



Thomas Lee Kelly

March 15, 1933 - June 11, 2013

Memorial Services will be held on Sunday, June 16th, 2013 at 3:00 p. m. in the Clark Funeral Chapel in Tishomingo, Oklahoma for Mr. Thomas L. Kelly, 80, of Tishomingo. A private burial will be held at a later date. Mr. Kelly passed away on June 11th, 2013 at the Mercy Hospital in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

Thomas Lee Kelly, born Thomas Allison Polk on March 15th, 1933, to Lily Mae (Riggs) Polk and Carl Polk in Bowie, Arizona. Raised during the formative years of his life on the cattle ranch owned by his beloved grandparents, Joe Stafford and Anna Mae Riggs Stafford. He was adopted by his step-father, Leroy Kelly at the age of five and moved to El Paso, Texas where he went to school, graduating from Ysleta High School. He was popular and respected by both students and faculty. He was president of the student body and elected Mr. YHS his senior year. He played in the backfield and lettered in football and competed in track as a pole vaulter taking him all the way to State. Tom attended Texas A & M University, receiving a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics and a commission in the United States Army. His senior year, he married his true love, His "Sweetheart" of 58 years, Dorothy Ann Scott on Ground Hog Day, 1955. Then the adventure of being a military family began. Tom and Dot and their three children traveled all over the United States, where Tom's military career as a Field Artillery Officer included two tours of duty in Vietnam, a variety of military schools, including the Armed Forces Staff College and the Air War College, and a list of interesting assignments in

exciting places, Hawaii, Korea, Colorado, Texas, Maryland, Oklahoma, Alabama and Virginia. While in Alabama, he received his Master's degree in Political Science from Auburn University. He was also awarded many decorations and medals, including the Legion of Merit with 4 oak leaf clusters, the Bronze Star for meritorious service with 3 oak leaf clusters, the Bronze Star of Valor, the Air Medal, the Meritorious Medal with 2 oak leaf clusters and the Army Commendation Medal, with 3 oak leaf clusters. After serving his country faithfully and heroically for 29 plus years, he retired in 1984 as a full Colonel. Not content to putter about in retirement, Tom took on the position of University Relations and Extension Projects Director and then Executive Assistant to the University President at Oklahoma State University. When an opportunity to lease a ranch on the land once owned by his family in Arizona, Tom couldn't pass up a chance to live his dream as a rancher. The new life was challenging, especially for Dorothy, but being an Army wife had taught her to adapt and soon the couple began a new adventure as a cowboy and the rancher's wife. They bought their own ranch, the "Tres Lomas Ranch" in Deming, New Mexico and operated it for 14 years. Not only a successful rancher, Tom was a past president of the local Deming chapter of People of the West, President of the Deming-Luna County Chamber of Commerce, Director of the Deming-Luna County Chamber of Commerce, Director of the Luna County Farm and Livestock Bureau, and Chairman of the Public Lands Advisory Committee. He loved Tishomingo where he and Dorothy moved after someone made them an offer they couldn't refuse to sell "Tres Lomas". He was a strong believer and loved the Lord. He especially enjoyed his Tuesday morning men's bible study. He was also involved in the Veteran's group. Tom loved nature, and wildlife. Fishing and birdwatching always gave him pleasure. He lived for football season and especially loved his Texas A & M Aggies! He had a great sense of humor. He loved people and never forgot a face.

Tom is survived by his wife Dorothy; his daughter, Kathy Kelly Christos and

son-in-law, Chris Christos of New York City; his son, Thomas Riggs Kelly and daughter-in-law Laura Kelly of Dacula, Georgia; his son David Scott Kelly and daughter-in-law Randi Kelly of Dallas, Texas; and five grandchildren, Christopher Kelly of Atlanta, Georgia, Kristin Kelly and Colton Kelly, both living in Dacula, SFC Clay Kelly of Edmond, Oklahoma and Sarah Kelly of Dallas.

In lieu of flowers, if desired, donations may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, which was one of Tom's favorite charities.

Tribute Wall



“ *Thomas Lee Kelly*

October 05, 2023 at 07:47 PM



“ *We are so sad to hear of Tom's passing. We do appreciate being notified. Our sincere sympathy to all the family..*

Dot our hearts go out to you in this time of grief. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your children.

Tom was a fine officer and a friend to all who knew him. He will be greatly missed.

Tom and Lois Ann

Tom and Lois Banner - June 24, 2013 at 12:00 AM