



Darrell Dennis King

November 30, 1954 - May 12, 2026

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Darrell Dennis King passed away Tuesday, May 12th, around 12:56 a.m., leaving behind a family and community who loved him deeply and who will carry his memory forward with gratitude, laughter, and love.

“The most important things are the hardest to say...words shrink things that seemed limitless when they were in your head to no more than living size when they're brought out.” -Stephen King, *The Body*.

As the quote above from Darrell's favorite author states so eloquently, words in this obituary will fail to fully encompass all that Darrell was and did.

Darrell was a man who embraced life fully, loved fiercely, and gave people the gift of being accepted exactly as they were. He was not a perfect man — something he himself would have been quick to admit — but to those who knew and loved him, he was something even better: genuine, compassionate, resilient, and deeply human. Beneath his rough edges was a heart that never stopped caring for others.

For more than seven decades, Darrell was a devoted husband, stepfather,

grandfather, mentor, brother, and friend. He taught those around him countless lessons — how to cook, how to build and create with your hands, how to dance, how to laugh at yourself, and how to keep moving forward even through hardship. He loved reading aloud to his family, beginning with short stories and eventually sharing his favorite Stephen King novels as the children grew older. He and his beloved wife shared adventures on their Harley, embracing life with a rebellious spirit and joy that became part of who they were together.

Darrell held several jobs throughout his early life but was proudest of being a self-employed solar panel installer, a journeyman carpenter, and a construction project manager.

He went on to earn his Bachelor's of Arts in Psychology and English from Missouri Southern State University in 1995 and his Master's of Arts in Psychology from The University of Tulsa in 1997. He then worked as a project director at the Vinita County, OK prison where he ran a substance abuse rehabilitation program.

Darrell was a lifelong Denver Broncos fan and a member of the American Psychological Association. He loved dancing and all genres of music, and enjoyed playing video games, putting together and operating model airplanes, drones, and boats, and also loved painting. His numerous paintings and model airplanes will be keepsakes for family and friends for years to come.

Darrell faced many challenges throughout his life, including a long battle with alcoholism followed by years of chronic pain and declining health. Yet even through those struggles, the people closest to him saw his growth, his sincerity, and the goodness that remained steadfast within him. He believed in giving people second chances and always tried to see the best in others even when he disagreed with them.

Perhaps one of Darrell's greatest gifts was the way he made people feel seen and loved. He supported the uniqueness and individuality of those around him without judgment. When his stepson came out as gay, Darrell responded not with hesitation, but with unconditional acceptance and pride, telling him he admired his courage to live authentically. In doing so, he demonstrated what true love and fatherhood look like. His example shaped the lives of those around him in lasting ways, especially the children and family members who looked to him as a source of strength, humor, and unwavering support.

Those who knew Darrell will remember his smile, his conversations, his stubborn streak, his humor, and the bright side he could always somehow find. They will remember a man who fought hard battles, loved deeply, and left an indelible mark on the people fortunate enough to know him. His family takes comfort in knowing that the energy of his life, love, and spirit continues on in all the lives he touched.

Darrell leaves behind his wife and soulmate, Laura King, his stepsons, Jason Blackford (Jason Hough) and Eric Blackford (Kelly Blackford), his siblings Yvette McClanahan (Robert McClanahan), Gary King, Sandra Boyd (Joe Milot), and Phillip King, his grandchildren Kalynne Boyes (Eric Boyes), Ella Hough-Tucker (Ainsley Smythe), Jaxon Cruz (Nox Cruz), Mia Hough-Tucker, and Olivia Hough-Tucker, numerous nieces and nephews, extended family, and friends who will forever cherish the memories they shared with him.

He is preceded in death by his mother Consuelo Morgan, his father Richard J. King, beloved family and friends, and cherished pets (whom his loved ones like to imagine he is joyfully reunited with now).

In honor of Darrell's love for animals, memorial donations may be made to the

Joplin Humane Society. He will be cremated and his ashes scattered in a place of his choosing. Private family and friends' services will be held at a later date.

Though his passing leaves an immeasurable void, those closest to him take comfort in knowing that he is no longer suffering in pain and is now at peace. His love, lessons, humor, and spirit will remain forever woven into the lives of those he loved.

Arrangements are made with Midland Cremation Society in Joplin, Missouri.

Tribute Wall

JA

“ Jason purchased the *Beautiful in Blue* for the family of Darrell Dennis King.



Jason - 5 hours ago

JA

“ Jason planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Darrell Dennis King.

Jason - 5 hours ago