



Joe Elbert Thornburgh

December 25, 1936 - January 5, 2026

Joe Elbert Thornburgh peacefully passed away on Monday, January 5, 2026, in Tulsa, OK, at 89 years old. Born in Okmulgee, OK, on Christmas Day, December 25, 1936, he was the son of the late Bert and Margaret (Alden) Thornburgh.

As a young man, Joe enjoyed playing sports, especially basketball, baseball, and softball, and he loved hunting. Joe graduated from Okmulgee High School in 1954 before attending the University of Oklahoma, where he was a member of Phi Kappa Sigma Fraternity. He completed his education at Oklahoma City University, earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Marketing. Joe served in the United States Army from 1958 to 1960 and again from 1961 to 1962. He was a proud citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Joe had a successful career with General Electric in sales and operations management, and later served as the Human Resources Manager for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

Joe married Wanda Jean Norman on July 3, 1965, in Oklahoma City, OK. They resided in Oklahoma City, El Paso, Texas, Richardson, Texas, and in 1979, they made Broken Arrow their home. Joe's greatest joy was spending time with his family, especially his beloved daughter, Rhana Jaree (Thornburgh) Perkins. He was an avid sports fan and loved watching college football and college basketball games with her. He eagerly looked forward to

visits from his grandchildren, sharing countless stories and endless belly laughs. Throughout his life, Joe touched many lives and leaves behind a circle of loving family and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Bert and Margaret Thornburgh.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Wanda Thornburgh of Tulsa; his daughter Rhana Perkins and her husband, David L. Perkins Jr. of Tulsa; grandchildren Delaney McKnight and her husband Tyler of Edmond, Drew and Will Vickers of Oklahoma City; great-grandchildren Wes and Scotty McKnight of Edmond; sister Mary Lou Hasselman of Okmulgee; along with nieces, nephews, and many other relatives.

The family will receive friends on Monday, January 12, 2026, from 4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M. at the funeral home. A committal service will be held at 2:00 P.M., Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at the Okmulgee Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to the McClendon-Winters Funeral Home of Okmulgee, Oklahoma. Memories, condolences, photos and videos may be shared with the family on Joe's Tribute Page of our website. www.mcclendon-winters.com

Cemetery Details

Okmulgee Cemetery

2601 South Wood Drive
Okmulgee, OK 74447
(918) 756-5109

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 12. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - Okmulgee
303 E. 7th Street
Okmulgee, OK 74447
(918) 756-1677
info@mcclendon-winters.com
<https://www.mcclendon-winters.com>

Graveside Service

JAN 13. 2:00 PM (CT)

Okmulgee Cemetery
2601 South Wood Drive
Okmulgee, OK 74447
(918) 756-5109

Tribute Wall



“ McClendon-Winters Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Joe Elbert Thornburgh



McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - January 12 at 02:51 PM

SH

“ Sincere condolences from California. Shirley Holleyman

Shirley Holleyman - March 02 at 02:36 PM

CM

“ Charles M. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joe Elbert Thornburgh.

Charles M. - January 12 at 03:15 PM



“ 63 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - January 12 at 02:48 PM

CK

“ *Cogee (Cox) Keith-Long lit a candle in memory of Joe Elbert Thornburgh*



Cogee (Cox) Keith-Long - January 09 at 01:47 AM

DM

“ *David Miller lit a candle in memory of Joe Elbert Thornburgh*



David miller - January 08 at 07:33 PM