



# **Lt. Colonel (Ret.) Joel L. Bunch**

FEB 17, 1935 - FEB 28, 2026



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## **Lt. Colonel (Ret.) Joel L. Bunch**

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**L**t. Colonel (Ret.) Joel L. Bunch passed away Saturday, February 28th, in Fayetteville Arkansas after 91 beloved and beautiful years. Born in Elkins, Arkansas on February 17, 1935 to Joel Ernest Bunch and Edith (Stokenbury) Bunch, he grew up in Elkins where he lived for most of his life and graduated from Elkins High School and the University of Arkansas with a degree in Business.

As a young man, Lt. Col. Bunch was stationed in Budingen Germany in the armored division, where he earned the distinction of Master Tank Gunner. As a result of his superlative aim and expertise with a tank gun and weaponry, he shared this rare designation with very few other soldiers. Joel later became the CEO of the Bank of Elkins, and through his role there he was instrumental in shaping and supporting the future businesses of Northwest Arkansas, as well as the lives of many families. He served as a Presbyterian Elder at the Elkins Community Church, volunteered in many organizations providing generously to those in need, and was instrumental in establishing the Elkins Community Center and library. A lifelong Democrat, he believed in fairness, equality, and voting, and was always up for a courteous political discussion.

He was a man who loved his family, great gin, a good book and bad cats. He never failed to send flowers, tell his wife how beautiful she was or spend time with his daughters. Joel saw the world around him with a kind and enthusiastic eye and could make anyone laugh with his wry wit and unique observations. He taught us all how to find delight in the everyday, add a touch of elegance and wonderment to all occasions, and to maintain an open curiosity about the world.

He is preceded in death by his parents and one brother, John Bunch.

He is survived by his wife, Joyce Bunch, daughters Sarah Bunch of Fayetteville, AR and Rose Bunch, and son-in-law Christopher Wong of Vila Nova de Gaia, Portugal, as well as numerous nieces and nephews, and many, many people who will miss him greatly.



## Obituary

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The family wishes to express their gratitude to Uzi Weir and all the caregivers at Ciel Memory Care for their kindness.

A visitation will be held on Tuesday, March 10th from 2:00 PM until 4:00 PM in the chapel on Moore's Funeral Chapel in Fayetteville.

In lieu of flowers memorial contribution may be made to the Elkins Community Church.

To sign the online guest book please visit [www.bernafuneralhomes.com](http://www.bernafuneralhomes.com)




## Events


**Lt. Colonel (Ret.) Joel L. Bunch**

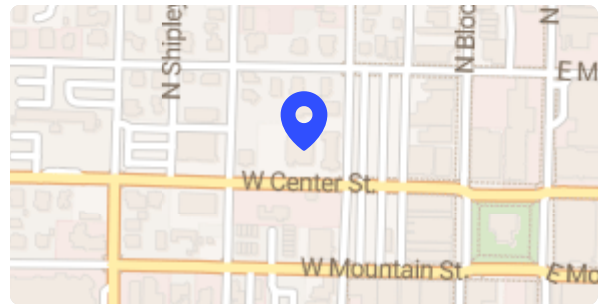
FEB 17, 1935 - FEB 28, 2026

### Visitation

 **Tuesday**, March 10, 2026

 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM CT

 **Moore's Chapel Funeral Home**  
206 West Center St., Fayetteville AR 72701





# Tribute Wall

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**K Albertson** lit a candle in honor of Lt. Colonel (Ret.) Joel.

Dear Joyce, Sarah, Rose, Sarah, and the entire Bunch family, Our thoughts are you this week as you grieve the loss of Joel. We have been nothing but regaled with so many wonderful stories of him over the years. We send our love and condolences during this time and always. Love, Kristen Albertson and the Albertson Family



March 12 at 10:16 AM



**John Fuller Cross** posted:

CSBank 479.253.3000 70 S. Main St. Eureka Springs, Arkansas 72632 sbaker@cs.bank John F. Cross, Chairman March 9, 2026 Dear Bunch family, As you probably know, I have known Joel Lee Bunch ever since I attended the University of Arkansas in 1952. As I recall, when graduation date came, I chose the Infantry school at Ft. Benning, Georgia, and he chose the armored division. He and I both graduated together, with Joel with a degree in business and me with a degree in agriculture. Joel and his wife Joyce were good bankers and worked together very well, he as Chairman and CEO and Joyce as President. Many years ago they sold the bank to Arvest and retired. I also remember that his brother, John served in the State Bank Department. Joel called me once in a while and came over several times to Eureka Springs to eat lunch with me and Sheryl, and we would talk about old times at the U of A and what each of us were doing. I, John Fuller Cross, Sr., have been putting out a Bank of Eureka Springs (now CS Bank) historical calendar each year for 49 years, so if you still have your 2023 bank Calendar, you will find that Joel Nathaniel Bunch (Joel Lee's Great Grandfather) started the Bunch Trading Company on the square in Kingston, Arkansas. Joel Lee and his wife restored the building, and after 141 years, the store was sold in 1921. He will be missed by this banker, who is now in his 71st year of banking, and comes to work every day. As a Christian, I hope to see him again at some time in the future, when God calls me home too. John Fuller Cross, Sr.

March 9 at 2:34 PM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Lt. Colonel (Ret.) Joel.



March 6 at 4:05 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Bunch family.



March 6 at 4:05 PM



## Tribute Wall

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**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Lt. Colonel (Ret.) Joel.



March 4 at 2:16 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Serene Retreat to the Bunch family.



March 4 at 2:16 PM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Lt. Colonel (Ret.) Joel by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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