



William Joseph "Joe" Cunningham Sr.

February 17, 1933 - February 15, 2020

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William Joseph “Joe” Cunningham, Sr - father, husband, and long-time Barber in Searcy left this earth today for his heavenly home. The gates of Heaven opened wide and welcomed home a true lamb of God. He’ll wear many jewels on his crown of glory.

He was known to his friends and customers as Joe, to his children as Pop and Daddy, to the rest of his family as Papaw and to his grandchildren who called him Peep. Joe was the fourth generation in a long line of family barbers and started cutting hair when he was 14 years old. He loved sports as a student as was captain of his high school football team, even calling the plays. Joe was a popular young man who was president of his Junior and Senior high school classes. Joe joined his family in working the coals mines before barber school. He soon married and moved to Searcy with his best friend, Raymond Hill, also a barber, and opened East End Barber Shop in 1958. It is an icon the local business community.

His barber shop was one of the first in Searcy. Having served the community for 60+ years, many families enjoyed having their sons, fathers and grandfathers get a haircut from “Flat Top Joe” or “Five Minute Joe” as he was fondly nicknamed. Joe was delighted when families brought their children to him for their first haircut.

Joe was an avid gardener and loved to share the bounties of his garden – from sweet corn to okra and tomatoes, neighbors and fellow parishioners at Oak Grove Methodist Church enjoyed the fruits of his labors. Joe also enjoyed bird hunting and training bird dogs. He traveled extensively to show his bird dogs in competition. His most beloved dog, Dude, was the inspiration the statuette in his front yard. Joe served as the President of the Bird Hunters Association of America and the Vice President of the White County Rebels Square Dance Club. Joe was an excellent bowler, square dancer, fisherman, hunter, little league baseball and peewee football coach.

Joe was devoted to his family and will be dearly missed by many.

Joe is survived by his son, Wm. Joseph “Joey” Cunningham, Jr. (Grace), daughter Mitzi Cunningham Elliott (Randall), grandchildren Marla Rutherford, Chris Felts (KaChera), Kirsten Cunningham, Megan Cunningham, Jakob Elliott; great grandchildren Taylor

Rutherford, Clint Rutherford, Cole Felts, and Cloe Felts. He is predeceased in death by his parents Charles E. Cunningham and Lois Webb, twice widowed; his wife Sue Cunningham (mother of his children) and second wife Amy Cunningham, his brother Charles Cunningham, Jr., sister Wanda Cunningham Brasher, grandson Justin Joseph Felts, and nephew Jeffrey Brasher.

A celebration of life will be held at Powell Funeral Home in Searcy on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 5pm with visitation on Monday, February 17, 2020 from 5 - 7 pm. In lieu of flowers, donations in his name may be sent to The American Spinal Injury Association (www.asia-spinalinjury.org) or The Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org).

Arrangements entrusted to Powell Funeral Home of Searcy. www.powellfuneralhome.net

Events

FEB **Visitation** 05:00PM - 07:00PM

17

Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services (Searcy)
2602 W. Beebe-Capps Expy, Searcy, AR, US, 72143

FEB **Service** 05:00PM

18

Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services (Searcy)
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Comments



“ An external video has been added.



Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services - February 16 at 10:17 AM



“ For Peep, who loved me with his whole heart, inspired me with his ability to listen, reason, and to never judge. It's true that you and I share no DNA. What we did share, however, was 46 years of respect, loyalty, devotion, and a bond tighter than most can imagine as we became partners in caring for my mother, who was undoubtedly the love of your life. To be honest, as my mother's daughter, I sometimes wondered how in the world you maintained such love and adoration for her. I watched as you modeled for me, Joey, Mitzi, Brad, and Robert and all of our family what it means to be committed, steadfast, brave, and selfless. I've made numerous mistakes in my life but I now have a marriage that I consider extraordinary, a partner who adores me, who is committed, steadfast, loyal, and (nearly) selfless. Every day I thank you for the role you modeled for me, for the qualities in partners who live with intentionality and humor and kindness. Thank you.
If I'm given enough room, I'd like to share a poem that helps me, strengthens me:

Death is nothing at all. It does not count. I have only slipped away into the next room. Nothing has happened. Everything remains exactly as it was. I am I, and you are you, and the old life that we lived so fondly together is untouched, unchanged. Whatever we were to each other, that we are still. Call me by the old familiar name. Speak of me in the easy way in which you always used. Put no difference into your tone. Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laughed as we always laughed at the little jokes that we always enjoyed together. Play, smile, think of me, pray for me. Let my name be ever the household word that it always was. Let it always be spoken without effort, without the ghost of a shadow upon it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was. There is absolute and unbroken continuity. Why should I be out of mind when I am out of sight? I am but waiting for you, for an interval

Holly Chance - February 28 at 02:31 AM



“ ...somewhere very near, just around the corner.
All is well.

(I got cut off before I was finished and I felt like it was very important to continue it to the end.)

Peep...in your life you taught me to be the very best that I could be. You never judged my failures...instead, you showed me the way to clean those failures, mistakes ("blips" as you referred to them) up. I'll never forget those lessons and I'll never stop trying to be exactly the person you saw when you looked at me: much more perfect, more worthy, more brilliant, simply better, than I ever was. It's you who were all of those things. And...this is important: all my recent free time has been devoted to writing about you, and about Mom. I want the lessons and the stories to live on...to be read by all 5 kids, all 12 grandchildren and great grandchildren. And by those babies yet to be born. I don't want to forget anything.

You were loved. You are loved. You will always be loved. Thank you for the countless ways you impacted all of our lives. I avoid using the word "blessing".... but in this case I can't think of anything that fits better.

Holly - February 28 at 02:57 AM



“ A true Christian gentleman, I honor this man who knew the meaning of courage, devotion and faith and lived them out in his life. I served as his pastor years ago, and was blessed by his example of those virtues then and in all the years I knew him. His soft spoken goodness and kindness will not soon be forgotten. May God grant to him eternal peace and rest, and strength to his family in their loss.

Jim Gilliam - February 22 at 01:20 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



John - February 18 at 05:42 PM



“ Love's Journey was purchased for the family of William Joseph "Joe" Cunningham Sr..



February 17 at 03:00 PM



“ I unfortunately never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Cunningham personally, but I will say that I know His precious Mitzi well. If his spirit is anything similar to his wonderful daughters, I know his loving family aches for him. To Mitzi and family, my heart goes out to you all.

With all my love and in my prayers you remain.

-Deidra.

Deidra Dobbs - February 16 at 10:08 PM



“ Joe was an amazing man with a heart of gold. He will be missed by all that knew him. Ferrell and Lisa Davis

Lisa Davis - February 16 at 05:48 PM



“ I had the honor and caring for Joe the last few months and he was truly one of a kind, such a precious gentleman. I will always cherish the memories I have of him. It was such an honor caring for your dad. Love and prayers to you all, love Lisa

Lisa Eddy - February 16 at 04:14 PM



“ My daddy went to Mr. Joe for years to get his haircuts and now goes to his granddaughter. I always loved going into the barbershop with my dad as a kid and getting bubble gum after daddy's haircut was finished! My condolences to the family. Rest high, Mr. Joe!

Andrea Spence McKane - February 16 at 10:24 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of William Joseph "Joe" Cunningham Sr..



February 16 at 12:36 AM



“ Joe was the best Neighbor, friend and Barber anyone could ask for , but I most admired Joe for the way he took care of his wife Amy after she had her accident. You would have to look a long time and probably never find someone that took better care of his wife Amy than Joe.

Bobby Roetzel - February 15 at 09:25 PM



“ My best friend Amy Cunningham was married to Jo. After her accident Jo took such good care of her. He loved her children Holly, Robert and Brad. He loved her grandchildren, Ben, Parker and Ryan. They were the apple of their eyes. They are not mentioned and I know Jo would have wanted them to be.

sheila tharp - February 15 at 08:22 PM



“ One of the best friends to the Crain family that there ever was. We all love Joe and his family, there was never a nicer and kinder man than Joe. Prayers for all the family, we will see him again on that great reunion day. God bless all of this dear family, he will be missed!!

Gary Crain - February 16 at 03:05 AM



“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



John - February 15 at 08:17 PM



“ We will always remember Joe giving Brent Blakely his first haircut. He was a special man and was an amazing husband to Amy and loved by many!!!
Rest In Peace My Friend.
Sue Ekdahl

Sue Ekdahl - February 15 at 07:52 PM



“ Ive known Mr. Cunningham since Mitzi and I were in grade school. He will be remembered as a kind and caring person from all who had the pleasure to know him. My sincere condolences to Mitzi & Joey, and the extended family. Love you Mitzi.

Charlotte Morris - February 15 at 07:02 PM



“ Mitzi....where do I start?
Back in the days when we were on the same Bowling team.
When he cut my hair in the little barber shop there on E. Race St.
I have more memories than there is space to list here.
Just remember that your Dad was a great man, and you abs your entire family are in
my thoughts during this difficult time..

Miles Johnson - February 15 at 03:49 PM



“ So sorry Mitzi but what a wonderful man your dad was. I never heard anything bad
about him. Hold on to your precious memories

Becky Rudesill - February 15 at 03:09 PM



“ Joe was married to my sister, Amy. He was a great husband, father, and friend. The
void his passing leaves is immense, but the memories will last forever. RIP Peep.

Bill Lindsey - February 15 at 01:40 PM