



Thomas E "Tom" Blevins

March 8, 1949 - December 23, 2017

Dr. Thomas E. (Tom) Blevins

2 Timothy 4:7 – “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

Dr. Thomas Blevins, 68, passed away on December 23, 2017, at Embrace Hospice House in Myrtle Beach, SC, after a long battle with ALS. He was born on March 8, 1949, in Welch, WV. He lived his entire life in southern West Virginia with the exception of his retirement years. He was a graduate of Northfork High School, Bluefield State College, Marshall University, and Virginia Tech. He had a long and established career in education, having taught at Elkhorn Jr. High from 1971-74 and Northfork High School from 1974-77. While there, he was the chess team coach and the Shakespearean Drama Society sponsor. Dr. Blevins came to Bluefield State College in 1976 and remained there until his retirement in 2012, serving the college in many capacities for 35 years.

During his tenure at Bluefield State College, he was a Professor of English and Education, was the Director of the Instructional Technology Center, which later became the Center for Extended Learning having off-campus sites in Lewisburg, Beckley, and Summersville. He assisted with the development of over 200 online courses. He served as the Dean of the School of Education

and Dean of the Virtual College. He served as interim President during 2000 and again from 2011-12. He worked for the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission from 1999-2010, serving as the Chief Technology Officer for the state of West Virginia. He was a member of many professional organizations, local, state, and national, including serving as an evaluator for North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

Dr. Blevins served on the Bluefield City Board of Directors from 2011-15. He was a member of the Bluefield Rotary International and a Paul Harris Fellow. He was a member of the Bluefield Elks Club and the Murrells Inlet Moose Club. He was a caring and charitable individual who put others before self. He was a loving father and husband who had many interests, including military history and travel. He valued his friendships with his peers, classmates, and former students. He was a member of Belin United Methodist Church in Murrells Inlet, SC.

Survivors include his wife, Dr. Betty R. Rader of Murrells Inlet, SC; his three children, Tracy Perkins (John) of Williamsburg, VA, Jim (Lisa) of Bluefield, WV, and Matthew of Bluefield, WV; six grandchildren, Cora Perkins, Abigail Hash, Jacob Blevins, Ashley Diffenbach, Kassi Diffenbach, and Dawson Diffenbach. He is predeceased by his adoptive parents, Rev. C. C. and Bessie Blevins and his grandson, Travis Blevins.

The family would like to express appreciation to Homewatch CareGivers of Murrells Inlet who assisted in his care in his final weeks.

A memorial service will be held at Belin United Methodist Church in Murrells Inlet, SC on Friday, December 29 at 2 p.m. with visitation one hour prior to the service. A memorial service also will be held in Bluefield, WV at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the ALS Association at 7499 Parklane Road, Columbia, SC 29223 and the Bluefield Union Mission at 2203 Bluefield Avenue, Bluefield, WV 24701.

Goldfinch Funeral Services of Murrells Inlet, SC and Mercer Funeral Home of Bluefield, WV is serving the family.

Tribute Wall

MK

“ Betty,
I have been in touch with Marsha, thinking about the Easter you and Tom and some friends were at Marshas for the afternoon, it is probably longer than I remember. I'm so very sorry to learn of Toms passing. I am thinking and praying for you and your family. Sending my sympathy to you.

Mary Ann Kopko

Mary Ann Kopk - January 05, 2018 at 12:02 PM

JC

“ Betty,
I am thinking of you and sending you my heartfelt sympathy. In reading all of these wonderful tributes, you must know how much Tom was loved and admired. Those we remember are with us forever.

Joyce Dailey Clemens.

Joyce Dailey Clemens - January 01, 2018 at 10:30 AM

VG

“ Betty,
We were saddened to hear that Tom had finished his journey here on earth. We have had you both in our hearts and prayers the past months. We all, here in Bluefield , were sorry to not be able to be more of a support system for you both during your time of need. Mark and I both had the highest respect for Tom. We knew him in different capacities and time frames but the memories we each have will always make us smile. You are both amazing people. Betty you have our prayers for strength and peace.

Mark and Vanessa Godfrey

Vanessa Godfrey - December 29, 2017 at 06:27 PM

DP

“ Dr. Tom Blevins was not one of the kindest gentlemen of the old school, but was also a professor of this age and time, not letting modern technology baffle him. He .was flexible enough to accept various educational and community challenges, like the Interim Presidencies. As a member of the press at both the Welch Daily News and the Glenville (WV) Newspapers, he always welcomed me with a smile and was always helpful to me, so I considered him a real friend, especially for befriending my son, Dave Jr., who was an assistant in the Computer Lab and, later, a BSC graduate. My heart goes out to his fine family but my solace is that his memory will never be forgotten for those who ever knew him. Prayers to the family from the Corcorans, formerly of Welch.

David H. Corcoran, Sr., Ph.D. - December 29, 2017 at 01:21 AM

DW

“ *Mr. Blevins was one of my favorite teachers at Northfork High School. I really appreciated how he made class interesting and a challenge. My husband and I often reminisce about him being one of our best teachers. My heart goes out to his family and friends.*

Delois Walters - December 29, 2017 at 12:57 AM

SC

“ *Tom Blevins was one of the people who made Bluefield State a special place to work. As a faculty member at BSC from 2006-2014, I had many opportunities to interact with Tom. He loved BSC; he respected the people he worked with; he gave his best for the students; he had compassion and empathy. We knew we were losing a special part of us when he retired. I will never forget his kindness or his ready smile. He was a very good man. --Sharon Bebout Carr--*

Sharon Bebout Carr - December 28, 2017 at 08:42 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Thomas E "Tom" Blevins.*



December 28, 2017 at 06:29 PM

DT

“ *So saddened to hear of Tom's passing. He was such a kind soul. My thoughts and prayers to Betty and the family. I fondly remember sharing our trip to Italy with you guys and still smile when I think of our tour guide that about ran our legs off!*

Deborah Tonelli - December 28, 2017 at 02:07 PM

SH

“ All of these tributes show just what people thought of Tom. He was all of that and more . I knew Tom from being ,at one time, a part of the BSC family. One of the smartest people I ever met. On the personal side , Tom and Betty always welcomed you into their home. We spent some days in the rockers looking out into the hills. I loved sitting with them at BSC functions because no doubt about it Betty for sure was going to make you laugh and then very quietly Tom would chime in appropriately. I will continue to pray for Betty and the family in the coming months and years. God grant you peace and RIP my friend.

Sandra Walker Heinrich - December 28, 2017 at 07:10 AM

SO

“ I'm so sorry to hear about Tom . Whenever I think about him only kind thoughts come to mind. He was always so kind and sincere. I have nothing but respect for him as a professional and a person ! My sincerest condolences to Betty and his family. God Bless.



Sonia ODell - December 28, 2017 at 06:21 AM

John
Burton

“ I met Tom when he was a PhD student in our program - a good one at that. We stayed in touch off and on over the years since. He was a true credit to our program and to our profession. He was also a kind and compassionate man of absolute integrity who always spoke of his family first. He will be missed.

John Burton - December 27, 2017 at 10:20 PM

LC

“ I met Tom when I came to BSC as student. I so remember his tireless work to bring the first computer lab to the students. While I was president of the student government association, Tom was an ally and a professional friend. I will always smile when I hear or see something on the Star Wars theme-and I am sure at this very moment, he is enjoying the universe. Tom knew, understood and practiced public service- and his willingness to give to others influenced me as an educator. Always a friend, always an educator, always a selfless man. His legacy is vast. Lynn (Harman) Chance

Lynn (Harman) Chance - December 27, 2017 at 04:55 PM

JF

“ Jack Mabry and Family purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Thomas E "Tom" Blevins.



Jack Mabry and Family - December 27, 2017 at 02:52 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas E "Tom" Blevins.



December 27, 2017 at 01:18 PM



“ Very sorry to hear of Tom's passing. May peace be with Tracy and the rest of the family.


Scott Wilson - December 27, 2017 at 11:54 AM

SH

“ *Howdy! Mr. Blevins was an awesome man and life saver. I would always hug him and thank him for changing my life. Gone but not forgotten, another warrior is at rest. God bless.*



Samuel Harris - December 27, 2017 at 09:55 AM


Deborah
Majors

“ *Chris and I remember Dr Blevins fondly from our years at Bluefield State College. He was always a kind and gentle soul. As we will all miss your kindness here on Earth~Heaven has gained a Beautiful Angel! Our Heartfelt condolences go out to the Blevins Family!*



Deborah Majors - December 27, 2017 at 12:47 AM



“ *My life intertwined with Tom's from my eighth grade year, through college as his student; from before my college graduation until his retirement in 2012 as one of his employees; and finally as friends, until now. Perhaps his greatest lesson to me, through our years of bringing educational media from four dusty storage rooms and 135 pieces of broken equipment, to a showcase of technology covering most of two floors of a building, was, "The technology itself is irrelevant. It's the service you use it to bring to students and instructors that's important."*

Service was always at the center of Tom's life, whether it was scavenging parts to build a stage from trash heaps and decades-untouched supply closets; lobbying for educational progress in the halls of West Virginia's capital; or simply keeping the junior high school gym open so that local kids would have something to do after school. If a project were being held up waiting for a painter to be arranged, Tom would look at me, say, "Wear your t-shirt and jeans tomorrow," and we would knock out a typical classroom in a day or less.

Tom was also quite the eclectic, enjoying the works of Shakespeare, Dickens and Hemingway one day, and take equal pleasure from the adventures of James Bond, Dirk Pitt and the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise the next.

In fact, it is a quote from Star Trek his personal favorite that I will close with. Farewell and Godspeed, Tom.

"The Kobayashi Maru has set sail for the promised land."

Jerry Conner - December 26, 2017 at 10:19 PM

JW

“ Tommy and I became very close friends the first day I was on campus at BSC. Tommy always was the brains, and I always was the instigator. We plotted and played out many, many projects that were good and less than good. But our hearts were always in the same place. Whatever we could possibly do to reach students, for their own good, and to improve BSC. Tom had a very interesting personal side, and when he was your friend and you were his it didn't matter what you needed the other one did it. I stood strong with him through thick and thin. Until his last battle, and physically I wasn't able to do as much for him as I would have liked to have done. And watching him totally deteriorate in one year, simply tore my heart out. Tom had other sides to him, that not too many other people knew. Tom and I and a few other close student friends of mine, would winter backpack the Cranberry. They were great moments, and I'm so glad we had them together. Lastly, I'd like to say, that Betty has suffered more with this death than any human should have to. Again, if I would have been stronger I would have been there for her more. She is not less than a saint in my eyes. I'm sure there is a special place in heaven for Tom and for Betty when she goes. With his death I lose my closest professional friend and personal friend. Need I say more.

Prayerfully Yours,

John M. White

JOHN WHITE - December 26, 2017 at 09:49 PM

BA

Remember Tom Blevins as a student in the education classes in 1978-79, very nice man , willing to help you with any situations that you had to deal with. Also had Dr, White as a history professor . Both these men leadership lead me to over 30 years working in education. RIP Tom

brian aldrige - December 29, 2017 at 04:18 PM

DC

“ Tom was a fellow NCATE/CAEP team member & one of the best & fairest. He made professional service enjoyable. I will miss him.

Dale Carpenter - December 26, 2017 at 08:56 PM

NJ

“ Tommy's death saddens me to the core. We have been great friends since we were 12. He was the smartest kid in school! Yet, he had a heavy dose of common sense. In our later years we talked more and more on the phone. He was so wise about life. He never gave me advice, but always had something to say. My heart broke when he found out his diagnosis. Tommy was determined to accomplish as much as he could...writing new curriculum for BSU just a couple of months ago. Because I was an English teacher, we discussed a lot of literature, public education, politics, former students we loved, and our families. Tommy was kind, religious, caring, and dedicated. I will miss you, my dear friend.

Nonia Gay Hunt Jones

Nonia Gay Jones - December 26, 2017 at 08:54 PM

DK

Tom was a special person that I had the privilege of knowing. I especially enjoyed the stories of his youth in the coalfields. May our friend Rest In Peace. My thoughts and prayers are with you Betty and your family 🙏❤️

Donna Kelly - December 27, 2017 at 11:57 AM

BM

“ Tommy...that's the name I knew him by in high school. A good friend then and now, some 50 years later. He was quick witted, kind, and considerate, always asking about my welfare and happiness. I am saddened by his passing, coming way too soon. He truly made this world a better place. Rest In Peace, gentle spirit.

Brenda Kosa McLaughlin - December 26, 2017 at 07:35 PM



“ Tom's father Reverend C.C. Blevins was our pastor at Maybeury Church Of God. Tom was a little older and I always looked up to him. He was a true Gentleman and a Scholar! Very intelligent and a super nice guy. Always asked about my Mom and Dad and was just such a very nice guy. Rest in peace Tom. You will be missed. Arthur Blevins

Arthur Blevins - December 26, 2017 at 07:31 PM

A(

“ I remember sitting in Dr. B's office my senior year of my undergrad and crying because one of the teachers I was doing a student teaching placement with told me I was terrible and that I wasn't cut out to be a teacher. I remember him telling me "look at me" (with a very stern but loving voice). He said "stop crying, I don't want to see that. I want to see you take what this old bat has said, and use it as fuel to prove her wrong, I know you can do this. Don't EVER let anyone tell you that you can't do something that you have your mind set to do".

He continued to check up on me many times after I graduated, and also continued to tell me to never give up and how he always knew I could do it.

On a funnier note--one time I had to do a summary on a book in his English Lit class and I used the summary from spark notes, and I remember him passing them back out in class, walking up behind me, squeezing my shoulder, and saying "The next time you want to cheat in my class, at least copy the spark notes from the correct chapters" and then he just laughed so hard and told me to read it for real that night and turn in my summary the next day.

I loved that man like an uncle! He is the reason I am the teacher I am today! I love you Dr. B!

Ashley Mauceri (Froy) - December 26, 2017 at 06:59 PM

BT

“ Sorry to hear of your loss, Tommy was a special cousin and friend . My mom his Aunt Agnes always told the story how Aunt Bestie would teach him to read when was little by reading off the cereal boxes . I know he in heaven with Uncle Casper and Aunt Bestie . May God gave you the peace you need during this time. Love Robert Blevins and Bernice Thomas

Bernice Thomas - December 26, 2017 at 06:07 PM

DH

“ We didn't know Tom for very long but, becoming his and Betty's neighbors was one of our best choices we've made . Awesome people and missed. God has called you home my friend know that you will be missed. Prayers to Betty and the kids..... Mike and Daris

Daris Hodge - December 26, 2017 at 05:56 PM

PM

“ Dr. Tom Blevins was one of my instructors in 1980. He taught me how to use technology during my senior year at Bluefield State College. We became friends and colleagues for the next 37 years. He was always helpful, uplifting, and positive. He loved his family and spoke of them often. I am grateful to have called him friend in this life. For his family, may God bless and comfort you. Know that he is no longer in pain or afraid. He is with his departed loved ones beyond the veil. He will be there to greet each of you as you step thru the veil. God be with you till you meet again. Love to you all ~
❤️ ~ Pamela Byrd McPeak, 1981 Bluefield State Graduate, and friend.

Pamela Byrd McPeak - December 26, 2017 at 05:56 PM

TL

He was my English teacher at Elkhorn Jr. High and then my confidant and mentor at Bluefield State. I innocently angered a jealous boyfriend of a staff member who threatened me with bodily harm. It was Dr. Blevins that I knew I could trust. He took care of it for me. He served the young people from the area where he grew up. He was trusted because he was one of us
May Tom rest in peace and rise in glory.
When this life comes to an end how we have impacted others is the measure of our life. Tom Blevins was a king by that measure.
My prayers and thoughts are with his family. May G-d's steadfast love and faithfulness bring you comfort and peace
Tim Lusk
Tucson, Arizona

Tim Lusk - December 26, 2017 at 07:57 PM

Peggy
Abreu

“ I had the privileged of having Tom for several classes at Bluefield State College.He was a kind,brilliant,understanding man who challenged me to be my best and THINK. I will forever carry him in my mind and heart.I hope to be just half the teacher/friend he was and still is.Fly high friend!



Peggy Abreu - December 26, 2017 at 05:50 PM

KH

“ Tom was a great teacher of mine at Northfork. He became an even greater friend during my years attending and working at Bluefield State. You will be missed.

Ken Hartley - December 26, 2017 at 05:49 PM

GS

“ I am saddened by Dr. Blevins' passing. He was a good man who professed Jesus as his Lord and Savior. May the Lord give his family peace during this time.

Greg Shrewsbury - December 26, 2017 at 05:34 PM

LL

“ Our sincere condolences to Betty and Tom's children. Tom made many generous donations to the Woodlake Village Library from his own collection which the patrons were very grateful. He will be missed by all and we are sorry that he had to struggle so in his last days. Sadly, Ed and Louise Lavigne

LOUISE LAVIGNE - December 26, 2017 at 05:05 PM

EB

“ Will mourn this scholar, honorable and gentle friend - your impact on our world was profound -Prayers for eternal rest....

eva bressan - December 26, 2017 at 04:51 PM

DJ

I remember Tom Blevins as a very Good, Decent, and Upstand-ing person throughout our school and college years, and beyond. Our fathers were both pastors and we attended the same schools. In the daily commute from the county to Bluefield State College, I rode with him several times, and we had good conversations. More recently, we chatted on messenger. I did not see him through his suffering, but I have had other friends who were victims of ALS, and I understood in some small way what he was going through. I always reassured him that we were praying for him. My heart goes out to Tom's family. May God bless you all in this time of sorrow and loss. Never forget that there will be a reunion day. Christ has promised it, and His promises cannot fail. Love and Prayers, Rev. Don Farmer, Jr.

Don Farmer, Jr. - December 27, 2017 at 10:01 AM



Francine Claytor

robert claytor i remember when were kids how we played and was awesome friends i will never forget him a true friend.Rest in peace .

Francine Claytor - December 27, 2017 at 03:21 PM