



Tommy Ray "Coach" Estes

May 2, 1941 - February 10, 2026

On Tuesday, February 10, 2026, Tommy Ray "Coach" Estes, beloved father and grandfather, passed away peacefully at Circle of Life Hospice in Bentonville, Arkansas at the age of 84.

Tommy was born on May 2, 1941, in Van Buren, Arkansas to the late Richard O. And Johnnie Bell Estes. He graduated from Van Buren High School in 1959 and from Arkansas Tech University in 1964. He went on to serve as a history and social sciences, teacher and coach for 35 years. He spent 25 of those years with the Springdale School District, most of them at Springdale High School. Tommy also served in the Arkansas Army National Guard for 24 years, retiring in 1990 as a Field Artillery Lieutenant Colonel. He was known for this quiet, gentle spirit, generosity, and quick humor.

In 1967, Tommy married his sweetheart, Connie Standlee, and together they built a life devoted to family, faith, community, and their students. Until later in life, Tommy was an active member of Cross Church Springdale, where he sang in the choir, volunteered in countless service events and outreach opportunities, and traveled the world on mission trips. He was an avid sports fan (especially of the Razorbacks), enjoyed tinkering in his woodworking shop and had a love for writing poetry. In 2013, he published a book of poetry entitled "Writing in Poetrinese" "to give glory to his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, to thank and pay tribute to those who serve and have served in the US

Armed Forces, to celebrate America, to encourage, inspire, and amuse the reader, and to share some of his joys.” Above all, he cherished his role as “Pawpaw” to his grandchildren.

Tommy was preceded in death by his wife of 30 years, Connie Estes; his parents; and his brother, Richard Estes. He is survived by his children, Ray Estes (Tanya) of Cheyenne, WY, and Ricia Wilson (Aaron) of Rogers, AR; three grandchildren, Morgan Markow of Ventruea, CA, and Eli and Emmitt Wilson of Rogers, AR; his sister, Dinah McClarty of Olive Branch, MS; and many friends and extended family. The family would like to extend a special thank you to the wonderful staff of Grand Brook of Rogers for the care he received in his final years and Circle of Life in his final days.

A graveside service will be Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 2pm at Friendship Cemetery in Springdale, AR. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

Cemetery Details

Friendship Cemetery

1980 E. Friendship Road
Springdale, AR 72764
<http://www.friendship-cemetery.com>

Previous Events

Graveside Service

FEB 19. 2:00 PM (CT)

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Springdale, AR 72764
<http://www.friendship-cemetery.com>

Tribute Wall

TM

“ I had Coach Estes, fir Driver's Ed, at SHS. He was a patient instructor. Later, I worked with him as a fellow teacher ,at SHS. He was always kind and professional.

Terri McNeelis - February 15 at 01:29 PM

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*for

Terri McNeelis - February 15 at 02:15 PM

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“ Rest in Peace Coach Estes. I recall once being in detention picked up and moved a chair with a girl sitting in it. He looked at me and said “boy you would make one hell of a tackle”. Coach Estes no matter your situation always looked for the best in someone. Rest in Peaxe Coach.

John Mars (Hudson) - February 15 at 09:06 AM