



Thomas G Tuxill

August 9, 1941 - November 3, 2021

Thomas G. Tuxill, MD, passed away on November 3, 2021 in Bellingham, Washington in the presence of his wife Sue, his son John and daughter Stephanie. Tom fought an intermittent battle with lymphoma over the past 24 years. He was diagnosed with lymphoma of the brain in September.

In spite of his condition he led a very full life. Tom is remembered as a generous and loving son, brother, husband, father, uncle, grandfather, colleague, and friend. As an eye surgeon he gave many patients the gift of sight. He was a committed nature conservationist and defender of end-of-life choices. He and his wife Sue pursued numerous fishing and flying adventures in North and South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean, oftentimes reaching their destination in their plane.

Born in 1941 in Syracuse, New York, to F. Wesley and Agnes Tuxill, Tom was the third of four boys. He spent his childhood years in Geneva, New York, before moving to Akron, Ohio, and graduating from Springfield High School. Tom received varsity letters in football and track and field, sang in the school choir, and enjoyed hunting and fishing. At Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio, Tom majored in chemistry. He co-captained the football team his senior year and set a school record in the shot put. He shared science classes with Jacquelyn Lenox; they dated for two years and married in 1963, the weekend after graduation.

At an early age Tom resolved to become a medical doctor. He received his M.D. from the University of Rochester (New York) in 1967. Tom entered the U.S. Navy and in 1968 completed a rotating internship at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland. He then served as a naval flight surgeon, training in Pensacola, Florida, before being assigned to Kodiak, Alaska. During these Navy years, his son and daughter were born. In Kodiak, Tom enjoyed bountiful opportunities for hiking, hunting, and fishing, and fulfilled a longtime goal of getting his private pilot's license. He retired as a Lieutenant Commander in December 1971.

Following his Navy service, Tom returned to the University of Rochester to complete a residency in ophthalmology at Strong Memorial Hospital. In 1975 he moved his family back to Alaska to join a general eye clinic in Anchorage, but soon decided to pursue a subspecialty in medical disorders of the retina. In 1976 the family resettled in Hopkinton, New Hampshire. Tom established a private practice in Concord and served on the staff at Concord Hospital. He was the first ophthalmologist in New Hampshire to offer laser eye therapy to treat retinal vascular disorders. Tom was particularly interested in cataract surgery as well as treating eye disease caused by diabetes. Outside of work and family, he sang in the Concord Coachmen barbershop chorus and coached track and field at Hopkinton High School.

After his first marriage ended in divorce, Tom reconnected with his high school sweetheart, nurse practitioner Sue Slevin, and they married in 1986. Sue became Tom's partner in adventure, trading her New York City condo for a Lake Amphibian airplane and putting in hours of work to get her pilot's license.

Upon retirement from his ophthalmology practice in 1998, Tom renewed his passion for flying and fishing. He and Sue moved to Eagle Lake, Florida, where they found a welcoming community of fellow seaplane enthusiasts.

Together with friends they attended fly-ins and organized long-distance trips as far afield as Alaska, Ontario, Arctic Canada, Mexico, the southwest US, and the Caribbean. Tom also delighted in catching fish with family and friends in many different locales, including Montana, Alaska's Bristol Bay, Patagonia, Quebec, Labrador, and New York's Finger Lakes.

In 2013, Tom and Sue relocated to Bellingham, Washington, in order to be closer to their two grandchildren. They continued outdoor activities and philanthropic pursuits. For the last ten years Tom served as a volunteer advisor and board member for the Final Exit Network. He was also a lifetime member of Trout Unlimited; a founding member of The National Air and Space Society and The American Air Museum in Britain; a volunteer pilot for Northern Wings and LightHawk; and a longtime supporter of Environmental Defense Fund, Seaplane Pilots Association, The Nature Conservancy – Adirondack Chapter, and Planned Parenthood.

Tom was predeceased by his oldest brother, Robert Tuxill, and nephew, James Tuxill. Tom is survived by his wife of 35 years, Sue S. Tuxill; daughter Stephanie Tuxill, of Lincoln, VT; son John Tuxill, his wife Julie Dugger, and grandsons Callum McAllister and Xavier Tuxill, of Bellingham, WA; brother Richard Tuxill and his wife Monta Faye, of Auburn, NY; brother Bruce Tuxill and his wife Keren, of Penn Yan, NY; sister-in-law Margene Tuxill, of Geneva, NY; former wife Jacquelyn Tuxill, of Lincoln, VT; and many beloved nieces, nephews, and cousins.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Whatcom Hospice Foundation and End of Life Washington. Tom's family greatly appreciates the staff of these organizations for their compassionate support and care.

Memorial donations may also be made to The Nature Conservancy –

Adirondack Chapter, 8 Nature Way, Keene Valley, NY 12943.

Tribute Wall

DL

“ Our memories of Tom bring smiles, sadness and joy. Tom will be remembered by George as “Captain” . Oh how the two of them enjoyed flying together whether the trips were local around Winter Haven or in the Bahamas. They always came back with smiles and stories. Then there were the many invitations to gather in the warmth of your home for the Sunday football games and feasts. These and other memories will never be forgotten. We are fortunate to call Tom. True friend and gentle man! Take comfort in the cherished memories the two of you created as a couple. We will miss Tom.

Donna & George Louth - December 02, 2021 at 12:00 AM

KM

“ What a wonderful man! Doctor Thomas Tuxill and I go back some 40+ years. He saved my eyesight by performing many laser treatments on both eyes, while I was a senior at Hopkinton High School. I found him to be very caring and full of compassion and helped me get through a very difficult time in my life. in which I will always be forever grateful. His reassuring smile always made me feel better. R.I.P. Doc, my friend and THANKS!! With deepest sympathy to the family.

Kathy (Lima) Metz - November 21, 2021 at 12:00 AM

BW

“ We send our deepest sympathies to the Tuxill family. We remember Tom fondly from his days as an Ophthalmology resident at the U or R and his relationship with our company, Waldert Opticians, We are so sorry we missed reconnecting with him when we moved to New Hampshire.in 2012. We moved here for the same reason Sue and Tom moved to Washington, to be near our grandchildren. Family is everything.

Bill & Judie Waldert - November 20, 2021 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ Sue –
The first time I met you was at a Mace Club reunion at my home. While the Muskie grads were all reminiscing about “those good old college days” the rest of us, primarily you and me, were getting acquainted. You were on your way to WA and it seemed so exciting to me and your seemed enthused about it. It truly was going to be a sea change. My husband loved your Tom. He spoke of him being his “tackle” and his “co-captain” and his “track teammate.” When your Tom called my husband to share with him and his condition and essentially to say goodbye, my husband wept. I know their friendship enriched my husband ‘s life.
We made a donation to this organization as it seemed to best reflect your husband’s thoughts during his last conversation with my husband.

Mikki & Tom Bixler

Tom & Melissa Bixler - November 18, 2021 at 12:00 AM