



Thomas Bumpass

February 23, 1949 - April 29, 2026

Thomas “Tee” Bumpass, a veteran of Chattanooga, TN., was born on February 23, 1949, to the late Essie Belle Williams Bumpass and Butler Bumpass in Savannah, TN. He was a graduate of Howard High School, class of 1967. He passed away April 29, 2026, in a local hospital at the age of 77.

Thomas was a TN-based multi-instrumentalist, singer, and songwriter known for R&B, soul and funk music. He started as a trumpeter, touring with Dyke & The Blazers at age 17 before playing on Chattanooga historic “Big9” (M.L. King Boulevard). He was a Motown producer for seven years, as well as a songwriter and artist at Motown Records. As a former Motown producer and musician, he spent time in Los Angeles with the group Ozone and backing artists such as Billy Preston, Teena Marie, the DeBarge Family, and Sammy Davis Jr. Worked for 7 years as a producer, songwriter, and artist at Motown Records. He was proficient in trumpet, keyboards, and vocals. Throughout his music storied life, he has played around the world.

In 2018 he married the love of his life, Erika Hawkins- Bumpass of Chattanooga, Tennessee whom he was happily married until his transition home. In 2000 Thomas gave his life to Christ and has been a member of Bible Way Ministries since then and led the Praise Team. He led the Tee Bumpass Band and played with local groups including The El Continental Band, The Malemen, Skin Deep, and Convertabull. Thomas was featured in the

Chattanooga Times Free Press for his contributions to the local music scene.

He is survived by his loving wife, Erika Hawkins- Bumpass; son, Thomas Jerrod (Lorita) Bumpass and stepson, Derrick Norris of Chattanooga, TN.; sisters, Rosie Jean Bumpass of Spring Hill, TN. and Sheryl Bumpass (Balus Smith) of Chattanooga, TN.; one remaining brother, Frank (Patty) Bumpass; two grandchildren, Olivia Bumpass and William Davis; two great-grandchildren, along with a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Thomas will lie-in-state on Saturday, May 16, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at Taylor Funeral Home. Funeral service will follow at 2:00 p.m. in the Chapel with Pastor Walter Owens, Jr. as the Eulogist. Burial will be on Monday, May 18, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. at Chattanooga Memorial Park.

Previous Events

Lie-In-State

MAY **16.** 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Taylor Funeral Home
3417 Wilcox Boulevard
Chattanooga, TN 37411-1076

Funeral Service

MAY **16.** 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM (ET)

Taylor Funeral Home
3417 Wilcox Boulevard
Chattanooga, TN 37411-1076

Burial

MAY **18.** 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Chattanooga Memorial Park
501 Memorial Drive
Chattanooga, TN 37415

Tribute Wall



“ Prayers for the Family of My Dear Friend Thomas Bumpass. We had some good times together at Howard High Class of 1967. Also we have some great memories running together. My Brother. Our days playing with Howard High Marching 100, The El Continental Band, and Skin Deep were some of the Best Days of Our Lives. Rest in Heaven my Dear Friend! It's All Good. -Edward Ector Jr. (Preacher) The Ector Family

Edward Ector - May 16 at 07:25 PM



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Edwina LaShan - May 16 at 06:59 PM

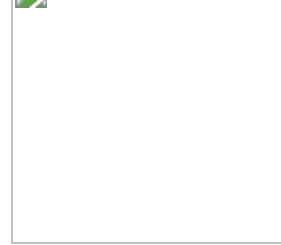


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Edwina LaShan - May 16 at 06:27 PM



“ *My Condolences and Prayers to the Family.*



sheila owens - May 16 at 02:48 AM



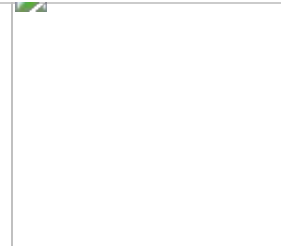
“ *Elder Jimmy Moore Jr MOCC purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Thomas Bumpass.*



Elder Jimmy Moore Jr MOCC - May 15 at 06:39 PM



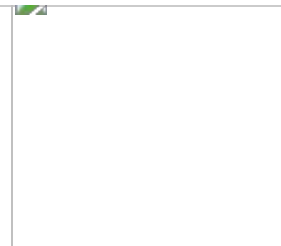
“ *Connie Gates lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bumpass*



connie gates - May 15 at 04:03 PM



“ *Dyanna White lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bumpass*



Dyanna White - May 15 at 03:06 PM

WP

“ Dear Erika, our heartfelt condolences to you and your family during this very difficult time. We will miss Thomas' friendly and jovial presence, the conversations and laughs we shared, and the sounds of his music floating through the windows. We are here for you and will continue to lift you and your family in prayer. Remember the words of Psalm 34:18, "The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." God's got you, and He will comfort and strengthen you... Just continue to trust Him.
With Love, Your Neighbor-Friends, Wendell and Sherry Pete

Wendell and Sherry Pete - May 15 at 02:15 PM

Y

“ Tee Bumpass was an amazing musician. I light this candle for Groove Line Dance established out of Brainerd Recreation Center 2008. Bumpass created a line dance song for "Chattanooga" Named the Chattanooga Shuffle he was in the process of remixing the song. But his legacy will live on through song and dance. Thank you Tee for your talent and time you shared with Groove Line Dance Team.

Yolanda Cox - May 15 at 01:10 AM

DW

“ Doris White & Family 🙏💙🙏

Doris White - May 14 at 02:09 AM

DW

“ *Rest in Paradise cousin. You will be missed and never forgotten. Such a joy to be around. Always kept a smile on your face. I will miss you calling me by my full name. Only family was able to do that. Praying for comfort and strength for the family and all those who loved Thomas.* 🙏💙🙏

Doris Ann

Doris White - May 14 at 02:08 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas Bumpass.*



May 12 at 06:57 PM



“ *Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses was purchased for the family of Thomas Bumpass.*



May 12 at 03:42 PM

R

“ *My deepest condolences to the Thomas Bumpass and Family.*

Ronnie Thomas - May 11 at 06:39 PM

V

“ *My sincere condolences to the Bumpass family in the loss of your loved one. May God give you comfort and peace.*

Vincinetta Brown & Family

Vincinetta P Brown - May 11 at 02:55 PM

JF

“ *Joyce Fears lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bumpass*



Joyce Fears - May 11 at 11:28 AM

E

“ *Rest in peace my brother you will be missed. Gene Crutcher*

Eugene Crutcher - May 10 at 03:32 AM

C

“ Rest up uncle Tee! You were my great uncle and yet so close! You always made sure to get the entire family together for reunions! You were always big on family! One of the most talented people! Im really going to miss you! You were always my favorite and you will be missed by all ❤️



COURTNEY DAVIS - May 10 at 12:25 AM

CM

“ Rest in Heaven my friend 🤍🙏
Such a wonderful man (person), will truly be missed. Prayers to the family.

Cassandra (Neely) Moore

Cassandra A Moore - May 08 at 09:02 PM

DB

“ Dirria Bell lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bumpass



Dirria Bell - May 08 at 06:09 PM

I

“ I’m writing this tribute to my father, Thomas Bumpass, with a very broken heart. Instead of us being able to finish our plans for Memorial Day weekend, I now have to find the strength to say goodbye.

Pops, I am grateful that God chose you to be my father, and I am proud to be your son. Your love, wisdom, and guidance carried me through so many phases of my life, and I could not have become the man I am today without you.

I love you more than words could ever express, Dad. Rest in peace and in the care of our soon-coming King, King Jesus. Glory and all praise be to His name.

To everyone who has shared tributes, prayers, and words of comfort—thank you. Your love and support have truly lifted me and my family during this difficult time.

*Blessings and love,
Jerrod and Family*

Integrated Team - May 08 at 03:56 PM

BJ

We are so sorry for the the loss of your dear father, he said our classmate and friend, and we truly going to miss him, we are praying for the family, Howard High Class of 1967, "Untill we meet again"

Bonita Johnson - May 08 at 08:20 PM

JJ

I HAVE BEEN KNOWING THE BUMPASS FAMILY SINCE THE EARLY 1960'S POSS HOMES. THOMAS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A GENTLEMAN AND A TRUE FRIEND. MAY YOU WALK DOWN THE STREETS OF GOLD WITH JESUS.

JESSE BRASWELL JR - May 10 at 10:10 AM



“ *Condolences to the family, you will be missed!*

eddie norwood - May 08 at 01:48 AM



“ *Ozone band members purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Thomas Bumpass.*



Ozone band members - May 07 at 10:40 PM



“ *Thank you for always being so kind. Your music and gentle spirit will always be remembered.*
LNash

Lucilla Nash - May 06 at 11:01 PM



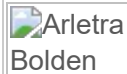
“ *My condolences to the family from a long time friend rest in peace my bro*

John Hudson - May 06 at 10:18 PM



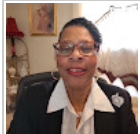
“ *My condolences to the family know tomorrow a long time back in the day chattanooga tn my home town rest in peace my bro*

John Hudson - May 06 at 10:17 PM



“ *RIH Dear Friend! Gone Too Soon! 🐾❤️ I'm sure that your Assention was welcomed by the Great Musicians from around the world 🌍 It was an honor to have you as a Friend for many many years. May 8th marks the 7th anniversary of the Ascension of my Dear Husband RT BOLDEN. Im sure that the Chattanooga Musicians will welcome you with the style and grace that showed here during you time on earth 🌍😇🎵 horn 🎺🎹*

Arletra Bolden - May 06 at 08:02 PM



“ *Olivet Baptist Church Bereavement Support Ministry extend heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and our community, during this season of bereavement. May you all find comfort knowing that others care . 🙏🌹🙏*

Viola Douthit - May 06 at 05:48 PM

DR

“ *My sincere condolences to the family and friends. I remember him always on the piano at Bible Way. He will truly be missed. God bless and comfort you all in this time of sorrow.*

Delores Readus-Elder

Delores Readus-Elder - May 06 at 04:53 PM

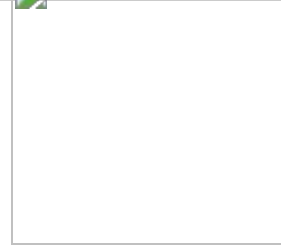
DR

“ *My sincere condolences to the family and friends. He's truly going to be missed. I remember him always on the piano at Bible Way. He was a nice man and always greeted me with a smile. God bless and comfort you all in this time of sorrow.*

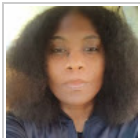
Delores Readus-Elder - May 06 at 04:50 PM



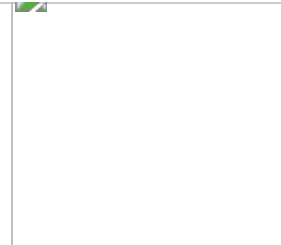
“ Audrey High lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bumpass



Audrey High - May 06 at 03:08 PM



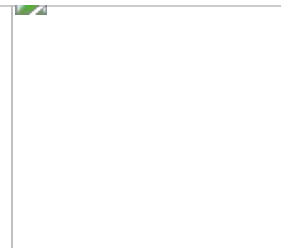
“ Rest In Peace 🙏



Mia Treadwell - May 05 at 01:47 PM

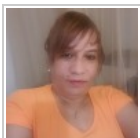


“ I'm so sorry to hear about the passing of my friend and Olan Mills coworker. My prayers to his wife Erica, and all his family members. Wishing you comfort and peace in this time of sorrow "Rest in Peace"

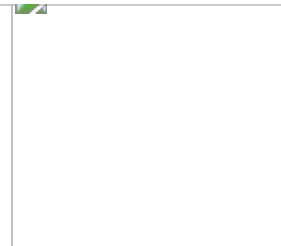


Denise H. Wilkerson

Denise H Wilkerson - May 04 at 06:12 PM



“ Lyn Owens lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bumpass



Lyn Owens - May 03 at 11:24 PM

PS

“ *GodSpeed My Dear Friend!! We will perform together again one day.*
Paul

Paul Stone - May 03 at 03:21 PM

CM

“ *Rest in heaven my friend* 💞

Cassandra A Moore - May 03 at 10:31 AM

 Tanna Bailey

“ *Tanna Bailey lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bumpass*

Tanna Bailey - May 02 at 09:51 PM

SC

“ *My sincere condolences to the family and friends. Mr. T was an honorable man who loved the Lord and people. His infectious personality will live on through precious memories. To know him was to love him. He will truly be missed by sooo many.* ❤️ 100 ❤️

Saron "Ms. Nisey" Carter-Geddes - May 02 at 12:06 AM

SC

“ Saron "Ms. Nisey' Carter-Geddes lit a candle
in memory of Thomas Bumpass



Saron "Ms. Nisey' Carter-Geddes - May 01 at 11:58 PM

EI

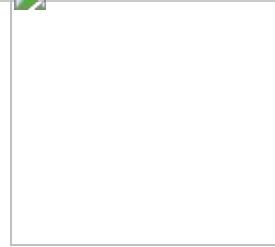
“ Eddie L. Scott II lit a candle in memory of
Thomas Bumpass



Eddie L. Scott II - May 01 at 11:57 PM

DS

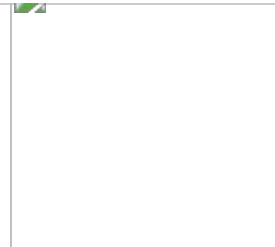
“ Dywana Sanders lit a candle in memory of
Thomas Bumpass



Dywana Sanders - May 01 at 06:47 PM

DW

“ Dyanna White lit a candle in memory of
Thomas Bumpass



Dyanna White - May 01 at 06:39 PM

DW

“ *Dyanna White lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bumpass*

Dyanna White - May 01 at 06:39 PM

TS

“ *Uncle I'm still in shock. I can't believe you're gone. I loved to hear you call me Tajuana Lynn. You would call me by my full name. You and Erika would have the whole family come to you all's house to fellowship. I loved that about you. You were always about family. I'm going to miss you. You were one of my favorite uncles and I had a few. Love you uncle.*

Tajuana Sterling - May 01 at 06:19 PM

BP

“ *I am so saddened to hear of Thomas' passing. He was such an awesome person, I called him friend, and my ex-coworker. He was so talented, I always enjoyed going to see him play in most of the bands that he founded.*

Condolences to his family and friends.

R.I.H. my friend, Thomas

As he called me, Betty Faye



Betty Faye Payeton - May 01 at 12:22 PM

JH

My condolences to a long time friend of yours may you rest in peace my bro

John Hudson - May 02 at 12:42 AM