



Thomas Ellis Obituary

Thomas (Tom) Ellis, 84, of Camarillo passed away on June 18, 2017 after living with Lewy Body Dementia for several years.

Born in Shelby, NC, the son of the late Tom S. and the late Maxine Ellis, the family followed his soldier father to several southern states, including Florida where he earned Boy Scout's coveted Eagle Scout rank. The family moved to Germany when his father was stationed there after WWII, where he was a "Berlin Brat", graduating from Thomas A. Roberts High School in occupied Berlin in 1950. He then attended the University of Florida, earning a degree in geology in 1954.

Rather than working in geology, he found himself called to Columbia Seminary (Decatur, GA) where he earned his Master of Divinity in

1957, followed by a certification in pastoral counseling. While in seminary he worked one summer at the Grand Canyon as a chaplain and a naturalist lecturing on its geology. This began his life-long love of hiking and birding in the western US in general, and the Grand Canyon in particular. While obtaining his counseling certification, he worked at a state hospital in Philadelphia, PA where he met a young nurse, Peggy Austin. Love soon followed and they were married for 59 years, having lived in Camarillo, CA since 1962 and raised their two children there.

During his 50-year career Tom served as a minister in Camilla, GA, as the first chaplain at the Sunland Training Center in Gainesville, FL, and as the first full-time chaplain in the California Youth Authority at the Ventura School for Girls in Camarillo, CA. He also served as a Clinical Supervisor at the California Family Study Center in Burbank, CA and as a Marriage and Family Counselor with the Bradley Center in Columbus, GA. He spent most of his career in private practice following his passion to provide counseling to couples, families and children to repair marriages and improve family relationships.

Tom is survived by his wife, Peggy, and their two children, Richard (Theresa) of Lewis Center, OH and Lisa (Christopher Young) of Albuquerque, NM. He is also survived by his younger brother, Peyton (Jeanne) of Orlando, FL and his four grandchildren: Laurel, Austin, Sophia, and Joel. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister, Regina Jolly of Delray Beach, FL.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to The Grand Canyon Association (www.grandcanyon.org/donate) or to The Lewy Body Dementia Association (www.lbda.org/donate). A private celebration of life will be held in Ohio at a future date.