



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DARRELL L. BELL



Written by AMA staff (01/2017); Formatted by JS (01/2017)

The following was published in the In the Air section of Model Aviation magazine in the February 2017 issue (pages 13-14).

Darrell L. Bell 1968-2016

Darrell Bell, known as “Big D” or “Uncle D,” passed away on October 27, 2016. Darrell was well-known in the RC helicopter and 3-D airplane communities as an announcer and judge at events such as the Extreme Flight Championships [XFC], the International Radio Controlled Helicopter Association Jamboree [IRCHA] and the Electric Tournament of Champions [ETOC]. He also worked for or was a field representative and sponsored pilot for several manufacturers, distributors, and retailers throughout his years of involvement in the hobby.

Darrell was born March 25, 1968, in Magnolia, Arkansas, and moved to Detroit when he was a child. In 1978, his family moved back to Arkansas, where he graduated from the historical Little Rock Central High School and was active in several organizations, including Future Business Leaders of America and Students for Black Culture, as well as the marching band and Spanish Club, among others. He was also listed in Who’s Who Among American High School Students, and a member of Top Teens of America and Jack and Jill of America.

After attending college in Arkansas, Darrell returned to Detroit and was employed with several businesses outside of the hobby, expanding his career opportunities in sales and management with companies such as Car Tunes Mobile Electronics, Bowers Real Estate company; Precision Tune Auto Care, and Detroit Customer Concepts. He also had his own disc jockey business, Reliable Entertainment. Most recently, Darrell was employed by HeliDirect, an online RC helicopter retailer, and Quicken Loans.

Darrell was full of big personality to everyone who knew him, and he enjoyed every minute of being with his hobby family and his RC “nephews.” The last weekend of May, Darrell annually hosted his Mid-America Fun Fly helicopter event on Grosse Ile, near Detroit, and RC helicopter pilots would come from across the country to participate. He had also cohosted the 2014 MegaHuckfest King 50 3-D airplane fun-fly in Monroe, Michigan.

Darrell attended several RC heli and airplane events throughout the Midwest, eastern, and southeastern parts of the country, but he also enjoyed just showing up at the field to fly with his friends.

At Darrell’s passing, word was received and forwarded to others through social media, to the point that his name trended on Facebook. Numerous friends from around the world gave their condolences to his family and offered memories about Darrell. He had a knack for recognizing talent and pushing people to be their best. Many of the memories came back to how “Uncle D”

motivated, inspired, and pumped up his “nephews,” no matter whether they were in competition or seeking advice about life in general.

Darrell is survived by his mother, Mary; sisters, Velda and Lashan; brother, Ryan; godsister, Elsa; daughters, Lalesa and Zhaneen; godson, D’ante; goddaughter, Adaija; special friend, Jeanine; and many friends, nephews, nieces, brothers, and sisters from his church, workplaces, and hobby families near and far.

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AMA History Project
National Model Aviation Museum
5151 E. Memorial Dr.
Muncie IN 47302
(765) 287-1256, ext. 511
historyproject@modelaircraft.org

