDOR was sent on February 8, 2017
Roll Tide Brother. Love JB, Ann & Truett Harris



Expression of Sympathy - February 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MM

“ Michael Rylee, Bryant Rylee, And Michelle Rylee McCrory lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Michael Rylee, Bryant Rylee, And Michelle Rylee McCrory - February 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BW

“ Barry & Donna Whitten lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Barry & Donna Whitten - February 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LJ

“ *Louis and I , are so very sorry for your loss. May God bless you Courtney and your family with his peace and his love.*



Louis & Jan Johnson - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

VB

“ *Courtney, had it not been for you, I may never have met Bennie. A gentleman, to say the least. He was so happy having a new start with you. I was very proud you reached your goals in your schooling as was he. He bragged about you with a beaming heart! You both have a love for each other, family and people. He will continue to watch over you and all of those he cherished. No more pain. Prayers and live yo you and yours.... Vicki Robison*



Victoria Robison (Corner Mail Box) - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

VB

“ *Courtney, had it not been for you, I may never have met Bennie. A gentleman, to say the least. He was so happy having a new start with you. I was very proud you reached your goals in your schooling as was he. He bragged about you with a beaming heart! You both have a love for each other, family and people. He will continue to watch over you and all of those he cherished. No more pain. Prayers and live yo you and yours.... Vicki Robison*



Victoria Robison (Corner Mail Box) - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BF

“ *May his smile live on in those he touched. I lift you up in my prayers for peace, love, strength, and happy memories.*



Big Furr - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CE

“ *Charles And Donna Edmondson lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Charles and Donna Edmondson - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ *Karen and I are very sorry for your loss. Benny was always very kind to us and was a really special person with a big heart. His friendly smile and kind words were always a welcome sight. He will be missed by so many. We pray for comfort for the whole family and may God place his hands on each one of you during this most difficult time. God bless!*



David and Karen Martin - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ *David And Karen Martin lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



David and Karen Martin - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

ES

“ A SPATHIPHYLLUM was sent by Thomas and Shelia Boyd on February 7, 2017



Expression of Sympathy - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RJ

“ May God welcome Bennie into His Kingdom with open arms. My sincere condolences to the entire Perrin family. Bennie and I were in the same recruiting class at Bama. All I know is that Bennie was one of the very best people, in every way, that we had. A doggone good DB too. The very best!



Robbie Jones - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

ES

“ A SPATHIPHYLLUM was ordered on February 7, 2017



Expression of Sympathy - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LJ

“ Louis & Jan Johnson lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Louis & Jan Johnson - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ *Stacey Milam lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Stacey Milam - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ *Thomas And Shelia Boyd lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Thomas and Shelia Boyd - February 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

B1

“ This morning, my Father notified me of the sudden passing of Benny Perrin. I do not know the Perrin family, and have not lived in Decatur full-time since graduating DHS in 1985. Nonetheless, Benny Perrin was a major childhood hero of mine, and I wanted to reflect on this, and express my sincere heartfelt condolences to the Perrin family. Benny is 7 years older than me - as he was tearing up the gridiron, driving the lane, or making incredible plays at shortstop for the Red Raiders (and later playing at Bama), I was pretending to be him as I practiced football, baseball, and basketball as a 4th and 5th grader, and 6th, 7th & 8th grader at Oak Park Middle School. ("Pretending" being the operative word here, as not many people in this world possess his athletic abilities.) My Father took me to many Red Raider sporting events during that period of time, at which Benny was always the focal point, and I missed very few football games. We drove to Scottsboro, Florence, and the Huntsville schools for away games, as well as attending all the home games. I remember the Mountain Brook V. Decatur State Semifinal game at Ogle Field like it was yesterday. I stood at the fence on the old cinder track right at the goal line at the end of the game, when Mountain Brook and Major Ogilvie mounted an incredible goal line stand to hold off a potential game-winning score by the Red Raiders. Benny Perrin was, of course, the star of the game for DHS ... and I wanted to be just like him. Once I hit 8th grade and JV ball, I asked Coach Mose if I could wear #23, Benny's number at Alabama at the time. I thought that perhaps donning the #23 would help make me THAT good! (It didn't!) After Benny's Alabama career was complete, I believe it was the Red Raider booster club that hosted a "Benny Perrin Appreciation Night" in the DHS cafeteria. I was in high school, and a member of the Red Raider football team. Benny had an incredible Senior Bowl game, and there was a projector replaying all his highlights. I ended up meeting him personally, which was a real thrill for me. I remember thinking, at the time, what a genuinely good guy he was - friendly, affable, and outgoing - on top of being a great athlete to look up to as a kid. I want to thank you



for allowing me to post my thoughts and reflections of Benny. Again, my sincere condolences to family and friend of Benny Perrin. Brian Rushing Yardley, Pennsylvania

Brian Rushing - DHS Football & Class of 1985 - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ *Shorty's Boys lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Shorty's Boys - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ *Benny spoke to Shorty's Boys on November 9, 2009. We will always remember his knowledge of life and his love for sports. All will miss him and may God bless his family with good health and a merry heart. The Captain*



Shorty's Boys - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

WB

“ *Wanda Yingling Welch And Bill lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Wanda Yingling Welch and Bill - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

WW

“ *Benny, I worked for you at B.B.'s years back and enjoyed every moment of it for your was a Joy. Meeting you was like I had known you for years long. I met the man I married there working at B.B.'s. I have been away for Alabama for over 8 years but have caught myself thinking back of working for you. Cannot say enough of what a great person in heart and soul you are. You always made a person feel welcomed around yourself and at B.B.'s. Sending my Deepest Sympathy to Courtney, his children and Parents. Lord be with you all at this time of a journey for remembrance,memories. God Bless you all.Love you Benny,Wanda*



Wanda Yingling Welch - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ *Dawn Herren McCulley lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Dawn Herren McCulley - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

ST

“ *Sarita Tapscott lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Sarita Tapscott - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KM

“ Courtney, you and your family are in my prayers.. I am so sorry for your loss.. Benny will be truly missed..



Kelly Jo Portwood Moore - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ The Portwood Family lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



The Portwood family - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Josh And Tara Morrow lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Josh and Tara Morrow - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LM

“ Linda And Randy McLemore lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Linda and Randy McLemore - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JR

“ DEAREST BOBBIE- MAY YOU FIND COMFORT IN KNOWING THAT THERE ARE MANY OF US WHO SHARE IN YOUR SORROW !



Joy Robison - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RS

“ *Robbie Stephenson lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Robbie Stephenson - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RS

“ *Benny and I played baseball together at Decatur High. He was the shortstop to my second base. He was the most natural athlete I've ever seen. I am terribly saddened to hear of Benny's passing. I know this is a very difficult time. My thoughts and prayers are with the family.*



Robbie Stephenson - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MN

“ *Mark And Cindy Nix lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Mark and Cindy Nix - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ *Jerry Holmes lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Jerry Holmes - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ *I did not know Benny very long, or as well as some. But I did know him long enough to call him my friend. I only wish I had known him longer. My condolences to The Perrin family*



Jerry Holmes - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ *The McDowra Family lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



The McDowra family - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ *Rose & Tommy Bawsel lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Rose & Tommy Bawsel - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ *Mr. & Mrs. Randy J. Turner And Family. lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Mr. & Mrs. Randy J. Turner and family. - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MR

“ *Mike And Linda Richards lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Mike and Linda Richards - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JD

“ *Johnny & Patti Dean lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Johnny & Patti Dean - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KP

“ *Karen Chockley CCC Dental Assisting Program lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Karen Chockley CCC Dental Assisting program - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TH

“ *The Hardin's lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



The Hardin's - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MC

“ *Meghan Carroll lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Meghan Carroll - February 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DR

“ *Donna Reeves Robertson lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Donna Reeves Robertson - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SH

“ *The Hudson's are praying for the Perrin's during this most difficult time. Benny and your family have always been good to the Hudson Boys. Benny was like a brother to us and many others. We love him! I bet Coach Bryant has his arm around him. Love to you all.*



Steve Hudson - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ Steve, Cindy And Suzanne Simms lit a candle
in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Steve, Cindy and Suzanne Simms - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LP

“ Linda Putman lit a candle in memory of Jesse
Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Linda Putman - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

AT

“ Bobbie, I am so so sorry. You and the rest of
your family are in my thoughts and prayers for
comfort during this difficult time. Benny will be
forever remembered by my family and me.
Love to you!



Ann Thompson - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MP

“ Megan (Mears) And Alan Parker lit a candle
in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Megan (Mears) and Alan Parker - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ John And Melanie Cook lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



John and Melanie Cook - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RD

“ Robin Dent lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Robin Dent - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ Debbie Mills lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Debbie Mills - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TT

“ Tony, Kathy And Trey Thrasher lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Tony, Kathy and Trey Thrasher - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KS

“ I'm so sorry for the family's loss of Bennie. I met him in 83-84 through a mutual friend and always enjoyed being around him. I also worked with Braxton in advertising at The Decatur Daily when their dad worked in HR there. I hope your good memories and faith will bring you comfort in the days ahead. May God wrap his arms around you and carry you all through this difficult time.



Kim Norwood Samuels - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KS

“ Kim Norwood Samuels lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Kim Norwood Samuels - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ Jay And Marie Laughmiller lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin



Jay and Marie Laughmiller - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ *The Burroughs Family lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



The Burroughs Family - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ *Larry And Sandra Satterfield lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Larry and Sandra Satterfield - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ *Jeffrey, Pam And Megan Smith lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Jeffrey, Pam and Megan Smith - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ *Jim And Mary Ann Brown lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Jim and Mary Ann Brown - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ *Michael, Jan And Jason Holt lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Michael, Jan and Jason Holt - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

AN

“ *Adron Neill lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Adron Neill - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

WH

“ *Wanda And Billy Howell lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Wanda and Billy Howell - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ *Chris And Caroline Sassano lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Chris and Caroline Sassano - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

AW

“ *Andy And Kim Wenzler lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



Andy and Kim Wenzler - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ *The Dunlap Family lit a candle in memory of Jesse Bennett "Benny" Perrin*



The Dunlap Family - February 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM