



Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D.

January 12, 1935 - July 3, 2019

Thomas O. Nicklas, M.D., age 84, beloved doctor, husband, father, and friend, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, July 3, 2019 at his home in Grove, OK. Tom was born on January 12, 1935 in Comanche, OK to John and Ince (Ludewell) Nicklas. He grew up in Oklahoma City, OK and graduated from Capitol Hill High School. There, he met his bride of 65 years, Susanne Divine, and they were married on April 5, 1954 in Guthrie, OK. After high school, Tom earned a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Central Oklahoma and then graduated from the University of Oklahoma, College of Medicine where he served as the president of his class all four years. He graduated in 1962. After completing his internship at St. Anthony's Hospital in OKC, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and proudly served as a Green Beret in the 82nd Airborne Division. Tom was selected for Special Forces duty, completing Underwater Demolition and Special Operations training. His unit was deployed to Vietnam, where he served as a surgeon in the most intense combat theatres of the war.

After completing his Army tour, Tom attended Tulane University, where he received specialized training and board certification in Ophthalmology. He served a one-year fellowship with Dr. John Sheets, a pioneer in phacoemulsification (laser cataract removal) and was one of the first doctors to offer that treatment in Oklahoma. Tom also served as the Assistant Clinical Professor at Dean McGee Eye Institute in Oklahoma City, OK. He practiced Ophthalmology for 20 years before joining the Air Force, and served as a

hospital commander on three bases and spearheaded development of a Strategic Air Command mobile airborne hospital.

In 1985, Tom and Susanne left the Air Force. At the urging of Dr. Norman Cotner, they moved to Grove, where Tom was the first surgical specialist. He tried retirement in 1996. During his "retirement," Tom purchased land and began cattle ranching, but he missed his patients. He sold his cattle and opened an Ophthalmology practice in Jay, OK. He continued to see patients until the age of 81.

Tom was larger-than-life: strong, intelligent, fearless, funny, and a faithful servant of Christ. He never forgot his humble beginnings and worked hard to bless patients, friends, even strangers with his kindness and generosity. Being outdoors brought Tom great enjoyment, whether it was riding horses, elk hunting in Colorado, or growing his legendary tomatoes that he readily shared with his friends and neighbors.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his in-laws, Dr. and Mrs. Hal G. Divine.

Tom is survived by: wife, Susanne Nicklas of Grove, OK; children: Diane Mastin and husband, Darrell of Grove, OK, Vicki Beckwith and husband, Ron of Broken Arrow, OK, Tom Nicklas, Jr and wife, Charla and Nancy Smith and husband, Jerry, both from Tulsa, OK, sister, Beverly Jo Hubbard of Kingfisher, OK, 10 grandchildren, and 13 great grandchildren.

Visitation for family and friends will be from 5-7pm Monday, July 8 at Nichols-Stephens Funeral Service. Funeral services will be at 2pm Tuesday, July, 9, 2019 at Grove's First Baptist Church. Rabbi Curt Landry and Pastor Marty Dyer will officiate. Interment at Olympus Cemetery North.

If desired, donations may be made to Newsong Church, Faith Church of Grove, or House of David in c/o Nichols-Stephens Funeral Service 10201 US Hwy 59 Grove, OK 74344.

Cemetery Details

Olympus Cemterey

Grove, OK

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 8. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Nichols-Stephens Funeral and Cremation Service
10201 U.S. Highway 59
Grove, OK 74344
(918) 786-6761
nicholsfunerals@yahoo.com

Funeral Service

JUL 9. 2:00 PM (CT)

Grove's First Baptist Church
501 E. 13th St
Grove, OK 74344

Tribute Wall



“ Nichols Funeral & Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D.



Nichols-Stephens Funeral & Cremation Services - July 08, 2019 at 02:30 PM

EM

How can I get one of his videos?
Emma J. McConnell

Emma J. McConnell - July 10, 2019 at 01:53 AM



“ Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D.

October 04, 2023 at 03:23 PM

KS

“ 1 file added to the album Tom Nicklas



Karin Stephens - July 17, 2019 at 11:34 AM

CR

“ I was privileged to work with Dr. Nicklaus in Tahlequah, OK from 1977 to 1981. He and his family became very dear to me and my love and prayers go out to them all in their loss. Also enjoyed attending church with him at Peggs for several years. He was a mighty man of God and know he’s basking in the arms of Jesus. 🙏

Connie Smith Rhodes - July 13, 2019 at 06:27 PM

DJ

“ Prayers for the family for their loss of a great man. Wonderful Doctor who never met a stranger. D Jackson

D Jackson - July 09, 2019 at 11:10 PM

TE

“ Our Grandma, Jewel, and Mom, LaVona, always called him Tommy... They dearly loved him and appreciated all he did for our family! LOVE picturing their family reunion in HEAVEN! Dancing and singing on the streets of Gold! We wish we could be there today to celebrate HIS life! We are praying peace and comfort for our extended family in Grove. We Love you all...
Tod Fields Family & Teri Oliver Family



Teri - July 09, 2019 at 08:47 AM

SA

“ Tom has a special faithful, soul. I looked up to him as a mentor, we collaborated as colleagues and we laughed as friends. He earned my infinite respect . God has a special place for him, Heaven is brighter now that he has arrived.

I feel fortunate to have known him.

Shawn Anderson MD

Shawn Michael Anderson - July 08, 2019 at 08:35 PM

SA

“ Shawn Anderson purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..



Shawn Anderson - July 08, 2019 at 08:01 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..



July 08, 2019 at 04:45 PM

FC

“ Dear Suzanne and family....we were saddened to hear about Tommy--- our condolences to all of you..... we got out our year books yesterday and enjoyed it bringing back high school memories. You and Tommy had a wonderful and long marriage to be proud of. We wish you prayers and peace in the following times to come.

*Sincerely and with love,
Frances and Wayne Craig
Tulsa, Ok*

Fran Craig - July 08, 2019 at 01:17 PM

AD

“ Al & Susan Degan purchased the *With Distinction* for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..



Al & Susan Degan - July 08, 2019 at 11:52 AM



“ *Basket of Memories* was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..



July 08, 2019 at 11:23 AM

DM

“ Dr. Tom is a wonderful man. We sold him his current house and he would call me and thank me for keeping it so nice. Through the years, he would send me pictures of his garden or peony bushes I planted. Oh, there's no doubt he is wearing the largest set of angel wings there is. Suzanne, I'm thinking of you and your family and know that the good Lord is going to help you. You and Tom are great disciples for Jesus.

Diane & Charles McBroom

diane mcbroom - July 07, 2019 at 11:00 PM

DF

“ Dean, Talon Hollenbeck and family purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..



Dean, Talon Hollenbeck and family - July 07, 2019 at 04:37 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..



July 05, 2019 at 08:22 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..



July 05, 2019 at 06:56 PM

WN

“ Wayne Neilson purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..



Wayne Neilson - July 05, 2019 at 06:17 PM

WN

“ I have only had the pleasure of knowing Tom for a few short years, I quickly found him to be a amazing man and a dear dear friend. I could sit and listen to him forever about his life and his family. He was truly a selfless man, always the first one there for anyone needing help. I will truly miss him. I can only believe God needed him back in Heaven for a special mission that only Tom could accomplish.

Wayne Neilson

Wayne Neilson - July 05, 2019 at 05:47 PM

JG

“ I had the privilege of working with Dr. Tom in the operating room for 10 years. One of the finest men and surgeons I've known. His huge heart and wonderful personality made him so easy to love. I saw him last spring getting ready to go crappie fishing. He was always so happy. Condolences to his family. RIP Dr. Tom. You were loved by many.

Janie Gibbs - July 05, 2019 at 03:38 PM

MT

What a wonderful, gentle giant of a man. He was our dr. fir for several years and always curious to here about what we were doing on the farm and the cattle. Truly he will be missed by those that were touched by him. Prayers for his wife and family. Larry and Mary Ann Troyer

Mary Ann Troyer - July 19, 2019 at 04:43 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tom" O. Nicklas M.D..*



July 05, 2019 at 01:10 PM



“ *Dr. Tom Nicklas contributed, mightily, to the safety, to the Health and Welfare, of the good people of Delaware, and Ottawa Counties. Tom Nicklas brought to us, a fine hand in the critical practice of Ophthalmic Surgery, and Medicine. Tom Nicklas was a man concerned with all of us. He was not in this for the money. He saw his role, his important role, as a guardian of our Health, as a Community. The magic word, here, is Community. One day, about 5 years ago, at a local department store, Tom Nicklas saw me, and stopped in his busy day to inquire as to my well - being. Now, what does that say, about a fine, old school Gentleman, and Physician ? The message, to my mind, is clear. We have not lost merely a good man. We have lost a Treasure. We are richer, by far, because Tom Nicklas walked with us, here. And helped us stay healthy. This, folks, is what Heaven is for.*

*Dr. H. E. "Buz" Sawyer, Jr.
Grove, OK*

Buz Sawyer Jr. - July 04, 2019 at 10:04 PM

SL

“ *I will always feel privileged to have known this wonderful man. What a special life he led! I still talk about the few years I spent working for him and what a positive work place it was. I know there are many, many people feeling especially sad this day. To his family: You are sad today but just know that you had a singularly honorable and kind person in your lives for many years. Please accept my very sincere condolences.*

Sylvia Loftis - July 04, 2019 at 11:09 AM

KG

“ My husband and I both were in awe of Dr Tom. His reputation spread to Norman. We asked our ophthalmologist in Norman for a reference in Grove when we retired here. Without hesitation, Dr. Tom was the only one our Dr recommended. I am very sorry to hear of his passing and his family has my heartfelt condolences.

Kay Gray - July 04, 2019 at 10:40 AM

MK

“ Dr. Tom was Karl's and my eye Dr at one time. He was a very great and caring man. He always had a fantastic attitude, and cared about his patients. It was a joy to see him, and always feeling so great when we were through with our appointment.

Mary T Kriesch - July 04, 2019 at 01:19 AM



“ Great man, he will be missed. Prayers for comfort for the family.

Carla O'Neal - July 04, 2019 at 12:48 AM

JE

“ He saved my daughter's eye from a bad corneal ulcer and did it with warmth and compassion. He will be missed, what a wonderful man!

jennifer ellis - July 03, 2019 at 11:52 PM

MR

“ Fine doctor, fine man. We will miss him sorely. Our love and prayers to the family.

Courtland Smith, MD and Michelle Cody Smith

Michelle Cody Smith, RN - July 03, 2019 at 10:23 PM

JR

“ *Dr. Nicklas was our gentle giant of a man and surgeon! I was always amazed he could put the tiniest stitches in the eye with his large hands! Great man!*

Jalonda Husong, RN - July 03, 2019 at 10:07 PM

JW

He took a piece of metal out of my husband's eye once and we were amazed at how those large hands were so meticulous.

Janet Warford-Perry - July 03, 2019 at 10:25 PM

MR

Many years ago near the week end, my husbands eye was in extreme pain. I finally convinced him to let me call Susie to ask Doc. if he could help him. We met him at his office in Jay. Dennie told him how he didn't want to bother him, and how much he appreciated him coming, saying he could have waited till Monday. Dock looked at him and said: Its been said, A Nagging wife will save your life, but this time its your eye! If you would have waited till Monday you would have lost it. You let me take care of your eyes from now on! We appreciated Dock and Susie so very much.

Mary Lee Ritchie - July 05, 2019 at 01:10 PM

DH

“ *Only surgeon I ever knew to have “Everclear” on his table for disinfectant. Lol. What a wonderful and generously good man!!*

debbe hendrix - July 03, 2019 at 09:00 PM

PM

“ *Tom and I shared an OR day for awhile when we both worked at Grove. He was a wonderful physician and friend. Rest In Peace, Tom.*

Patrick E Stout, MD

patrick stout, md - July 03, 2019 at 08:45 PM