



## Dr. Thomas David Plamondon

November 13, 1920 - April 20, 2017

Dr. Thomas Plamondon, Sr.

TRAVERSE CITY – Dr. Thomas Plamondon Sr., age 96, of Traverse City, passed away Thursday, April 20, 2017 in the loving care of his family.

On November 13, 1920, a spectacular event occurred for Ovilla Joseph Plamondon and Mamie (Martineau) Plamondon of Lake Leelanau, MI. Their oldest son Thomas David was born that day.

“Tommy,” as he was called during his childhood, would grow up to be a born leader. As a young lad, he was the first in town to have a bicycle which he earned by saving candy bar wrappers from customers in his Dad’s General Store, “O.J.’s.” St. Mary High School did not have a track team, so Tommy became the coach and also participated as a runner. He organized a High School baseball team by arranging to borrow equipment from the village team. Tommy’s desire at this point in his life was to be a pitcher for the Detroit Tigers!

Tommy was captain of his High School basketball team and was the leading scorer.

At age 15, Tommy observed some CCC men come to his home after a day of digging ditches in the hot sun asking for a drink of water; this made him stop and think about his future career. Soon after that, Tommy drove his mother to the Optometrist office to replace her broken glasses, and realized that would be perfect profession for him!

One evening, during his junior year in high school, Tommy was walking home after attending a Church youth group. He noticed a car parked along the sidewalk with four high school seniors in it. Tommy had been known as “shy” around girls. The driver said to him, “Do you want to kiss my girl?” Tommy asked, “Who is she?” The driver responded, “Viola Bunek.” Tommy said, “Sure.” So he walked around the passenger side and kissed Viola through the open window. The rest is history. They became high school sweethearts.

Tommy graduated from High School in 1938, and at the young age of 17, he entered Northern Illinois College of Optometry in Chicago that September. Four years later he graduated with his Doctor of Optometry degree. On July 7, 1942, Dr. Tom married his h.s. sweetheart, Viola Bunek.

In 1944, Dr. Tom entered the armed forces where he served 17 months in the eye clinic of the 234th General Hospital in Chhabra, India, assisting Major A.C. Chandler, ophthalmologist. Dr. Tom took many photos while in India, which is a myriad of information

about the China Burma India Theater of WWII. On June 5, 1946, Dr. Tom was discharged from the Army. He and his wife then moved to Grand Rapids where he was employed as an optometrist.

Dr. Tom purchased an optometry practice in Traverse City, and in 1947 daughter Carolyn was born; three years later son Thomas Jr. was born. The family lived on 11th street in Traverse City, and seven years later son David was born.

Dr. Tom was devoted to his family, religion, eye care practice and was a philanthropist. He loved to help out the underprivileged and made them feel like they were the most important person in the world.

Dr. Tom enjoyed boating at his home on West Bay, and also at the family cottage on Lake Leelanau. Picnics at the lake were a frequent event when his family was young. He loved spending time with his children and grandchildren watching the Tigers and Notre Dame games on TV with them. He also followed TCSF athletics, and enjoyed watching his granddaughters, Dr. Janelle Gloss Routhier pitch softball, and Callista Gloss act in the TCSF Theater.

Dr. Tom was a member of St. Mary Church in Lake Leelanau, where he and his wife Viola were named benefactors of the year and have an annual tuition scholarship given out to a parish student in their names. He also donated the new electronic basketball scoreboard for the St. Mary gym.

After relocating to Traverse City, Dr. Tom became a member of the Elks, Lions Club, Third Order of Mount Carmel, Michigan Optometric Association, lifelong member of Illinois College of Optometry Alumni and St. Francis Church. There he helped out in many activities and was instrumental in keeping TCSF High School open and thriving. Dr. Tom was inducted into the Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools Hall of Fame in 2008.

A man in his 40's, blind since birth, gained total eyesight after a thorough eye exam by Dr. Plamondon. The man referred to Dr. Tom as "My Miracle Man." This is one of the reasons why we call Dr. Tom our "St. Thomas." He was also very generous with his time and made many financial gifts to people and charitable organizations.

Dr. Tom was preceded in death by infant twins Joseph and Joan, parents, Ovilla and Mamie, son David in 1999, wife of nearly 60 years, Viola, in 2002, brothers; Richard, James, and Cletus, sisters; Dorothy, O.P., Rose Lee, and Mary Jane.

Left to continue their love for him is his daughter, Carolyn Gloss (Ron), son, Dr. Tom Plamondon Jr., (Annmarie), daughter-in-law Maggie Plamondon, grandchildren, Dr. Janelle Routhier (Franklin) of Dallas TX, Callista Gloss (fiancé Kyle Sullivan) of Grand Rapids, Lane Plamondon, of Traverse City and Monique Plamondon of Traverse City. Dr. Tom is also survived by many cousins, nieces and nephews.

The family wishes to express their gratitude to Tammy, Nicole, Ruth, Aleec, Jen, Amber, Katelyn, Shaylee and other caregivers for the love and care they gave Dr. Tom during his stay at Cherry Hill Haven. Thanks also to Hospice of Michigan for their loving support.

A visitation for Dr. Tom will be held at the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home on Tuesday, May 2, 2017 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm with a rosary at 7:30 pm.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held the next day on Wednesday, May 3, 2017, at 11:00 am with a visitation one hour prior at St. Francis Catholic Church. Fr. Kenneth Stachnik will officiate. A luncheon will be served after mass in the church fellowship hall. Graveside services will take place at 3:00 pm on Wednesday, at St. Mary Cemetery in Lake Leelanau with full military honors.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Dr. Tom's name to; St. Francis Catholic Church 1025 S Union Street, Traverse City, MI 49684, Grand Traverse Catholic Schools 123 E Eleventh Street, Traverse City, MI 49684, St. Mary Church, St. Mary Catholic Church 403 St. Mary Street, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653, Wounded Warrior Project PO Box 758517, Topeka, Kansas 66675-8517.

Please share a memory with the family by visiting Dr. Tom's tribute page found at [www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com](http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com). The Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home and Cremation Services is serving the family.

# Events

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**MAY**   **Visitation**   06:00PM - 08:00PM

**2**

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Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home  
305 Sixth St, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**MAY**   **Rosary**   07:30PM

**2**

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Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home  
305 Sixth St, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**MAY**   **Visitation**   10:00AM - 11:00AM

**3**

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St. Francis Catholic Church  
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**MAY**   **Mass of Christian Burial**   11:00AM

**3**

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St. Francis Catholic Church  
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**MAY**   **Graveside Service**   03:00PM

**3**

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St. Mary's Catholic Church  
411 S. Saint Mary's Street, Lake Leelanau, MI, US

# Comments

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“ I will always remember him as a happy and kind person. I always looked forward to our visits and discussions. He is truly a great man. Mark Smith MD

Mark Smith - May 04, 2017 at 07:42 AM

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“ My deepest sympathy to Dr. Plamondon's loving family. I have such happy memories of a couple summer vacations when we stayed in the Plamondon cottage next door to my grandparents cottage. As a child I always thought Dr. Plamondon was the kindest man. I still visit Lake Leelanau every summer and look fondly at the cottage next door. It will forever be Dr Plamondon's cottage to me.

- Ann Baxter Crane

Ann Crane - May 03, 2017 at 06:07 PM

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“ I have two memories I would like to share of my Uncle Tom. The first is takes place when I was a child at a family gathering with a number of cousins. We were looking for something to do and Uncle Tom sacrificed his body by becoming our bucking bronco. He took a saddle that was my father's who had a horse at the time and got down on all fours with the saddle on his back. One by one we took turns getting bucked off the wild pony until he was exhausted.

The second occurred when I was an adult. My husband and I, with our three children visited my parents where they wintered in Palm Springs. Uncle Tom and Aunt Vi were there at the time and we visited them. Uncle Tom gave my children candy bars at ten o'clock in the morning despite my protests. I instructed them not to eat them until after lunch. When we returned to my parents place, I couldn't locate my oldest daughter until I looked out the bedroom window and spied her, crouched down like a nervous bunny behind a bush, hastily eating the candy bar. She still remembers him for that very reason.

RIP Uncle Tom, you will be remembered.

Michelle Sledee - May 02, 2017 at 12:15 PM