



Tommy "Tom" Forrest Ball

September 10, 2025

Tommy "Tom" Forrest Ball, 82, of Rusk, Texas, passed away peacefully on September 10, 2025, in Houston, surrounded by family.

A 1962 graduate of Palestine High School, Tom earned an associate degree from Tyler Junior College. He devoted more than 61 years to public safety, beginning with the Texas Department of Corrections in 1964. He joined the Houston Police Department (Class 32) in 1965 and entered the Texas Department of Public Safety Academy in April 1967 (Patrol School C-67). After graduating, he served as a Texas State Trooper in Houston until 1972, then transferred to Rusk/Cherokee County, where he served as a Highway Patrolman until his retirement in May 1986. He was later appointed a Special Ranger with Texas DPS and maintained his Texas Peace Officer's commission and firearms qualification until his passing. Alongside his public service, Tom was a lifelong entrepreneur who invested deeply in Cherokee County and the East Texas area for nearly 40 years. Beginning in 1977, while still with DPS, he owned Century 21 Piney Woods Realty (later renamed Tom Ball Realty). In 1986, he and Bill Hanson co-owned Cherokee Arms & Ammo. Later he founded Ball Bail Bonds, Rusk Wrecker Service, and Rusk Self Storage. Tom was also a DPS-certified Concealed Handgun License instructor, training thousands across East Texas from 1995 to 2011.

Civically active, Tom was a 60-year Master Mason with Terrell Masonic Lodge

in Alto, under the Grand Lodge of Texas; a longtime member of the Rusk Lions Club; vice president of the Trinity Neches Forest Landowners Association; a member of the Rusk Athletic Booster Club; The 100 Club of Houston; and the East Texas Peace Officers Association. A devout Christian, he worshiped at Rusk First United Methodist Church and gave his life to Jesus Christ.

Tom and his wife, Linda, were recognized for years of support to the Rusk Fire Department. He was respected throughout Cherokee County for his integrity, mentorship, and devotion to family - choosing to keep his roots in East Texas even when promotion might have led elsewhere. Over the years he received numerous awards and commendations from the State of Texas and across East Texas. Tom was a master storyteller and a good-natured practical joker. He enjoyed his "philosophy class" friends every Thursday. A rancher who loved his horses and cattle, the outdoors, and time spent hunting and fishing with his son (little Tom) or simply relaxing on his land.

Tom was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas J. Ball and Louise Odom Ball, of Rusk. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Linda Reiman Ball; children, Kimberly Ball and Tom Ball Jr.; and many dear friends he considered family.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, October 18, 2025, at Rusk First United Methodist Church, with Rev. Sunny Farley and Retired Texas Ranger Lieutenant/ Rev. Kenny Ray, officiating. Texas DPS Honor Guard will perform taps followed by a Masonic Burial Service that will be conducted under the auspices of Terrell Lodge #83. The family will receive friends from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.; services begin at 11:00 a.m. followed by a reception in the church fellowship hall.

Honorary pallbearers: Active and retired Texas Department of Public Safety

Highway Patrol Troopers, Rangers, and Agents; Master Masons under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Texas; and all law enforcement officers.

Special pallbearers: Phillip Power, Don Parsons, Mayor Ben Middlebrooks, Charles Hassell, Robert Bernard, Jim Britton, Don Britton, David Little, Jerry Burford, Larry Long, Jim Biendorf, Robert Blankenship, Larry Moody, Don Boethel, Harold Liverette, Jim Netters, Bobby Tosh, George Covington, Austin Rohr, Jim York, Pat Jones, Judge Chris Davis, Jamie Campbell, Zac DeLoach, and the Methodist Men Philosophy Class.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Terrell Masonic Lodge No. 83, A.F. & A.M. (PO Box 266, Alto, TX 75925) and Rusk First United Methodist Church (P.O. Box 99, Rusk, TX 75785). www.ruskfumc.com

Previous Events

Receive Friends

OCT 18. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
255 S. Henderson St
Rusk, TX 75785
(903) 683-4675

Celebration of Life

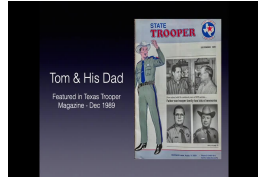
OCT 18. 11:00 AM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
255 S. Henderson St
Rusk, TX 75785
(903) 683-4675

Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album *Tribute Video*



Wallace-Thompson Funeral Home - October 17, 2025 at 04:04 PM



“ Red, White & Blue Sympathy Floor Basket was purchased for the family of Tommy "Tom" Forrest Ball.



October 14, 2025 at 12:21 PM



“ My deepest condolences to the family and loved ones. May God's peace and grace cover you during 5his difficult time of loss.

Marieo Foster - October 09, 2025 at 02:15 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Photos*



linda ball - October 02, 2025 at 02:42 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album Photos



Wallace-Thompson Funeral Home - October 02, 2025 at 02:39 PM

LB

“ 2 files added to the album Photos



linda ball - October 02, 2025 at 02:30 PM

LB

“ 1 file added to the album Photos



linda ball - October 02, 2025 at 02:26 PM