



Thomas E Franklin, D.O. (Colonel Ret. USAF)

JUL 16, 1953 - MAY 2, 2023



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Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Tribute Wall	Page 6



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Thomas Franklin, D.O. (Colonel Ret. USAF) Obituary

Services to honor and celebrate the life of Dr. Col. Thomas E. Franklin will be held at 2:00 pm Thursday, May 11, 2023, at Cornerstone Fellowship, 718 Pendelton St., Tahlequah, OK 74464.

Thomas Earl Franklin was born July 16, 1953 in Loxley, Alabama (Baldwin County). He began his life in a manner common to many in rural communities: he fished every weekend (Gulf of Mexico) with his father and favorite older brother, Artie and lived a life of relative simplicity, where elementary and high school friendships were solid. His parents, Rufus and Mary Franklin, instilled in their children a strong desire to succeed in all of their undertakings. They preached to each of their twelve children, "Dream big and work hard. You can do anything you set your mind to." Thomas' parents, now deceased, remained incredible influences throughout his life. Love, compassion, respect, and unconditional positive regard for others were ubiquitous in his home and surrounding communities.

Thomas is a graduate of Robertsdale High School in Robertsdale, AL, but his formative years were spent at Loxley Elementary and Baldwin County Training School. The last time Robertsdale High went to the state high school football championship, Thomas was on the team as an Exceptional Wide Receiver. Within days of graduating from high school, Thomas enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. After completing basic training, he was stationed at Badger Air Force Base (Bangor, Maine) and it was there he started college (night school). Thomas was later transferred to Torrejon Air Base in Spain, where he served as a cryptographic and telecommunications specialist, while playing football (Stand-Out Wide Receiver) for the U.S. Air Force. After his stint in Spain, Thomas was transferred to Tinker AFB in Oklahoma where he served the Air Force in telecommunications until his initial discharge. After briefly leaving active duty, Thomas remained



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in the Air Reserve while attending college and working as a medical records clerk at the VA. He was later employed as an ophthalmology and ENT technician. Thomas received his first commission shortly thereafter as a Chief Naval Warrant officer.

While working full time, Thomas relentlessly pursued his education, and those educational efforts paid off just as his parents envisioned. Thomas received a Bachelor of Science degree from Rose State College, OKC, with the intention of teaching high school science and coaching football. However, encouraged by a colleague to continue his education in the field of medicine, he graduated from the University of Oklahoma Physician Assistant Program in 1982. He then went on to obtain a Master of Education and a Master of Occupational Medicine while working as an Orthopedic Physician Assistant. Thomas completed Aerospace Medicine at the US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, San Antonio, TX in 1999. He served as Flight Surgeon for the 465th Air Refueling Squadron before being selected to command the 507th Medical Squadron. Thomas received numerous medals and awards as an enlisted Air Force Officer and as a Civilian physician. Thomas retired from his Air Force career in 2014 as a full bird Colonel at Joint Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland.

While serving as a member of the USAF, Thomas also managed to be a full-time physician at W.W. Hastings Hospital, beginning his career in 2000 as an Emergency Room Physician. He then served as the Director of Emergency Services from 2008 until 2014. Thomas retired from W.W. Hastings Hospital in 2019. He continued his work part time in the Emergency Room at W.W. Hastings Hospital, as well as serving as Clinical Professor at OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine in Tahlequah and as Medical Director at NSU Physician Assistant Program until March 2023. Continuing his legacy of medical academia, Thomas donated his body to science.

Thomas passed away on May 2, 2023, with his family by his side. Those he leaves to cherish his memory are: wife, Lori Franklin; children, Thomas Franklin, Jr. of Tulsa, Minisha Franklin of Oklahoma City, Marty Franklin of Moore, Christopher Franklin of Pueblo, CO, Michol (Amy) Jordan of Coweta, Allison Jordan of Tulsa, and Justin (Brittany) Jordan of Tulsa; grandchildren,



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Xander and Jayda Jordan, Koye, Kwan, Khai and Minisha Brown, Keanu and Keauyona Franklin, Kiara and Kaden Franklin; siblings, Jeremiah Tolbert Franklin (Miami, FL), Mary O. Muggins (Loxley, AL), Rufus L. Franklin (Philadelphia, PA), Annie Odell Franklin (Loxley, AL), Artie (Diane) Franklin (Daphne, AL), Frankie L. Franklin (Miami, FL), Mable Lea (Otisi) Franklin (Washington, DC); devoted niece, Khadija Franklin (New York, NY), and a host of other nieces, nephews and relatives. He was preceded in death by his parents, Mary and Rufus Franklin; siblings, Moses Franklin, Emma Franklin Martin, Willie Franklin, McKinley Franklin, and Darcus Franklin.

Thomas' philosophy in life: "I've learned that people will forget what you have said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." – Maya Angelou

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Dr. Thomas Franklin Scholarship fund at www.nsugiving.com/donate or via check, payable to NSU Foundation, 812 Cedar Ave., Tahlequah, OK 74464. Memo line: Dr. Thomas Franklin

To send flowers
to the family or plant a tree
in memory of Thomas E Franklin, D.O. (Colonel Ret. USAF), please visit our floral store.

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Tribute Wall

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MH

Michele Hyson posted:

Col Franklin was an awesome officer and a true gentleman. There were days when it would be hectic. Col Franklin would come into the Admin Office with a smile and a joke and make the day better. When I retired in November of 2014, Col Franklin was already retired, but he flew back to Andrews AFB to officiate my retirement ceremony. I'm forever grateful for his kindness, professionalism and beautiful spirit. Rest peacefully Col Franklin 🙏🙏🙏 TSgt(Ret) Michele Hyson

June 13 at 2:05 PM

TS

Tricia Selby posted:

Thinking about you and praying that you find peace in all the wonderful memories you two had made together.

May 11 at 8:50 AM

LF

Lori Franklin posted:

Words are not enough to express the heartfelt gratitude, joy and love you brought into our home. I know firsthand the physical and emotional challenges you faced daily but yet you met those challenges like you have your entire life; with humor, thoughtfulness and hard work. You have been an inspiration to and positive influence on your family and everyone who crossed your path throughout the plethora of endeavors you were so successful in and dedicated to. I will miss the road trips we planned, gardening, sitting by the fireplace on the patio watching basketball and football, baseball tournaments, watching the grandkids grow, and of course listening to you sing karaoke on the couch for hours. We will always remember that regardless of what we were doing, you always had a nugget of wisdom, humor and most of the time a fact or two to share. I feel honored to have been so loved by you. Thank you for sharing your life with me. XOXO, Lori

May 8 at 10:58 AM

PB

Phillip Brand September 19 at 2:38 AM

I had the pleasure of knowing Doc Franklin at Tinker as our flight surgeon. I fondly remember him as a true gentleman, soft spoken and humble. He took great care of us during deployments and at home station. During a deployment to Turkey, someone stole his bike and put it in the shower of his bathroom. He was looking all over for it. Finally, someone told him it was in the shower. We all had a big laugh over that. Truly a great man. Sincerely, Phil Brand, CMSgt. USAF, Ret.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Thomas by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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