



## Gene Norman Thompson

September 10, 1936 - March 16, 2021

Gene Norman Thompson, a descendant of pioneers and a forester who worked in the forest industry for five decades, died March 16, 2021, in Portland, where he was being treated after suffering a heart attack in his Corvallis home. He was 84.

Born September 10, 1936, in Corvallis to Norma F. (Williams) and John R. Thompson, Gene grew up in the tiny coast range town of Blodgett, where his family owned the general store and his father, a former Model-T mechanic, ran a sawmill. He graduated from Corvallis High School in 1954, and earned a degree in Forest Management from Oregon State University in 1959. Before graduating, he and his father spent six weeks in Europe studying forest management practices, greatly influencing his views on sustainable forestry. After graduating from OSU, Gene entered the U.S. Coast Guard's Officer Candidate School at Yorktown, Virginia, graduating as Ensign. He served on active duty in Seattle, Washington, as Captain of the Port, and later, for 12 years, as a reserve officer in Eugene.

Gene and Charlotte, his wife of 59 years, were married in Las Vegas, Nevada, on Friday, October 13, 1961.

During his more than 50-year career in the timber industry, Gene worked with his father, and later his son and grandson, managing the family tree farm. He and his father formed Thompson Timber Co. in 1959, which was followed by Thompson Tree Farm in 1986.

From 1980 to 1999, Gene served as director of Citizen's Bank of Corvallis and

was board chairman from 1993 to 1999, when he retired. He held various leadership positions in the Oregon timber industry, including director of the Oregon Logging Conference from 1989 until he was president in 2001, and director of the Oregon Forest Industry Council. Later in life, he formed the Thompson Foundation, a charitable organization to support the health and education of the local community where he had spent his life. He was also an avid supporter of the Benton County Historical Society's new Corvallis Museum. In 2017, he was honored by the Oregon State University College of Forestry as an Outstanding Alumni Awardee.

Gene had a great sense of adventure; he was a pilot, skier, and wilderness backpacker. An Eagle Scout, he had a lifelong love of the outdoors, and after retiring, enjoyed spending time in Sun Valley, Idaho, with his wife and beloved Briard sheepdogs.

His love for the West was echoed in his deep interest in history and genealogy, tracing his ancestors from Ireland across the Oregon Trail in the 1840s to settle in the Kings Valley area. That passion for history extended to trains, and he rode historic railways whenever he could. For more than 25 years, he took great pleasure in setting up a toy train display, with the help of a crew of friends, each Christmas at Citizen's Bank in downtown Corvallis.

An only child, he leaves behind his wife; son Eric Thompson and wife Carrie; daughters Courtenay Thompson and husband Rick Attig, and Gina Thomas and husband Vaughn; seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

There will be a private family burial. A celebration of his life will be held sometime in the future when such a gathering is possible. Arrangements by McHenry Funeral Home in Corvallis. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory can be made to the Benton County Historical Society's Corvallis Museum.

# Cemetery Details

## **Blodgett Cemetery**

Blodgett, OR

# Tribute Wall

LD

“ We are sending love, thoughts and prayers to all of you. Gene was a kind and generous man who will be missed by many.

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**Lee and Linda Dowless** - March 25, 2021 at 08:30 PM

Jl

“ Choosing ‘a memory’ of Gene is impossible as there are over 60 years of Gene & Charlotte memories. They gave of themselves to friends and shared their good fortune with the community. I was fortunate to join them in many years of skiing, Sun Valley Jazz weeks, Thompson Lake; the list goes on. My life was definitely enhanced by my association with the Thompson family. Love you all. Gene’s presence will be felt on many levels. Choo. Choo.....  
Jean Iverson

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**jean iverson** - March 23, 2021 at 04:05 AM

NB

“ Dear Charlotte and family,

*I am so very sorry to hear of Gene's passing. Please accept my deepest sympathies for the loss of your husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. I know how important family was to Gene ... I have some wonderful photos of you all at Thompson's Lake and others from our great ski trips with " Osgood's Army" and Summer outings, too.*

*I have fond memories of skiing until our legs gave out ... at so many great locations around the Northwest and even in Switzerland. Gene and Charlotte always found ways to have fun with friends ... I am grateful for the wonderful memories.*

*Your friend,*

*Nan Bogdan*

*(503-819-2303)*

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**Nan Bogdan** - March 21, 2021 at 07:53 PM

BA

“ Dear Thompson Family

*I've known Gene for over twenty years and he has been loving, caring, and giving, Not only to his family and friends but to many others as well. My connection with Gene has been a love of trains and the Corvallis High School Ski Team for many years.*

*I Will Miss Him Greatly  
Bill Albright  
billchoochoo@gmail.com*

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**Bill Albright** - March 20, 2021 at 07:22 PM

JL

“ Dear Thompson Family,  
I was deeply saddened to hear of Gene's passing. I had been speaking with him about every two weeks or so, keeping him updated on my mom's health (Nadine Long, Gene's cousin), and we had been planning a trip to visit her after Covid. He was always cheerful, kind and a true gentleman in our conversations. I will miss speaking with him. My thoughts are with you.

*Jim Long*

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**Jim Long** - March 18, 2021 at 12:42 PM

ED

“ Dear Thompson Family,  
  
I'm thinking of you with fond memories of Thompson Lake and love for your entire clan.

*Condolences,*

*Beth Quatrano Diamond  
elisabeth.diamond@gmail.com*

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**Elisabeth Q. Diamond** - March 18, 2021 at 10:55 AM