



Robert Black

April 2, 1939 - March 14, 2024

Robert Bates Black (“Bob” to all who knew him) was born April 2, 1939, in Hohenwald, Tennessee to Clyde and Pauline Black and died March 14, 2024, in Dallas, Texas following a long illness.

One of eight children, Bob left his tiny home town in 1957 and enlisted in the Air Force. His 23-year career would take him all over the world as a flight engineer on the military’s first swept-wing cargo jet, the C-141, including many trips crewing the Hanoi Taxi, the C-141 that brought home injured and KIA soldiers and prisoners of war. His squadron often flew the USO’s Bob Hope tour in southeast Asia in the late 60s and early 70s, and he treasured a poster-sized drawing of their plane autographed by everyone on the tour. When the Vietnam conflict ended, he transferred to the test flight squadron at Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins, Georgia, where he was one of the chief flight engineers on the C-141B stretch project with the Air Force and defense contractor Martin Marietta (now Lockheed Martin). Bob loved his years spent in the Air Force and always enjoyed sharing his many stories. He’s also one of the few flight crew members who flew every C-141 that came off the production line.

After retiring as Master Sergeant, Bob began a second career in the office furniture industry, working in sales and management from manufacturing to wholesale to finally owning his own business for almost 30 years in

Pensacola, Florida. Much of his business involved big contract projects for the region's military bases, something he loved because it gave him the opportunity to be around aircraft (and their flight crews) again.

When he wasn't in the air or, later, overseeing a big furniture installation, he was spending time with his family and creating the memories that now carry them through these difficult days without him. He loved the outdoors and took his wife and daughters on countless camping trips over the years, from the high mountains of the Cascade Range to the lakes of northern Georgia and sandy beaches of the Florida panhandle. He loved spending time with his girls, whether it was on some adventure or watching Saturday morning cartoons (something he seemed to enjoy even more than they did) and made sure they knew that. After retirement from the office furniture business, he and his wife Marvalee took advantage of the military's MAC flights to travel often to the Virgin Islands—something he did as much to hang out with the flight crew of the "Hurricane Hunters" in Biloxi that took them there as he did for the getaway itself.

He loved working on cars and often made extra money for his family working on others' cars—he had an engineer's mind and could fix or build just about anything—but his passion projects were restoring old cars and trucks. He restored many classic pickups over the years, but his real pride and joy was the 1964½ Ford Mustang he took from a rusted-out shell to mint condition.

He was active in his church, beloved for his easy sense of humor and willingness to mentor the young men who came to him for advice. He was always conscious of the example he set and approached every situation with thoughtfulness and compassion (he was slow to anger and quick to laugh, and always kind). He was a "second dad" to so many.

He is survived by Marvalee Black, his wife of 61 years, his daughters Robin

and Melissa, and two youngest brothers David and Jon. A burial service with military honors will be held Tuesday, April 9, at 2:30 pm at the DFW National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Air Force Assistance Fund.

Cemetery Details

DFW National Cemetery

2000 Mountain Creek Pkwy
Dallas, TX 75211

Previous Events

Veteran Burial with Military honors

APR 9. 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM (cst)

DFW National Cemetery
2000 Mountain Creek Pkwy,
Dallas, TX 75211

Tribute Wall

JS

“ Well we just found out about Bob’s death. My condolences go to marvelous Marvilee, Robin, and Missy. Bob was a good man and always very encouraging. He seemed to look always at the positive side of things at least when I interacted with him. Even though he was my dad’s friend, it was like he was my friend too. So the world is missing a good man without Bob. My love to you all. Jack Starkel

Jack Starkel - May 30, 2024 at 05:20 PM

FF

“ From Bob and Judy Bates and our Family purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Robert Black.



From Bob and Judy Bates and our Family - April 08, 2024 at 07:34 PM

LP

“ Love, Adam Gross & Amy Polowy planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Black.

Love, Adam Gross & Amy Polowy - April 08, 2024 at 04:10 PM

LP

“ *Love, Adam Gross & Amy Polowy purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Robert Black.*



Love, Adam Gross & Amy Polowy - April 08, 2024 at 04:10 PM