



## Donald Gene Thomas

September 12, 1941 - March 9, 2017

Services honoring the life of Donald Gene Thomas have been scheduled for 1:00 PM, Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at First Baptist Church in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. Interment will follow at Memorial Park Cemetery in Tulsa under the direction of Hayhurst Funeral Home.

The ever-loving and always faithful Donald Gene Thomas left the struggles of this world on March 9th, 2017 at 4:55am. A well-rounded life of grace and example followed a legacy of love and integrity, to reveal a beautiful man whom truly bore a humbled heart. Modest and devoid of pridefulness, he lived as one of the few fortunate enough to gain the gratitude necessary to seek out perfection in the details that make life worth living.

A faithful and dutiful son to Chester and Mildred, and loving brother to Jerry, Don made his family proud with his passions for everything family and baseball. Ultimately, how he cared for each heart through the curveballs life threw their way from the time his little brother Jerry had to be placed in care, to the time of each one of their dear passings. A member of the BA Baptist Community since 1948, Donald loved the example of Jesus Christ and accepted him as his savior at age 12.

A beloved graduate of the 1959 Class of Broken Arrow High, Don was a popular friend and known for his teamwork in both band and football. As a young man, Don served in the U.S. Navy during peacetime from 1960-1962,

allowing him a chance to fuel his curious sense of adventure and travel the world while serving his country. He also contributed his musical talents from his high school band days to the Navy Band with his saxophone in tow. He was ever faithful and continuously connected to his parents during his travels to Italy, South America and beyond by postcard, often with a sweet greeting of "Dear Folks,"...

Upon return to life in Oklahoma, Don took a few semesters at local colleges studying Business Administration and Finance, to assist in his desire to become an entrepreneur. During those times, many would not consider the path of a "peach farmer" entrepreneurial, but Don embraced the sometimes oppressive growing conditions and often had a flourishing crop of Glow Havens, which ultimately won him a few awards...namely, the Porter Peach Festival 1975 Grand Reserve. To round out his often stressful and seasonal gains of peach loving, Don began using those "number skills" to begin investing and learning the stock market. Passionate to the end of his days on the daily outcome of the DOW and making his dollar work, his enthusiasm was contagious through sharing small lessons in financial security with many grateful friends and family.

In his 40s, Don had a wild stroke of luck and love from which to build upon when he met his Donna Lorraine. His sweet spirit was guided by the divine knowing that work, love and play were the equation of happiness in life...and meeting Donna, his life's true love, meant all his passions would collide and breed further meaning.

A boating enthusiast, and self-proclaimed "boataholic", Don was always happiest sharing time and fun with friends at Grand Lake and Fort Gibson. Whether it be romantic sunset rides on the Cruisin Dude with his girl or creating fun out of a giant piece of styrofoam for kids to try their balance, he LOVED creating opportunities for memories that last.

Upon marrying Donna in 1991, he took on his biggest challenge as stepfather to Donna's girls, Andrea and Aimee. He never took his title as "Pops" lightly. He was stern when believed he was passing wisdom through experience, and always made sure they knew that they mattered, at times by surprising them with friends at the lake he had secretly corralled or delivering a gifted car. He delighted in the joy of his girls.

Of course fatherhood led to being a grandfather, which is another role wherein Howdy gained medals. With boating memories, tree climbing, simple walks to the creek, and wondrous Christmas mornings, Howdy shined in his role with a heart of gold. He was the kind of grandpa that legends are made of, and he was just being himself.

To make a full life more full, Don was also an avid St. Louis Cardinals fan as well as a savvy, ahead of his time, naturalist. From the many dogs that found their way to his empathetic heart, to his tree farm which created more oxygen for the planet, to the amount of power which was saved when he would turn off the Cards (when they weren't winning); Donald Gene Thomas was more than a simple man, he was a Godly man in tune with nature.

He is survived by his loving wife Donna Lorraine Thomas, daughters; Andrea Loran Upton, and Scott Adams and Aimee Tietze Adams, grandchildren; Ian and Jessica Upton, Kyler and Tess Hartsell, Elijah Upton, Harrison "Dane" Adams, Madeline Anne Leitch. Don leaves behind his close buddies Jerry, Jerry, Bill and Kyle and many loved friends he knows he will see on the other side and they will be forever "on the boat again".

# Cemetery Details

## Memorial Park Cemetery

5111 S. Memorial Dr.  
Tulsa, OK 74145  
(918) 627-0220  
<http://memorialparktulsa.com>

# Previous Events

## Viewing

**MAR 13.** 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM (CT)

Hayhurst Funeral Home  
1660 South Elm Place  
Broken Arrow, OK 74012  
(918) 258-9623  
[hayhurstfuneralhome@gmail.com](mailto:hayhurstfuneralhome@gmail.com)

## Visitation

**MAR 13.** 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Hayhurst Funeral Home  
1660 South Elm Place  
Broken Arrow, OK 74012  
(918) 258-9623  
[hayhurstfuneralhome@gmail.com](mailto:hayhurstfuneralhome@gmail.com)

## Funeral Service

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MAR **14**. 1:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church of Broken Arrow  
100 W. Albany  
Broken Arrow, OK 74012  
(918) 258-4575  
<http://fbcba.org>

# Tribute Wall



“ Donald Gene Thomas

October 23, 2023 at 01:21 AM



“ I just recently learned of Don's passing, since it had been a very long time since I had talked with him. Don became my best friend after we met him in the singles class at Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa. We shared an apartment at 51st and Harvard for a year in 1976/1977 while I was working at Seismograph Service Corp. at 61st and Sheridan. I moved to Stillwater in 1977 to work for OSU and get married. Don was my best man. My greatest joy with Don was boating and skiing on Ft. Gibson Lake and working for him at the Thomas Orchard with the only pay being a breakfast of peaches and ice cream prepared by his mother. After crating peaches each morning I would deliver to grocery stores in the Tulsa/Broken Arrow area. I will always remember him pointing his finger at me when in had something important to say to me. I loved Don tremendously.

Richard W. Hawkins - March 22, 2022 at 02:54 PM



One time Don asked me if I wanted to go bowling with him, and I said sure. He then said, "You got any money?"

Richard W. Hawkins - March 22, 2022 at 02:56 PM

BD

“ This message is to Donna Thomas, and wanting her to know, Pat and, Bill Denton was, at Dons going home celebration today and we are praying for you Ms Donna for peace and comfort that only comes from our LORD.

We love you Donna

Pat and Bill Denton

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**Bill and, Pat Denton** - March 14, 2017 at 05:53 PM



“ He was my dad's best friend and one of the reasons I am here today, because he introduced my parents Jerry and Charlene Teague. Don didn't have kids so he always made me and my brother feel like one of his own. He would take us on boat rides and make sure we always had a great time. He was a big part of my life and he will be greatly missed.



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**Michael Teague** - March 14, 2017 at 10:50 AM

SJ

Don gave Bill and I so much laughter and fun from the moment we met him at First Baptist Church Broken Arrow. He loved coming to our home for big fish fries. And on our big church bus trips he kept us so entertained. We will miss him. But know he would not want to come back. He is sitting at the feet of our Lord. Where he spent his whole life getting ready to journey there. See you later Don .

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**sharon Johnson** - March 14, 2017 at 04:57 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Hayhurst Funeral Home** - March 14, 2017 at 09:59 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of *Donald Gene Thomas*.



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March 13, 2017 at 01:53 PM



“ *Our memories of Don Thomas, include a warm, slow smile from a giant of a gentle and Godly Christian man. Grady and Frankie Brewer*

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**Grady Brewer** - March 13, 2017 at 09:16 AM

MP

“ *Heaven is much sweeter today, but our hearts are heavy. The Broken Arrow Class of 1959 has lost a very dear friend.*

*Elmer so enjoyed playing baseball with Donnie, and we loved hearing him reminisce about those memories of what most of us recall as growing up in the 50s.*

*Donna and family, we have you close in prayer and thought. ❤️*

*Elmer and Marcella*

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**Marcella Pense** - March 09, 2017 at 10:50 AM

SS

*Have known Donnie since he, Jerry, and my brother, Freddie played baseball on the team Donnie's dad coached in the 50s. Donnie was always a slow talking, slow moving, witty, smiling kind of guy.....and he never changed. Don't know of a person he was ever unkind to which may be why everyone liked him so much. He was just a good guy and will be missed by all who knew him.*

*Prayers of comfort and peace for Donna and the family during this sad time in their lives.*

*You have many friends who will be thinking and praying for you. God bless you.*

*Jerry & Shirley*

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**Shirley Showman** - March 10, 2017 at 08:30 PM

HH

“ *It is our honor and privilege to serve the Thomas family and to provide this permanent memorial website in memory of Donald Thomas.*



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**Hayhurst Funeral Home** - March 09, 2017 at 08:31 AM