



## Roy "Tuffie" Garland Thomas

March 8, 1934 - April 10, 2025

Roy Garland "Tuffie" Thomas was born on March 8, 1934, and departed this life on April 10, 2025, at the age of 91. Born to parents Grace & William Douglas "Bill" Thomas, Tuffie was the 7th of 12 children. Tuffie and his siblings grew up in Caddo County, Oklahoma. Proud members of the Caddo Tribe, Tuffie and his family contributed throughout their lives to promote their native heritage and support their community. A month after turning 18, Tuffie joined the United States Army. Tuffie loved traveling the world and he was able to see much of the world while serving his country. His favorite places included Germany, Japan and Australia. While in the military, Tuffie served one tour in Korea, three tours in Vietnam and four tours in Germany. It was in Germany where Tuffie met and fell in love with Christel Haffel. They married in 1957 and had two beautiful daughters, Heidi Grace Thomas (now Abend) and Martina Erika Thomas (now Polaske). Travel and duty took Tuffie out of Germany, but family always came first. Even though Tuffie was the 7th of 12 children, Tuffie later took on the unofficial role of patriarch of the family. Tuffie loved to gather family together and hosted the annual Thomas reunion for many years. Tuffie built a special gathering place so the family could sit and visit, and he provided room for the kids and dogs to romp and play. Tuffie had a heart for family and was generous to a fault. His sister, Geraldine, once told a news reporter that her brother was so generous, he would literally give you the shirt off his back. Giving was something that just was a part of who Tuffie was in life. While in the military, Tuffie gave honor, devotion and time to his country.

Tuffie was decorated for his service with the Bronze Medal, Vietnam Service Medals of 1 silver and 3 bronze stars, The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Army of Occupation Medal Germany, National Defense Medal w/ Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal w/ Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Good Conduct Medal. Tuffie continued his devotion of time and energy after retiring from the military by serving on the Retiree Council at Fort Sill. Tuffie served as Vice Chairman on the Caddo Tribal Council, he was as an active member with the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma, and he volunteered with the American Red Cross. Tuffie earned a place in the Retire Volunteer Hall of Fame at Fort Sill in Lawton, Oklahoma. He received the Commanding General's Community Service Award and the American Red Cross Volunteer Community Service Award. In addition to all his community service, Tuffie worked until retirement for the Caddo Electric Cooperative. Tuffie lived a long life and outlived much of his family. Tuffie is preceded in death by his parents, Grace and "Bill" Thomas; his siblings, Virginia "Gin or Ginger" Brummett; twins William Charlie "Billy" Thomas and Josephine Ellen "Jo" Hupp; James Jefferson "JJ or Cotton" Thomas; George Edward "Sam" Thomas; Lillie Mae Hawkins; Wilma Jean Lefever; Richard Dean "Dickie" Thomas; twins Catherine "Katie" Kielty and Augustine "Susie or PeeWee" Cole; daughter Heidi Grace Abend; and other beloved family and friends. Tuffie is survived by daughter Martina Erika Polaske; Grandchildren Benjamin Roy Abend, Vanessa Roxanne Abend, Monika Martina Stahle, Helen Grace Stahle, Kevin Polaske; many Great-Grandchildren; sister Dixie Geraldine "Squirrel" Kiley; niece Mary Katherine "Kathy" Spaulding and other nieces and nephews; and many cousins, great nieces and nephews, special friends and loved ones. Tuffie received his nickname because he was "Tuff" in the face of adversities that life threw his way and that is how he lived his life. He was tuff to face what came his way, but he showed love and kindness to all in his path. Roy Garland "Tuffie" Thomas lived life fully, he loved fiercely, and he showed kindness everywhere. Roy Garland "Tuffie" Thomas will be missed, and life is just a bit dimmer because of it.

Funeral Services will be held Saturday, April 26, 2025, at 1pm at Ft. Cobb Funeral Home. Burial to follow at Ft. Cobb Cemetery.

# Cemetery Details

## Oak Grove Cemetery

Fort Cobb, OK

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

APR 26. 1:00 PM (CT)

Fort Cobb Funeral Home  
306 3rd Street  
Fort Cobb, OK 73038  
(405) 643-2622  
<https://www.smithfuneralservices.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Thoughts and Prayers!!!* ”



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**Bill Reedy** - April 16, 2025 at 01:26 PM