



Charles D. Obershaw

August 7, 1926 - May 23, 2019

Charles D. “Chuck” Obershaw
August 7, 1926—May 23, 2019

Chuck died peacefully at his home on Thursday afternoon, while being cared for by his wife, Shelby, and caregiver, Mauricio Castillo.

Chuck was born to Marston (Obie) and Ina Obershaw in Saginaw Michigan. The family lived in several small towns in Michigan and Ohio, as his father sought work during the hard times of the Depression. The Obershaws moved to San Bernardino, in 1942 where his father found work during the War. Chuck attended San Bernardino High School.

When he was 17 he tried to enlist in various military services, but they would not take him as he was too small, barely 5-feet tall and 103 pounds. When he was 18 he was drafted. He said he stretched his body to make himself as tall as he could to make the height requirement. He took his Basic Training at Camp Roberts and was shipped out of San Francisco on a troop ship. He said he wondered if he would ever come back.

He was sent to the Philippines where he took parachute training. Chuck was selected for paratrooper service due to his skills as a crack marksman – a product of shooting skills he developed from the age of 10 when his dad bought him a 22 rifle. He was proud to be in the 11th Airborne. He also trained as a paraglider infantryman with the 187th paraglider infantry. He had his 19th birthday on Okinawa, as he and his comrades prepared for the invasion of Japan in August of 1945. Luckily there was no airborne invasion. He became part of the occupying force, and was stationed in Sendai, Japan. He said the Japanese were afraid of the occupying Americans but soon learned that the American soldiers would do them no harm. The Japanese were starving and the soldiers were sometimes invited to Japanese homes for dinner as long as they brought the food.

After the war, Chuck returned home to San Bernardino, where he attended San Bernardino Valley College where he met his first wife, Patti Durrell. They had five children.

Chuck worked at various jobs including selling advertising for the Sun Telegram newspaper. He eventually found his way into the automobile business, and it was love at first sight. He loved selling cars and he was a natural salesman. He eventually had a used car lot on Baseline, "Chuck's Inexperienced Cars." His love affair with imported cars started when he worked at "Sportscars Limited" in the late 1950s selling MGs, Triumphs, and Austin Healey sports cars. In the early 1960s he went to work at "Le Man's Motors" (Datsun, Peugeot, Jaguar, and Renault) at 1139 N. E Street and that store eventually became Imperial Imports (Toyota). After he bought his partners out it became "Chuck Obershaw Toyota." He always felt that you do what is right, because it is right. It was his motto from the Boy Scouts.

In 1968, he married Shelby Ludwig, a junior high school teacher in San Bernardino. They celebrated their 50th anniversary in September.

Chuck's community involvement included: serving as President of the Chamber of Commerce, President of the Motor Car Dealers Association, President of the Air Force Association at Norton Air Force Base. He received the Norton Chiefs Air Force Award. He received the Sports Illustrated American Imported Automobile Dealer of distinction Award. He was a lifetime member of Rotary. He was a member of Inland Action, Life Member of the 11th Airborne Division of the United States Army.

He is a member of the San Bernardino Valley College Hall of Fame. He was an honorary graduate of San Bernardino High School. He also attended Stanford University Graduate School of Business Executive Program for Small Business Leaders. In 2006 he received an Honorary Doctorate from CSUSB.

In his leisure time he could often be found on the golf course at Arrowhead Country Club. He and Shelby enjoyed golf, downhill and cross country skiing. All the kids learned to ski at Mammoth. He loved to read everything – from newspapers and classic car magazines to the great biographies. He enjoyed learning about new companies and was a very successful stock market investor during his retirement. Chuck and Shelby enjoyed skiing and hiking in Switzerland. Travel was another hobby. They enjoyed driving throughout Western Europe, never knowing where they would end up. Flying from New York to London on the supersonic Concorde in three hours was a particular thrill for someone who loved to move fast. He and Shelby visited China in 1980 shortly after its opening to the West. They saw an endless sea of bicycles, and no cars. Everyone wore Mao suits.

Chuck is survived by Shelby, his wife of 50 years, his sister, Roxanne of Cathedral City,

children, Lynda of Pasadena, Lisa (John)Durham of Redlands, Elizabeth of Buckeye, AZ, and David (Elizabeth) of San Francisco, grandchildren, Amy, Dillon, and Jake.

“I enjoy giving college scholarships to local high school graduates and to Cal State and Valley College students.” His philosophy: “Those who have prospered from the system should put back into the system.” He was thankful for everything the City of San Bernardino had enabled him to achieve, and was particularly interested in advancing educational and economic opportunities for members of our community. Obershaw House, operated through the Community Action Partnership, provides 7 apartments for homeless families transitioning into the workforce. Through the various Obershaw endowments at Cal State University San Bernardino, over 175 students have earned their undergraduate degrees. Through the Obershaw DEN at Cal State, students with food insecurity can get good food. The Obershaws have also funded scholarships for students at San Bernardino Valley College and college scholarships for high school students in San Bernardino. The San Bernardino Symphony is another cause Chuck and Shelby consistently supported.

The Memorial Service Celebrating Chuck’s life will be held on Thursday May 30th. There will be a brief graveside service with military honors held at 11:00A.M. at Mountain View Cemetery, 570 East Highland Avenue, San Bernardino. At 2:00P.M., a Memorial Service will be held at the First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino at 1900 N. D Street, San Bernardino, CA 92405.

In lieu of flowers, the Obershaw Family would appreciate donations in support of CSUSB. Please visit www.csusb.edu/makeagift to make a gift online, or mail gifts to CSUSB, Office of Development, 5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino CA 92407. Chuck and Shelby established a number of funds that you may choose to support in Chuck’s memory:

Charles and Shelby Obershaw Endowment Student Success –
Renaissance Scholarships for Emancipated Foster Youth

Charles and Shelby Obershaw Scholarship Endowment for Business

Charles and Shelby Obershaw Scholarship Endowment for Education

Events

MAY **Graveside Service** 11:00AM - 11:30AM

30

Mt View Cemetery

570 E. Highland Ave, San Bernardino, CA, US, 92404

MAY **Memorial Service** 02:00PM - 03:00PM

30

First Presbyterian Church

1900 N. D Street, San Bernardino, CA, US, 92405

Comments



“ My condolences to Shelby and the entire Obershaw family. Chuck was known to be such a gentleman. He will be greatly missed by his family & the community. God Bless!

Jackie McBay - June 08, 2019 at 03:28 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Charles D. Obershaw.



May 28, 2019 at 01:32 PM



“ What a wonderful cheery guy. Always a smile and a compliment. Such a giving person. Not a lot like Chuck. He will be missed.

Jean Milligan - May 28, 2019 at 09:33 AM



“ From David Quesada
Many memories, but there is one that stands out, after Chuck had remodeled the E street store, us techs had a back parts counter, so when we needed parts we would ring a bell, so one day I was waiting for Joe, had already ring the bell, oh buy the way you only rang the bell once otherwise Joe would come around the corner with darts in hand pissed off and he would actually throw them at us, so I was standing there waiting for Joe and Chuck walks in we have a brief conversion than he asks, has Joe help you and I said no not yet, and Chuck asks well what does it take to get Joe back here and I said you ring that bell, and I told Chuck I already rang the bell and you do not want to ring it again cause he has darts and he will us them, so Chuck just starts hitting that bell, I knew what was coming so I position myself behind this 2x4, Joe comes around that corner dart in hand ready to let who ever was ringing that bell have it, the look on Joe's face was priceless. Chuck was a great man to work for, Kathleen and I are sadden by his passing, our prayers go out to the family

david quesad - May 28, 2019 at 12:36 AM



“ I'm so sorry for the loss of Chuck. I was always supportive of all my events and me as I was recovery from my stroke. Happy was true gentleman and a wonderful leader in the community. May God Bless, Shelby and the rest of his family. I will cherish his memory.

Jim King - May 27, 2019 at 04:21 PM



“ "Not bad for someone who only made it through 8th grade."
- Chuck Obershaw

Love you and miss the heck out of one of the smartest guys I know!

Lynda



Lynda Obershaw - May 26, 2019 at 09:49 PM