



James "Tom" Thomas Shields

November 11, 1936 - August 5, 2025

James Thomas Shields, "Tom" to all who knew and loved him, passed peacefully on August 5, 2025, at age 88, surrounded by his wife of 43 years and many beloved family members. Visitation will be held at First Baptist Church of Blessing beginning at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 16, 2025, with a memorial service following at 2:00 p.m.

Born November 11, 1936, in Bryan County, Oklahoma, to James Thomas and Mildred Shields, Tom was the oldest of ten children. He cherished each of his siblings deeply, especially his brother Sam, who was just eleven months his junior. The two were inseparable—teammates, partners-in-adventures, and lifelong best friends. Tom attended Plano High School, where he discovered his lifelong love of sports. He excelled in football and basketball, but baseball held his heart. His talent earned him an athletic scholarship to Austin College. He continued and completed his education at Sul Ross State University. In 1961, Tom achieved his dream by signing with the Boston Red Sox Minor League Team. After a career-ending arm injury, he redirected his passion into coaching and education, pouring the same dedication into shaping young lives that he once gave to the game he loved.

Over the years, Tom became a respected coach and principal, retiring from Katy High School in Katy ISD. He continued his service to kids in his leading of the Coaches Outreach program, equipping coaches to impact young people

for Christ. He also served as the Headmaster of Grace Classical Academy and assistant principal and athletic director of Faith West Academy in Katy.

Tom lived his faith boldly and joyfully. He shared the gospel with anyone—whether they wanted to hear it or not—and inspired countless young men and women to follow Jesus. His words were as memorable as his smile, peppered with his signature phrases like, “A domino laid is a domino played” and “Study long... study wrong,”

Family was the heartbeat of Tom’s life. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather—known to his grandchildren as “Pampa.” Whether crafting slingshots, gardening, telling stories about his and Sam’s childhood adventures, or writing heartfelt poems for the grandkids, Tom made each child feel uniquely seen and loved. He had a gift for meeting them right at their level, giving his undivided attention, and creating memories they will carry forever.

In his later years, Blessing, Texas, became Tom’s “happy place.” Days were filled with counting and feeding cows, attending auctions, and sharing meals with family and church friends. He loved people, and he loved food—especially when the plate was full and the food was piping hot.

Tom was preceded in death by his parents, James Thomas and Mildred Shields; brothers Sam Shields and Rocky Shields; sisters Lavern Kirkpatrick, Billie Jean Hoard, and Timanda Landrith; and his son, Lieutenant Colonel Bradley Thomas Shields.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Judy Shields; daughter, Suzie Ribb and husband, David; daughter-in-law, Nikki Shields Tower and husband, Justin; daughter, Tracy Redding and husband, Stuart; son, Johnny Colvin and wife, Shellie; grandchildren, Sydney Redding Kotzman and husband, Kyle, Seth

Redding, Baylee Redding, Cameron Colvin, Kasen Colvin, Jake Shields, Jared Shields, and Anna Ribb; great-grandson, Nash Redding; sisters Marie Burton, Mary Barbee, Bennie Shields, and Sandra Martin; and many nieces, nephews, and friends whose lives he touched.

Honorary pallbearers are Cameron Colvin, Kasen Colvin, Seth Redding, Jake Shields, Jared Shields, Justin Beckendorff, Gary Martin, and Eddie Mills.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Tom's memory to the First Baptist Church of Blessing, Texas, designated for scholarships to summer camp, or to a children's charity of your choice—continuing Tom's lifelong love for faith and the next generation.

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 16. 1:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church of Blessing
910 Live Oak St
Blessing, TX 77419

Memorial Service

AUG 16. 2:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church of Blessing
910 Live Oak St
Blessing, TX 77419

Tribute Wall



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of James "Tom" Thomas Shields.*



August 14, 2025 at 02:39 PM



“ *Tom was a mentor to me growing up. I always looked up to him. I was known as little Tommy to his classmates. When I made the varsity basketball team I wanted #33 on my uniform, same as his. He used to practice his throwing when home in the summer and I was catcher. My hand would burn but loved doing that with him. I'm going to miss Tom loved him so much.*
Mary Louise

Mary Louise Shields Barbee - August 09, 2025 at 02:14 PM