



Thomas "Tom" Lee Bennett

March 8, 1950 - August 8, 2024

Thomas "Tom" Lee Bennett, 74, of Cary, NC, shuffled off this mortal coil on August 8, 2024, after a brief but valiant battle with cancer, at home with his family nearby. Born on March 8, 1950, in Oakland, California, Tom was the son of Loring "Bud" and Virginia Bennett (née Vlasnik), who gave him both a sharp mind and an even sharper sense of humor, which he carried with him all the days of his life. Though he traveled a lot as a child and lived in many places due to his father's job as an accountant with Shell Oil, he was a multi-generation California native and followed the Bennett tradition of graduating from U.C. Berkeley in 1972.

Tom is survived by his wife Linda; children Joe Bennett (Becca) and Meagan Bennett; grandchildren George, Charlie, and Emma Bennett; sister Lori Strickland (Bob); brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law Keith and Laurie Trammel, Chuck and Carol Hindes, and Janet Hindes; and nieces and nephews Molly, Mayra, Katie, Craig, Catie, Lisa, Billy, Julie, Sam, Maggie, and Sean. He was preceded in death by his parents, Bud and Virginia Bennett, his sister and brother-in-law Kate and Tom Loughran, and brother-in-law Bud Hindes.

Tom was a man of stories, mostly his own, and mostly from his years as a federal game warden and undercover agent with U.S. Fish & Wildlife, a job he loved to work, and a job he loved to talk about. He started that job in 1977, following in his grandfather's footsteps, but made it his own, spinning yarns about his days in the field—yarns that were always entertaining, if not entirely verifiable. If you ever found yourself next to him with a cigar in one hand and a

glass of whiskey in the other, you knew you were in for a story, and the truth was optional.

But Tom was more than just a storyteller; he was a fighter. A man with a powerful sense of justice, Tom stood up for the people and causes he believed in, never backing down when it came to doing what he felt was right. Whether it was protecting wildlife in his role as a game warden, standing up for the local equestrian community through his work with the North Carolina Horse Council, or having to be physically restrained from getting into a fight with the opposing team's coach during his (first-grade) son's baseball game when he felt unfair tactics were being used, Tom's commitment was unwavering. He fought with everything he had, driven by a deep sense of fairness, one small (or large) battle at a time.

He married Linda Hindes Bennett, the one true love of his life, in 1978, and together they spent over 45 years navigating the ups and downs of life, always finding their way back to each other at the end of the day. They raised two children, Joe and Meagan, who grew up knowing their father as a man of loyalty, love, and sarcasm.

Tom's heart swelled in ways he never expected when his grandchildren, Charlie, George, and Emma, came into his life. Following his grandfather, Joe Vlasnik, once again, he took the proudest title he would ever wear and became 'Boppa'. He embraced the role with a full heart, finding unprecedented joy and purpose in every moment he spent with them. He adored them so completely that the rest of the family wondered if they were looking at the same man—a man who, up until then, had been a bit more rough around the edges.

Tom was a man of the land, too. He owned and operated Chapel Ridge Farm in Apex, NC, with his wife Linda, for 36 years. A place where he was head of stall cleaning and horse transporter extraordinaire, positions he held with honor. Tom didn't have a natural affinity for horses, but he did have one for his wife and daughter, and so he threw himself into the farm life with the same commitment he gave to all the things he loved, selflessly sacrificing countless

hours so that the people he loved could live out their passions. He was also a fixture on the North Carolina Horse Council, where his presence was as solid as his handshake.

He had a dry sense of humor that could leave you wondering if he was serious or pulling your leg, and more often than not, it was the latter. Though family relationships had their complexities, Tom held onto them in his own way, valuing the connections he maintained throughout his life.

Tom lived a good life, the kind that doesn't make headlines but leaves a lasting mark on the hearts of those who knew him. He was fiercely loyal, especially to his close friends and family, and his memory will linger in the stories that will be told about him for years to come.

A Celebration of Life for Tom Bennett will be held on Saturday, September 14, at Morris Peaceland Farm, located at 4200 Graham Newton Rd, Raleigh, NC 27606. The ceremony will commence at 3:00 PM. Family and friends are warmly invited to attend.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation to Transitions LifeCare (<http://www.transitionslifecare.org/donate/>), a place where Tom's spirit will continue to do good in the world.

Tom Bennett may be gone, but his stories, his fighting spirit, and his sense of justice will live on, a reminder that a good life is made up of small moments, well-lived, well-laughed, and well-loved.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

SEP **14.** 3:00 PM (ET)

Morris Peaceland Farm
4200 Graham Newton Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27606

Tribute Wall



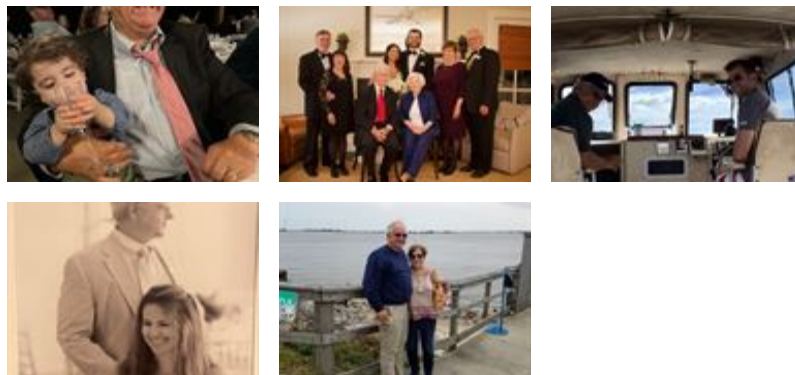
“ Wake Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Thomas "Tom" Lee Bennett



Wake Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc. - September 05, 2024 at 06:02 PM



“ 184 files added to the album LifeTributes



Wake Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc. - September 09, 2024 at 10:32 AM



“ 0 file added to the tribute wall

Wake Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc. - September 05, 2024 at 01:47 PM

MB

“ Tom was a great game ward. He worked with me in Moore county. He was such a nice guy to be around. He loved being a game warden. He was a great friend never forget working bait with him and the pileated woodpecker cases. He was sharp

Mark Bruton - August 27, 2024 at 07:52 AM

DW

“ Our loving thoughts and sympathy to Linda and Joe and Meagan at this most difficult time. We'll miss Tom as not only our cousin but more importantly as our dear friend. We're thankful for our time together especially the closeness that we have had for the last several years. Our love, Diane and Mike ❤️🌹

Diane Wakeski - August 13, 2024 at 08:24 AM