



Thomas "Tom" Nicholas Denker Jr

December 5, 1931 - February 18, 2025

A service celebrating the life of Thomas Nicholas Denker, Jr., 93, southeast of Enid, will be held at 10 am on Monday, February 24, at Bethlehem Baptist Church (66th & Longhorn—3 miles north of Pioneer School)—Pastor Tom Donaldson officiating. A family burial will follow at the Enid Cemetery Mausoleum. Services are under the direction of Anderson-Burriss. Visitation will be held at Anderson-Burriss Funeral Home on Sunday, February 23 from 4-5 pm.

Tom was born December 5, 1931, to Thomas Nicholas Denker and Beatrice Hawn Denker in Enid, Oklahoma, and passed away peacefully February 18, 2025, following a decline in health over the past few months.

He was raised on a farm southeast of Enid and attended school in the one-room Horner School where he had two classmates in his grade. In the eighth grade, he transferred to Longfellow Junior High so he could play football. He attended Enid High where he was in the Dukes Social Club. He spent many hours at Teen Town where, playing ping pong, he met Margaret Jane Morgan, who would become his wife a few years later. After graduation, he attended Oklahoma A&M College. He hitchhiked/caught rides home most weekends his freshman year to work on the farm and to see Jane. On May 31, 1950, he and Jane were married in Perry, Oklahoma, and soon after started their family, living near Enid in the summer and Stillwater while school was in session.

At A&M, Denker played intramural football and was named to the All-University team. He represented OAMC at a national crop judging contest in Chicago—winning first in judging incoming elevator grain and land judging; but only third overall. His castor bean article “There May Be Oil On Your Farm” for a national agronomy magazine also won first prize that year. In addition, he played the flute in OAMC’s Army ROTC Marching Band, and was in the Agronomy and Chess clubs. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture. After college, he worked as office manager during the first harvest at the “new” Johnston Elevator, then went to work for the Social Security Administration in Enid as a claims rep. He enjoyed his travels around the NW Oklahoma county seats to see his clients. He also enjoyed being a part of the Jaycees and AMBUCS service clubs, as well as, Toastmasters, where the focus was on better communication. But his passion was farming and ranching. He enjoyed raising wheat, cattle, and for many years, sheep, on his farm which had been established by his father and grandfather. With his kids, he also raised greenhouse tomatoes for several years—and he never lost his love for them.

He loved his farms, but he found special enjoyment in coaching, sports, his children and grandchildren, and looking at pretty flowers. He was in his 30’s before he became a head coach in the YMCA and EJRT leagues. Once he started, he didn’t stop for years and years—he was 87 when he hung up his sneakers for good. He coached soccer, using weighted balls to make legs stronger; basketball in which he coached one fundamental after another; softball in which one of his former players said, “I have a lot of memories of him teaching we, the untalented, how to play softball”; and football where he introduced the world to the backwards facing pennyback. In 1999, he was honored with the YMCA Lifetime Achievement Award.

He never lost his enjoyment of sports. He helped weld the first backstop at

Kellet Ball Park as part of a Jaycees project, was on a committee that started football at Pioneer, and would offer to help any athlete he thought could use his expertise. He coached/watched thousands of games and other events that involved his kids, grandkids, and great grandkids. You could often find Tom and Jane at Pioneer School and American Legion sporting events. He was a season ticket holder of OSU Football, and loved attending their games with other family members.

Tom is survived by his 6 children, Patty (Paul) Shepard of Moore, OK, Rick (Janet) Denker of Oklahoma City, Sally (Les) Clickner of Enid, Randy (Pam) Denker of Enid, David (Beth) Denker of Garland, TX, Tim Denker of Dallas, TX, along with 16 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, and a host of extended family and friends.

He was preceded in death by Jane, his wife of 68 years, his parents, and his siblings: Janice (Tom) Walker, Elaine (Howard) Anderson, and Rex Denker.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Pioneer Academic Foundation or YMCA Back a Youth.

Thanks, Daddy, for always being there!

Cemetery Details

Enid Cemetery

East Willow
Enid, OK 73701

Previous Events

Visitation with Family & Friends

FEB 23. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Anderson Burriss Funeral Home & Crematory
3002 N Van Buren
Enid, OK 73703
(580) 233-2700
ab@andersonburriss.com
<https://www.andersonburriss.com/>

Celebration of Life

FEB 24. 10:00 AM.

Bethlehem Baptist Church
Enid, OK

Tribute Wall

GB

“ Praying for peace and comfort for whole family during this very difficult time.

*With Our Deepest Sympathy,
Geneva & Michael Bolenbaugh & Kids*

Geneva Bolenbaugh - February 24, 2025 at 10:18 AM

SH

“ Tom was a pillar in the Pioneer Community, and he was loved by the residents of all ages who were blessed to have known him. For many years Tom coached children in various sports, teaching them basic skills necessary for outstanding play in the years to follow. This was a selfless gift of his time. Tom was visible at community gatherings of all kinds because he cared and was involved with his community; he had an interest in the lives of others. Tom will always be remembered as a wonderful man who deeply touched many lives.

Suzanne Parrish Hunter - February 22, 2025 at 12:07 AM

TB

I remember my mom telling the story of him and Jane when she got stuck one winter coming home and the next day Tom brought her and the groceries home on the tractor through the fields. Awesome man and family.

Terri B - February 22, 2025 at 10:45 AM

AA

Our thoughts and prayers to your families at the loss of Tom. My father's sister Gladys Armstrong married Tom's Uncle John Denker. I knew Tom's parents. Visited their homes. I remember the unique solar heater Tom constructed.

I recall Jane serving on the PPV school board where my wife Shirley taught.

I remember Tom working for SSA, his helping my mother qualify. Tom and my job had us meeting each on profession level. What a unique individual who will be missed.

AK, Shirley Armstrong - February 24, 2025 at 10:21 AM

SH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Suzanne Parrish Hunter - February 21, 2025 at 10:57 PM

AB

“ Alan and Brandi Barton purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Thomas "Tom" Nicholas Denker Jr.



Alan and Brandi Barton - February 21, 2025 at 04:00 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tom" Nicholas Denker Jr.



February 21, 2025 at 01:30 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Thomas "Tom" Nicholas Denker Jr.

February 21, 2025 at 01:30 PM