



Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella

September 28, 1946 - January 11, 2019

Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella of Alpharetta, Georgia, passed away from a heart attack at North Fulton Hospital, Friday, January 11, 2019. He was born at Crawford Long Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia on September 28, 1946, to the late Wayne Edward and Nellie Eva Gonnella.

Tom was a dedicated husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend. During the last few years of his life, he cared for his wife suffering from dementia. He met his beautiful bride and wife of 51 years, Sandra Jean Trainer, in high school, and they were later married in Atlanta, Georgia. Tom grew up in Atlanta and graduated with the Sylvan Hills High School class of 1964. He was a terrific athlete in many sports. He particularly excelled at track, where he once held the school record for the 100 yard dash at 9.9 seconds. He also was a member of the mile relay team that set a school record.

Tom served in the United States Marine Corps Reserves from 1968 to 1974 as an aircraft mechanic and graduated with a BBA from Georgia State University in 1972. He retired as an Accountant from General Motors and enjoyed traveling and camping with his wife throughout the years. Tom loved fishing, golfing, playing cards and shooting pool with his friends and family. He enjoyed spending time at the American Legion of Jonesboro.

Tom is survived by his wife, Sandra Jean (Trainer) Gonnella; daughter and her

husband, Kelley (Gonnella) and Heath Chester of Alpharetta, Georgia; son and his wife, Jay and Sarah Gonnella of Dacula, Georgia; four grandchildren: Kennedy, Taylor, Gavin and Riley; two sisters: Ann Gonnella of Glasgow, Kentucky, and Kay Leach and husband, Greg, of Gainesville, Florida.

Visitation will be held at 2:00 PM, Saturday, January 19th, and a celebration of life service will follow at 3:00 PM at Northside Chapel Funeral Directors and Crematory, 12050 Crabapple Rd, Roswell, GA 30075. In lieu of flowers, family requests donations be given to the AARP Foundation in Honor of Dementia Discovery Fund for Sandy Gonnella. Share your memories and leave condolences online at www.northsidechapel.com.

Cemetery Details

Cremation - Northside Chapel Crematory

12050 Crabapple Road
Roswell, GA

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 19. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Northside Chapel Funeral Directors & Crematory
12050 Crabapple Road
Roswell, GA

Celebration Of Life

JAN 19. 3:00 PM (ET)

Northside Chapel Funeral Directors & Crematory
12050 Crabapple Road
Roswell, GA

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella*

October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM



“ *I WORKED AT THE GENERAL MOTORS LAKEWOOD PLANT FOR SEVERAL YEARS WITH TOM, I AM SO SORRY TO HEAR OF HIS PASSING. MY THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS ARE WITH THE FAMILY. DORIS PHILLIPS FROM THE LAKEWOOD PLANT.*

DORIS PHILLIPS - March 04, 2019 at 04:52 PM



“ *I only met Tom once and liked him right away. He was so friendly and loved Sandy with all his heart. My sincere sympathy to all his family. God be with you and comfort you at this time.*



Sylvia Mazeau - January 19, 2019 at 12:40 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.*



January 19, 2019 at 09:50 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.*



January 18, 2019 at 04:23 PM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.*



January 18, 2019 at 10:50 AM



“ *Tommy was a great help to me while I was researching our family history. Tommy shared memories of spending time with our mutual great grandparents, Charles M. Thomas, Sr. and Lou in West End in Atlanta. I emailed Tommy frequently and he seemed glad to participate.*

We always think we have more time than we do, and I wish I had visited Tommy in person since we both lived in Newnan.

Rest In peace and rise in Glory.

Your second cousin,

Charles Mansfield Thomas IV

Charles Thomas - January 17, 2019 at 02:23 PM

KH

“ Tommy, dear sweet Tommy. We loved him dearly for he WAS a part of our family. I don't have the many stories my brothers , Chuck and Ed , can tell (or not tell) but I do have wonderful memories of the times I was around when Tommy was present. Especially when he would come to many of our family events (mostly to see our mom , Virginia or Ms Gross as Tommy would say). Tommy will be missed.

Karen (Gross) Hodges

Karen Hodges - January 17, 2019 at 01:23 PM

~S

“ ~ The Lucas Family (Ed, Karri, Brock, Jake & Syd) purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.



~ **The Lucas Family (Ed, Karri, Brock, Jake & Syd)** - January 16, 2019 at 11:36 AM



“ Reflections of Glory Wreath was purchased for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.



January 15, 2019 at 03:51 PM

JG

“ One of the greatest friends to have ever blessed my life. I met Tom decades ago through Charles “Chuck”Gross and his family, my former husband of almost 20 years. He and his sweet wife Sandy became our closest friends and constant traveling companions and we travelled the world together for many years. Our good times, our adventures, our hilarious stories throughout our life together, I could write a book! Driving a tiny European car on the wrong side of the road in Ireland, our first ever cruise to the Bahamas on a cruise ship with wood decks that burned my bare feet, Tom and Chuck testing their skills at Paradise Island on jet skis and coming back to the beach bruised and battered because the jet skis won! Our first trip to Hawaii and then many more, including flying across an island at night, in a near hurricane and being thrown all over the place and finally asked to get our heads down as Tom said we could kiss it all goodbye. We survived and had loads of fun in Maui. Also later all the trips back and taking my Sister with us to Hawaii. She had the time of her life and made a friend for life in Tom Gonnella. There are so many stories like this, too many to write here. Bermuda, San Juan, California, Virgin Islands, Atlantic City, New York, Canada, Oh Canada, what a trip! The Ski trip that caused us to be rescued just before dark and off the ski slope Sandy and I could not handle and the screaming at our crazy husbands who cheered us on saying, you can do this! I loved this man, this friend, this Father, this Brother, this husband, Grandfather and all that he was to his friends and family. He wanted us all to always be happy, he was devoted to friends and family, I hope there are Golf courses in Heaven, and I will never, ever forget my beloved friend Tommy Gonnella. God Bless Sandy, Jay, Kelly, his grandchildren, his brother and all his precious family. Heaven’s gain and gone too soon. Rest In Peace Sweet Friend. I will always miss you and the wonderful friendship I found in you.



Jenni Gross - January 15, 2019 at 03:17 PM

WJ

“ With caring thoughts, Justin & Stacy; Steph & Jock purchased the Treasured Lilies Spray for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.



With caring thoughts, Justin & Stacy; Steph & Jock - January 15, 2019 at 01:20 PM

TC

“ I didn't know Tommy as well as most of the posters. I was in the same class as Tommy at Sylvan High School. During our sophomore and junior years Tommy, Bobby McRee (now deceased), Joe Biola and I would play pickup basketball games at Perkerson Elementary school on Brewer Blvd. Lots of fun and good memories. Sorry to hear about Tommy's death.

*Ted Caswell
Class of '64*

Ted Caswell - January 15, 2019 at 11:36 AM

RR

“ .I am so sorry to hear about Tom. I worked with Tom at G.M. at Lakewood and Doraville plants. Also Tom was the reason I joined the U.S. Marine Reserves in 1970. Also went To Georgia State. Was a great friend and Co-worker. My prayers are with all the family and friends. Roy Rogers

Roy Rogers - January 14, 2019 at 09:50 PM

EG

“ I returned to Sylvan Hills in the summer of 1962 and met Tommy. We began our junior year together at Sylvan Hills High School and we were in the same home room. Since we were seated by last name, Tommy sat in front of me and we always disrupted Mrs. Davis home room. Tommy and I ran track together at Sylvan. My parents often rented a cottage on Lake Allatoona and Tommy went with us. It is amazing that we did not drown one night when Tommy and I floated on an air mattress across the lake and back. After we graduated from Sylvan, we traveled different paths. Throughout all those years we always stayed in touch. After I retired in 2001 and came back to Georgia, Paula and I would often get together with Tommy and Sandy for three day weekends. We were soon joined by John and Mary Clendenen. The six of us shared many a weekend together and I often thought how wonderful it was for High School friends to share the twilight years of our lives together. I will miss you Tommy and I already do.

Ed Gross - January 14, 2019 at 06:00 PM

DB

“ Tommy and I were track mates at Sylvan High. He was a great athlete and person with a tremendous sense of humor. You could not ask for a better teammate. I graduated with Sandy. Tommy and her were the greatest couple. I hate to hear this news and pray for God's blessing for his family.

Don Burkett - January 14, 2019 at 03:23 PM

JC

“ Tommy and I spent many many hours fishing, camping and sitting around a campfire swapping tall tales. His passing leaves a hole in my heart no one else can fill. Rest In Peace Old Friend.

John Clendenen - January 14, 2019 at 10:35 AM

CG

“ *My oldest and closest friend, 56 years worth. So many memories, so many stories. A brother to me....*

Charles Gross - January 14, 2019 at 10:09 AM

LD

Tommy, Sandy & I used to double date. He was always so sweet & funny. I was fortunate to have spent the afternoon with the two of them a few weeks ago. He took me to lunch & then we ran errands. I laughed so hard. Might have been a best date ever. Would not give anything for what will now be a great memory 😊

Leigh Howell Davidson - January 14, 2019 at 05:57 PM

TF

“ *Tommy will remain in our thoughts forever. purchased the Sacred Duty Spray for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.*



Tommy will remain in our thoughts forever. - January 14, 2019 at 10:09 AM

PN

“ *So sorry to learn we have lost our dear cousin, Tommy. I will always hold onto and fondly remember the many treasured memories from the Gonnella household.*

Patricia Thomas North - January 14, 2019 at 06:35 AM

GC

“ *Such sad news. Tom (Tommy) as he will always be to me was a favorite cousin. We enjoyed reminiscing about the good times we had at family gatherings. I'm so sorry he passed away too quickly since moving to Alpharetta recently, so close by. Rest in peace.*
Gloria Thomas Colley

Gloria Thomas Colley - January 13, 2019 at 10:25 PM

TF

“ *My best friend in this life , I pray we will be together fishing in Heaven !!!!!!!!!!!*
Ted Fort



Ted Fort - January 13, 2019 at 07:47 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.*



January 13, 2019 at 05:35 PM

FH

“ Tom was always so kind to me growing up. He treated me better than most any other adult from my youth. Through the years he always made me and Nikki and my kids feel like part of the family. He will be missed. My he find peace and joy that passes all human understanding.


Frankey Henderson - January 13, 2019 at 05:27 PM



“ Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Mr. Norman Thomas "Tom" Gonnella.



January 13, 2019 at 04:06 PM

 Sarah Gonnella

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album




Sarah Gonnella - January 13, 2019 at 02:52 PM

 Sarah Gonnella

“ 1 file added to the album Family Photos



Sarah Gonnella - January 13, 2019 at 02:51 PM

 Sarah
Gonnella

“ 2 files added to the album *Family Photos*



Sarah Gonnella - January 13, 2019 at 02:51 PM