



## John W. Earnhardt, Jr.

May 13, 1941 - April 25, 2020

On April 25, 2020 John W. Earnhardt, Jr was undoubtedly dancing the Carolina shag as he crossed the finish line — and entered heaven's pearly gates. He was born May 13, 1941 in Salisbury, NC to the late John W. Earnhardt Sr and Helen Cline Earnhardt of Salisbury. John was baptized into the Lutheran Church as a child and continued to faithfully serve the church his entire life.

In his early life, John displayed his love for music by joining the children's choir at age 6. He would continue to sing praises to his Lord in church choirs for another 72 years, until he joined the heavenly choir. At age nine, Johnny got his first job mowing yards. "Johnny" was a busy young boy, involved in Future Farmers of America, 4-H club, and the family farm on which he worked tirelessly. He took great pride in his farming skills, and his "best-laying hens" in Rowan County. As a boy, Johnny's dream was to be the biggest farmer in NC. Along with farming and music, Johnny was very active in Boy Scouts. He earned every merit badge available to him.

He was a member of the Order of the Arrow and received two very distinguished awards - Pro Deo Et Patria (For God and Country) and the Eagle Scout award. The values and principles he learned through scouting helped John to become the southern gentleman and scholar that he was to be. All of these experiences would help him continue to be a dedicated and

disciplined hard worker at everything he did for the next 70 years.

As a student of Granite Quarry high school Johnny participated in the band - and in the chorus. He was co-captain of the football team, president of the Beta Club, and president of the graduating class of 1959- of which he graduated with honors. During his "free time" he drove school buses, sold eggs from his farm, and saved two lives as a lifeguard at Granite Lake.

After high school, John was accepted into the chemical engineering program at NC State College, (before it became NC State University in 1965) While retaining honors status at NC state John was also an active brother in Delta Sigma Phi, sat on the engineer's council, and he worked diligently as the permanent president of the graduating class of 1963. After again graduating with honors, John was immediately recruited to work for Dupont Fibers- where he remained employed for over 33 years. While at Dupont, John was a member of an elite team of chemical engineers that developed and implemented the use of Nomex. This fire-resistant fiber has become the gold standard in military aviation protective wear, is widely used in firefighting protection gear, is used by racecar drivers, and serves various other purposes in other fields around the world. John took great pride in this remarkable fiber he helped to create which continues to save our brave firefighters lives daily and allows them to save untold numbers of civilian lives as well. John ascended the Dupont hierarchy -relocating 8 times - and capped his career with Dupont by leading the globalization of it's Lycra/Spandex business.

After retiring from Dupont, John still had much more to contribute. He went back to school at the University of Delaware and launched Pro Services, his own environmental services company. He was invited to Geneva, Switzerland to develop the International Standards for Environmental Management. His foresight and knowledge, appreciated by numerous international companies, helped him to develop environmental management systems that not only

improved health, but safety, quality, and also benefited our environment.

As a proud alumnus of NC State John remained active by serving on the Alumni Advisory Board, and hosting several reunions. In 2019 John received one of the Universities highest honors: the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering Distinguished Alumni Award.

In retirement, John continued to stay incredibly active. In addition to the annual fishing trip with the Earnhardt family to the Outer Banks, shag conventions at least twice a year, dancing twice a week, and singing twice a week he also sustained his family legacy of servitude and generosity at St Mark's Lutheran Church in Mooresville, NC, where he was not only a faithful member but an impeccable bass in the church choir. After all John brought 45 years of barbershop harmony, practice, competition, talent, and performance along with him! John thoroughly relished barbershop music with the S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. since 1972. His booming and vibrant bass voice was not only in nine competition quartets, but also countless informal quartets and choruses. In almost 48 years involved in the Barbershop society John won many accolades and awards, continuing his legacy by receiving 17 Man of Note awards, one for each man he sponsored to join the society. His passion for music was not only confined to barbershop and choir singing, but as an especially proud and active member of the Central Lake Norman Golden Boys, he participated in a local band of Golden Boys brothers, the GeeBee's.

If he wasn't singing, John earnestly enjoyed dancing. Although he was an all-around great dancer, his favorite dance by far was the east coast shag, learning it from a girl on the beach when he was only fourteen. He was very talented; he helped teach lessons and always had a full dance card. He was an active member of both Twisters shag club and the Charlotte shag club.

And then there is the 4th generation Earnhardt Brown Turkey Fig farm that John established around 2009. His fig tree maintenance and germination — as well as harvesting and preparing, even dehydrating of his figs brought John Earnhardt, Jr literally back to his roots. Every fig bush he sold, planted, donated or raised stemmed from his Great, Great Grandfather, Wylie Samuel Earnhardt's fig tree.

When John became aware of his illness, he spent his days focused on making music, dancing, family, and philanthropy. Before his passing, John diligently worked to establish, and pre-fund, a scholarship endowment fund at NC State so that a talented young student was helped with their education for the spring 2020 semester, and the fund will continue as a memorial in his name.

John adored being a brother to his five siblings; Yvonne Gullet of Salisbury, Kent Earnhardt of Chapel Hill, Carol Rosenbaum of Clemmons, Mark Earnhardt of Smith Mountain Lake, VA, and Sarah Edwards of Fayetteville.

John was also an extremely proud father of his three girls, Melany Kay Earnhardt of Efland, Christina Marie Jones of Wilmington, DE, and Angela Earnhardt Metzger of Mooresville. He considered himself so blessed to be "Pop Pop" to two wonderful grandsons, Samuel John Hedrick of Statesville and Jonathan Lucas Jones of Wilmington, DE.

John was preceded in death by his parents, and his only granddaughter, Stephanie "The Champ" Hedrick.

John's daughters will host a celebration of their father's exceptional life on Sunday, September 27, 2020. The drive-in service will be held at 2:00pm at Victory Lanes, 125 Morlake Dr, Mooresville, NC. Parking will be available beginning at 1:30pm and the service will begin at 2pm. All social distancing protocol's will be in place for the service. The family asks that you RSVP if you

plan to attend no later than September 24th by email to [angiemetzger117@gmail.com](mailto:angiemetzger117@gmail.com).

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the John W. Earnhardt scholarship endowment fund of N.C. State University. This can be done by contacting them at [russ\\_odell@ncsu.edu](mailto:russ_odell@ncsu.edu).

Cavin-Cook Funeral Home & Crematory, Mooresville, is serving the Earnhardt family. Condolences may be made to the family at [www.cavin-cook.com](http://www.cavin-cook.com).

# Previous Events

## Service

SEP **20**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Cavin-Cook Funeral Home & Crematory  
494 East Plaza Drive (PO Box 977)  
 Mooresville, NC 28115

## Celebration

SEP **20** (ET)

Cavin-Cook Funeral Home & Crematory  
494 East Plaza Drive (PO Box 977)  
 Mooresville, NC 28115

# Tribute Wall



“ *John W. Earnhardt, Jr.*

February 14, 2021 at 11:24 AM



“ *John W. Earnhardt, Jr.*

February 14, 2021 at 11:04 AM



“ *John W. Earnhardt, Jr.*

February 14, 2021 at 11:03 AM



“ *I loved John. He always said it was the singing and dancing that kept him alive and extended his life. He enjoyed going to Lynn's when I took him and to SOS, too. He was such a good man. Heaven is a better place with him there.*

**Dave Rodgers** - May 08, 2020 at 05:23 PM



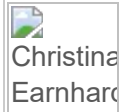
*Agree*

**cmacmillan** - May 08, 2020 at 05:37 PM



*He was just the best brother. My heart hurts.*

**Sarah E.** - May 08, 2020 at 07:48 PM



Christina  
Earnhardt

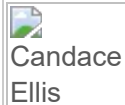
*Dave you were such a wonderful friend to him! Thank you for coming from South Carolina every week to pick Daddy up to dance. IT and YOU meant the world to him. Thank you for being one of those people that made a difference, saw a solution and need, and had a desire to be a great friend. I love you Dave!!! 💕*

**Christina Earnhardt Jones** - May 12, 2020 at 09:40 AM

KA

*“ You've had so much loss Angie and we're so sorry. You have more to go to Heaven for! Hugs and prayers to you girl!*

**Kathy Alexander** - May 08, 2020 at 03:53 PM



Candace  
Ellis

*“ I danced with John and we always did the "John Boy" move. I would kid him about how strong his arm muscles were. A great guy that will be missed. Candy*

**Candace Ellis** - May 08, 2020 at 03:36 PM

JB

*He was another brother to me. We grew up together and never lost out dedication and love of each other. I'll never forget his moto, "I'm going to live till I die". Our next fishing trip to Cape Hattaras will be dedicated to him. RIP brother. I love you always, John Bernhardt*

**John Bernhardt** - May 09, 2020 at 09:55 AM

JW

*My husband Larry and I met John at Lynn 's Dance Club many years ago and we have all been "regulars" who enjoyed the shag dance and the many friendships forged on that dance floor. John amazed us with his positive attitude throughout his illness and told us many times he was going to live 'til he died. We are happy he got his wish! Our sympathy goes out to his family and all those who loved him. We know John is finding "Peace in the Valley." Janice Walker*

**Janice Walker** - May 09, 2020 at 01:06 PM



Christina  
Earnhardt

*Amen!* 🌸

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**Christina Earnhardt Jones** - May 15, 2020 at 01:02 PM