



## John David Black

August 31, 1945 - November 6, 2022

John David “Shorty” Black, 77, of Searcy, Arkansas, passed away on November 6, 2022. David was born August 31, 1945, in Humphrey, Arkansas, to Harry J. and Gertrude O. Black. David is survived by two brothers Harry “Jay” Black (Joy) and Charles “Al” Black (Sharon) of Humphrey, Arkansas, nieces and nephews Joy Lynn Black, Greta Mittman (Michael), Jara Miller (Corey), John Black, Michele Black-Key, Laura Holland (Greg), Charlie Black (Michelle), Bennie Bullock (Vickie), and a host of great-nieces and great-nephews.

David graduated from Stuttgart High School on May 27, 1966. He was recruited by the Arkansas Razorbacks as a kicker, but he declined the football opportunity to pursue his passion for flying. David received his student pilot license in 1964, private pilot license in 1967, commercial pilot license in 1973, rotorcraft pilot license in 1974, floatplane pilot license in 1989, and he had an impressive career as an agricultural pilot. In 1968, David started flying for Grand Prairie Dusters. In 1980, David and his brother Jay started the Sunshine Fly Boys Crop Dusting Service. He later moved to Searcy to fly for the Air Croppers Service.

David was a spirited storyteller who loved engaging everyone in his enthusiastic tales. One was never quite sure if he was telling a tall tale or the truth, as his adventures were always interesting, and as the saying goes,

sometimes the truth is stranger than fiction. Whether his stories actually happened the way he described, or if they were “Shorty’s” version of the truth, you were always entertained and sometimes enlightened.

David was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Edward Black, and his sister Annabelle Bullock. He will be deeply missed by his family and friends.

Funeral services will be conducted on Saturday, November 12, 2022 at 1:00p.m. at the Powell Funeral Home Chapel in Bald Knob. Visitation will precede the service; beginning at 12:00p.m.

Arrangements are entrusted to Powell Funeral Home, Bald Knob - Judsonia.  
[www.powellfuneralhome.net](http://www.powellfuneralhome.net)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 12. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services (Bald Knob)

1272 Highway 367 North

Bald Knob, AR 72010

(501) 724-3201

[baldknob@powellfuneralhome.net](mailto:baldknob@powellfuneralhome.net)

<https://www.powellfuneralhome.net/>

## Funeral Service

NOV 12. 1:00 PM (CT)

Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services (Bald Knob)

1272 Highway 367 North

Bald Knob, AR 72010

(501) 724-3201

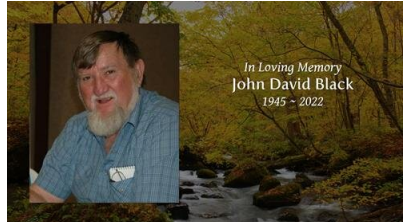
[baldknob@powellfuneralhome.net](mailto:baldknob@powellfuneralhome.net)

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# Tribute Wall



“ Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of John David Black



Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services - November 11, 2022 at 02:40 PM

VP

“ I was sorry to hear about Shorty. I was one of the neighbors who benefited from his friendship and wanted to share my story. It was after we move to the Searcy area and Shorty landed on our air strip to visit. I happened to be home from college and Shorty offered to let me go for a ride in his airplane. I was happy to take him up on the offer and Shorty gave me the ride of my life!! It was a thrilling flight as he would fly straight up then do a nose dive and I felt like I was on an aerial roller coaster. I had a great thrill but my dad meanwhile was watching from the ground while his baby girl was in death defying maneuvers in the air! You are missed, Shorty, but you have truly earned your wings.

Vicki Schroeder Pierce - November 24, 2022 at 08:52 PM

SW

“ I was a class mate in high school with David. Loved by everyone....a gentle giant. On a date with him we spent the evening traveling country roads and talking— many guys would be trying to find a stopping spot or cruising Main Street. David was his own. I always enjoyed time with him. —he was a great fellow. May his family heal and be filled with memories of the best of times.

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**Shelley Derryberry Wasson** - November 13, 2022 at 09:32 AM

BJ

“ Berchie McCollun Jr. sent a virtual gift in memory of John David Black



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**Berchie McCollun Jr.** - November 12, 2022 at 04:25 PM

BJ

“ After talking with my Mom and swapping stories about Shorty, I feel compelled to share a little more, in hopes that it will shed a little more light on just how special a person he was. Shorty was not only a neighbor but a friend to our family. I recall sometimes when the rice field at our house would freeze over, he would bring over a go cart and we would have too much fun sliding around and doing donuts. That was some of my earliest driving experience on ice. In the summertime when the mosquitoes were so bad he would load up some malathion in his plane and make a quick pass over our house as well as several others right as the sun was setting. Shorty sold me my very first car for 800 dollars. A '68 GTO, green and white with the Hurst dual gate shifter and 8 track tape player with a Grand Funk Railroad tape still in it. I loved that car! I can remember him going across our lake on the back of our farm in his crop duster and letting just his wheels skim the water. It made for one awesome rooster tail. When I asked him why he did that he just replied, " My tires were muddy and I just wanted to clean them off before I park my plane for the day." Occasionally he would buzz our house when going back to reload. It would usually be at a time that he figured my mother would be in the kitchen. Shorty would drop down and level off flying directly at the kitchen windows. His plane just feet off the ground and just when she thought he was going to crash into her kitchen he would yank it up and shake the rudder back and forth as if to say "Gotcha". You've never lived until you've witnessed 50 laying hens try to get through the same door all at once. Nothing but feathers and dust and my mother screaming. They wouldn't lay eggs for days. Sometimes he would land on the road out front of our house, taxi into our yard and spin it around and shut down. He would climb out, pull his helmet off and wash his hands outside; then come inside and give mom a big hug and join us for lunch. When finished he would thank mom, put his helmet on, fire his plane up, taxi back out to the road and take off. These are just small examples of his sense of humor, his demeanor and always making himself available when you needed him. He was definitely one of a kind, an icon to me. I will always remember those days fondly and smile. I hope that those closest to him will smile in remembrance on

*this day of sorrow. He left an indelible impression on the six McCollum children that bordered his family's farm. As Shorty would say, "Kick the tires and light the fires, let's go fly something." Rest in Peace.*

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**Berchie McCollun Jr.** - November 12, 2022 at 04:20 PM

LG

“ *So sorry to hear of David's passing. I was born and raised in Stuttgart and went to church with the Black family. What a great place to grow up. We had a great time in our youth group at North Maple Baptist Church. Please know you are in my thoughts today. God Bless, Leta Snider Garrison*

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**Leta Garrison** - November 12, 2022 at 10:55 AM

PM

“ *I loved Shorty Black. I was standing at the kitchen window when I saw this airplane coming . I thought it was going to fly right through my kitchen. But at the last minute it pulled up and flew over the house', You should have seen the chickens trying to get back in the chicken house all at once. They did not lay eggs for a week. Yes, I loved Shorty and he was a hero to all my kids. what an extra special human being. r*

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**Peggy Mccollum.** - November 11, 2022 at 06:21 PM

BJ

“ I have so many vivid memories of Shorty. What a mentor, he was always like a John Wayne to me growing up. Our farm bordered his families' farm and flying service. I can remember when the army worms would hit and all the flying services in the area were booked up. Shorty would always make time for our dad to take care of his infestation problem at the end of an already long day spraying for other farmers. I remember flagging for Shorty when it was so dark that all you see of his plane when he flew over you was that hot blue exhaust flame coming out of the right side of that radial engine. How he navigated the terrain and power lines I will never know. That's not Shorty's version of the truth, that's just the way it was. I was there, I lived it. Many times when his family's farm equipment needed parts he would call my dad and see if I was free to fly down to Mississippi to pick up a tractor or combine part. He would take me along and teach me the basics of flying and would give me a heading and let me fly there and back to pick up some parts on will call. I've seen him run out of runway and be forced to fly under high lines so many times that I can't count. He was always taking on a little more load than he should just to get one more pass across your field. He was a true flying cowboy. I remember when he was going for his rotary certificate and he would practice hitting a big ball back and forth while hovering with his skids as if to be playing pinball. He landed and asked me if I wanted a ride. Of course I said yes. It was the most exhilarating ride that I'd ever taken watching him control that ball with just his skids across that field. Shorty and my father shared a special love for radio control planes. Winter time was always prime time for building the newest thing in model airplanes. If my dad and I weren't down at Shorty's sharing ideas and plans, Shorty would be at our house showing off his latest build. I remember Shorty built an AG-CAT crop duster from scratch without any plans. It was to scale and looked just like the real thing, colors and all. It even had spray booms. I remember flying r/c planes with him in the winter and it would be so cold that you could barely feel the controls on your finger tips. He was truly devoted to the love of flying. Those were the best of times but as a kid I didn't realize how important an influence he would be. Four or five years

*ago my wife, my mother and myself had the opportunity to visit Shorty at his Searcy residence after many years. It was truly one of the best trips I've taken. Shorty was very gracious and inviting. He caught us up on the years gone by and told us what I believe were "Shorty" stories. He showed us a lot of pictures of the early days of flight around Stuttgart. Some had Howard Hughes in them along with J.O. Dockery and many others. It was a memorable visit that I will cherish forever. We had a wonderful visit with him on his mountain top and watched the sun go down and stars come out. I will always remember his cowboy boots, his smile and that chuckle he had. The memories are vivid in my mind and he will always occupy a special place in my childhood heart. May your tanks always be tipped off, wind at your tail and the sun shining bright. No more will you have to worry about how much runway is left or where the heck is the loader truck. Rest in peace old friend. Fly High!!*

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**Berchie McCollum Jr.** - November 11, 2022 at 03:20 PM

JM

“ *John and Paula McCollum purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of John David Black.*



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**John and Paula McCollum** - November 11, 2022 at 10:28 AM

JM

“ Let me tell you about a trick Shorty pulled on me one day. My dad, Berchie Mccollum, and I stopped by Sunshine Fly Boys one afternoon to visit Jay and Shorty, as we were neighbors and friends. My dad and I had been working on farm equipment all day and Shorty noticed my hands were dirty with grease and asked me if I wanted to wash my hands with some good, strong soap, so I said sure. He handed me a container of what looked like white liquid soap, but unbeknownst to me, what looked like liquid soap was actually an additive called " Low Drift" that was used to weigh down liquid chemicals making them settle on your crops and not drifting away in the wind when applied by aircraft. Shorty told me to get a big hand full of it and rub it all over my hands, which I did. Then he turned on the water hose next to us and said "Here, let me wash that off for you". If anyone knows what Low Drift is, they know once you add water to it, it clings to whatever it is touching and is extremely hard to remove. So, here I am, trying to remove what I think is liquid soap from my hands but it will not come off and Shorty, Jay and my dad are having a big laugh at my expense. I always loved Shorty. He was a great guy and I hate to hear that he's gone but I know he's in peace and flying high in the heavens! My condolences, John and Paula McCollum

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**John McCollum** - November 11, 2022 at 10:14 AM