



## Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr.

November 2, 1942 - October 1, 2019

Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr.  
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Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr., entered into Eternal Life on October 1, 2019, after a long and courageous battle with cancer that he never quit fighting.

Tommy was born into this life on November 2, 1942, in Albany, Georgia, to Judge Rosser Adams Malone and Petrona "Toni" Underwood Malone. The son of a prosecutor who became a judge, Tommy dreamed of being a rodeo cowboy, auctioneer, blacksmith or farrier. Despite his earliest ambition to ride bucking horses in rodeos, Tommy completed his education in the Dougherty County Public Schools and attended the University of Georgia from 1960 to 1963. From there he went on to attend the Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University. He was admitted to the Georgia Bar in 1965, a year before he graduated from the Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University in 1966.

After graduating from law school, Tommy returned to his hometown of Albany to begin his legal career as a trial lawyer by joining his father in law practice. Within a few years, Governor Carl Sanders appointed Tommy's father Director of the State Game and Fish Commission and Tommy founded Malone Law. This was the beginning of Tommy's career as a tenacious legal pioneer. As a pioneer in those days, Tommy was one of very few willing to represent regular people against the rich and powerful establishment which resulted in many losses at trial. Early in his career, after a particularly devastating medical malpractice loss for a young paralyzed girl that would have made many lawyers quit, Tommy enlisted the help of the famed "King of Torts", Melvin Belli to partner with him in another suit against the pharmaceutical company which resulted in the largest settlement yet seen in South Georgia. Mel told Tommy he was the best lawyer he had ever seen in the courtroom.

Tommy either believed what Mel told him or didn't have the heart to let Mel be proven wrong and, as a result of that and what he called the "Guiding Hand" in his life, Tommy

went on to launch a career of obtaining record-setting recoveries for the families of those severely injured or killed in preventable disasters occurring in hospitals, on the highways, and the airways. Throughout his 50-year legal career, Tommy earned a nationwide reputation of having the highest standards of character and integrity, skill in the courtroom, and an incredible talent to simplify, solve, and explain the most complicated and complex problems. If he believed a case had merit, he feared nothing and fought until the very end. He was considered a giant in the legal arena by his peers.

In addition to being a legal giant, Tommy was a leader in numerous state, national, and international legal organizations. He was a past President of the American Board of Professional Liability Attorneys, the Southern Trial Lawyers Association, the Melvin M. Belli Society, and the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association. He was also honored to be included as a Fellow in the International Academy of Trial Lawyers and the International Society of Barristers, which are reserved and limited to the 500 most elite trial lawyers in the United States and abroad. Tommy was included in the annual listing of the Best Lawyers in America every year for the last 30 years and he was honored as a Super Lawyer every year since the inception of Super Lawyers and was voted by his peers as the number one Super Lawyer in Georgia for 10 years in a row until his retirement.

Among his many professional awards and honors, the two Tommy was most proud of receiving are both from the Southern Trial Lawyers Association, the coveted “War Horse Award” and, the one named in his honor, the “Tommy Malone Great American Eagle Award”. In 2018, the famed author Vincent Coppola together with the Mercer Press, produced a best-selling biography of Tommy Malone’s lifetime of making a meaningful difference for others entitled, Tommy Malone, Trial Lawyer, And the Light Shone Through ... The Guiding Hand Shaping One of America’s Greatest Trial Lawyers.

Tommy not only served his clients and the legal profession, but also his community including the Carter Center Board of Councilors, Shepherd Center Foundation Board of Trustees, where he and Debbie were honored with Angel of the Year Award, and the Mercer University Board of Trustees. He served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Mercer 2015-2017 and has been an ardent supporter of Mercer Law School, endowing the Tommy Malone Distinguished Chair in Trial Advocacy at the law school.

Of his many accomplishments and successes, Tommy was most proud of marrying his life partner, Debbie, the love of his life, his soul mate, closest friend and companion. Their chance encounter in a grocery store blossomed into one of the greatest love stories ever told. Tommy believed his success in his life and career would not have been possible without Debbie’s love, understanding, and support. They spent 34 years adoring each

other, and their love radiated to everyone around them. Their 32-year marriage mirrored that of what fairytales are made of; she, his princess, and he, her prince charming.

When Tommy wasn't working, he was with Debbie, travelling, entertaining, deep sea fishing and adding new chapters to their love story. Tommy was known as the life of the party. Together, he and Debbie were most known for their generosity and epic soirees. For decades, their Bahamian estate, Snapper Point in Marsh Harbour on Abaco Island, was the scene of once-in-a-lifetime memories for their family, friends, colleagues, and even mere acquaintances. Everyone who knew Tommy knew the only place to find him during the month of May was with Debbie and their Pomeranians on the 70-foot Striker, aptly named "Justice," fishing the crystal clear waters of the Bahamas. Tommy and Debbie loved to travel to many of the Bahamian Islands fishing, exploring and making lifelong friends that they would meet along the way.

Tommy is remembered as a man who was larger than life, had an infectious smile, an incredible sense of humor, a fertile mind and integrity like no other. His last days were spent as he had lived – captivating the many who flocked to visit him with his quick wit and unparalleled charm.

Tommy is survived by his loving wife, partner, and helpmate of 32 years, Debora "Debbie" Blankinship Malone. He is also survived by his two sons of whom he was most proud, Tommy Malone, Jr. and Adam Malone. Adam was deeply honored and felt privileged to have practiced law together as a father/son team with his dad for 16 years incredible years. He is proud to be continuing his father's legacy and the work they did together with Malone Law in making a meaningful difference in the lives of others. Tommy is also survived by four grandchildren – Maddie, Emilie, Rosser, and Kennedy. Tommy was preceded in death by his parents, Toni and Rosser Malone, and his brother, Ross Malone.

A small private service will be held in celebration of Tommy. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial gifts be made to the Malone Distinguished Chair in Trial Advocacy or the Judge Rosser Malone Scholarship at Mercer University, 1501 Mercer University Drive, Macon, GA 31207, <https://law.mercer.edu/malonememorial> or the Shepherd Center, 2020 Peachtree Road, NW, Atlanta, GA 30309, <https://give.shepherd.org/charitable-giving>

# Comments

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“ Driving through Albany today recalling visiting Tommy and wife here at family plantation about 56 years ago. We were from Alabama. I worked at Mercer w his wife. May God comfort his family and.may they all know Jesus as Savior. John 3.16.

Patsy and James Rogers.

**James and Patsy Rogers** - February 14 at 02:32 PM

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“ Medical Visions, Inc, Elizabeth Shick, Kent Kuehne purchased the Guiding Light Bouquet for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



**Medical Visions, Inc, Elizabeth Shick, Kent Kuehne** - October 07, 2019 at 12:44 PM

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“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



October 06, 2019 at 04:58 PM

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“ Tommy and I became friends over the years when he first started litigation against Doctors, and Hospital back when he was in Albany. I was the Regional Manager for St. Paul Insurance Companies and we at one time insured most of the Health care providers and Hospitals. Tommy was one of the first Attorneys that would take on this type of litigation back in the 80;s. We had many cases over the years and became good friends.

A true Gentleman and a great Attorney.

I suggest you get his book on Amazon if you want to get more of an insight on Tommy. A great read.

I will miss him. So long old friend. Gone but never forgotten.



**Dennis Caniglia** - October 05, 2019 at 04:56 PM



“ God bless Adam, Debbie, Tommy Jr and the extended Malone family. Tommy was a great man and it was truly an honor getting to know him and learn from him as a younger lawyer.

**Joe** - October 14, 2019 at 03:45 PM

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“ Dennis Caniglia lit a candle in memory of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr.



**Dennis Caniglia** - October 05, 2019 at 04:41 PM

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“ Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



October 05, 2019 at 11:43 AM

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“ We are deeply saddened by Tommy's passing. We will always cherish the wonderful times we had together and the memories that were made. Tommy loved life and lived it to the fullest. Our deepest condolences. Janice and Lloyd Moriber

**Dr. Lloyd & Janice Moriber** - October 05, 2019 at 08:13 AM

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“ He was a good man. My sincerest sympathy.  
Susan Dowdell Smith

Susan Dowdell Smith - October 04, 2019 at 07:49 PM

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“ Tommy was a larger than life man and he will be in our hearts and minds as long as we are here. We feel all the happier for having had the privilege of knowing him and spending joyous times together with him.  
Our deepest sympathy  
and  
All our love to Debbie and Tommy's family  
Karen and Walter Emroch

The Emrochs - October 04, 2019 at 05:07 PM

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“ In 2010, shortly after moving to San Diego to follow my then wife's employment, I received a call from Tommy asking if I would take the reins of the ABPLA from him and serve as President. I told Tommy, “not only no, but hell no! You are not just a tough act to follow you are an impossible act to follow!” As only Tommy Malone can, he twisted my arm without my feeling the slightest pain and achieved my commitment to serve, keeping his promise to support my service in every way.

Adam and Debbie, I am so proud to call Tommy my friend. He helped me in so many ways as a practicing lawyer, never hesitating to encourage me to take gallant risks, always calculated to make the world a better place for all. I will keep you and your family in my prayers and wish you all the love and support at this difficult time.

Bill McMurry, Louisville, Kentucky

William McMurry - October 04, 2019 at 03:33 PM

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“ Tommy Malone was a great lawyer and a true champion for the injured, the poor, and the powerless. His passing is a great loss for all of us and the cause of justice. —  
Arthur Bryant, Chairman Emeritus, Public Justice

Arthur Bryant - October 04, 2019 at 03:15 PM

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“ Jack McGovern purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



Jack McGovern - October 04, 2019 at 03:03 PM

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“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



October 04, 2019 at 01:03 PM

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“ John & Doris Underwood and the Underwood family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



John & Doris Underwood and the Underwood family - October 04, 2019 at 11:44 AM

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“ We offer our deepest and most heartfelt sympathies to Debbie, Adam, Tommy Jr. and the entire Malone family. Tommy was an icon, a loving husband, father and grandfather and he had a life well lived. We are all graced by our fond memories of Tommy, and are inspired by Tommy and Debbie's wonderful love story.

We will continue to keep you all in our prayers during this difficult time. To quote Big Daddy, "When thou are done with us on this earth, we pray that you accept us in Heaven." Tommy is certainly with his maker now, and, for the first time, does not have to make his case through persuasion and rhetoric. He touched so many others in his life by helping those that could not help themselves that his life is his testimony, and there is no more persuasive argument.

## John & Doris Underwood and the Underwood family

John E. Underwood - October 04, 2019 at 11:36 AM

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“ Dee, Rachel, Chelsea, Meri, Denise, Holly & Cat purchased the Tropical Tribute Spray for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



Dee, Rachel, Chelsea, Meri, Denise, Holly & Cat - October 04, 2019 at 10:47 AM

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“ My first introduction to Tommy was almost 25 years ago when a mentor gave me audio recordings of Tommy demonstrating his masterful art of closing arguments. I was truly inspired. Years later I was blessed to meet and then become friends with Tommy through Southern Trial Lawyers Association. He was absolutely passionate about doing the right things for the right reasons. He was a true giant among us, and made the world a better place for his family, his clients, his friends and colleagues. Debbie and Adam, we will dearly miss your wonderful husband and father.

Randall Phillips - October 04, 2019 at 08:47 AM

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“ Tranquil Seas was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



October 04, 2019 at 08:15 AM

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“ I am extremely saddened at the loss of my friend of 37 years. My deepest sympathies to Debbie, Adam and the entire Malone family. Tommy will be missed by all who knew him. I admired his gentle manner, his kindness, his love of family, friends and clients. His ability to be concerned and compassionate to those less fortunate was truly admirable. Tommy loved being a lawyer and proved it every day. I am happy Adam that you practiced law with your father, learned the great lessons he had to share and you will carry on the practice he loved.

Sincerely, Betty Simms

**Betty Simms** - October 03, 2019 at 11:32 PM

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“ I am a better person for knowing Tommy

**Mike Anderson** - October 03, 2019 at 09:56 PM

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“ When you meet a stranger on a dock in the Bahamas and you know nothing of his status and accomplishments then you shake his hand and communicate, you realize you have met a man of character, kindness and friendship. Tommy told us his passion was to help, guide and counsel those in need, as he has done for us.

The Lord will recognize men of Tommy's character. Rest in Peace our fellow fisherman and friend.

Morrie and Frank Peterson

**Morrie & Frank Peterson** - October 03, 2019 at 09:54 PM

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“ I met Tommy when I needed help after my husband passed away. While he was my attorney, he became my friend. In my darkest hour, he was my ray of light. I was fortunate enough to visit Snapper Point on two occasions and will always be grateful for his generosity. I stayed in touch with him every month via text since he told me of his cancer. I loved Tommy and he will forever hold a special place in my heart. To say he was one of the good guys is an understatement. Rest In Peace my sweet dear friend. Heaven surely gained an Angel.

**Susan Helms** - October 03, 2019 at 07:35 PM

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“ If the measure of a man at his death is his family, the people that loved him and the lives he changed, Tommy was truly a giant.

We were but stones, your light made us stars.

Rest in peace, my friend.

-Brendan

**Brendan Way** - October 03, 2019 at 05:52 PM



“ Mary Alexander and Brendan Way purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



Mary Alexander and Brendan Way - October 03, 2019 at 05:07 PM

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“ I was fortunate enough to meet Mr. Malone in early 2015 when he spoke to the Mercer Law Class of 2017. Lead by the Tommy Malone Distinguished Chair in Trial Advocacy, Professor Timothy Floyd, our small group section had heard many stories of Mr. Malone's unflappable integrity, his superior legal aptitude, his boundless generosity, and his deep-seated love and concern for his clients, and for all those with whom he came into contact.

I distinctly remember his as the most memorable visit of the dozens of attorneys who spoke to our class. Even at 8:30 A.M. on a Friday morning, he was simply captivating.

Despite decades of professional successes, awards and recognitions, his humility was palpable, his candor unparalleled, and the brilliant light of his spirit radiated forth. That morning, I saw the embodiment of every good and positive trait with which an attorney, advocate, and counselor can be attributed; he was a professional of the highest order. I hope that I might be remembered for possessing a minute fraction of his character, his legal mastery, and his compassion for others.

Though we all grieve his departure from our midst, I am certain that the whole of Heaven rejoices in welcoming him to his eternal home in the kingdom of our Lord and Savior.

Brian Aplin - October 03, 2019 at 04:58 PM

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“ Adam - we are sorry for your loss. Your father was a great man. Professor Mitchell

Joe Mitchell - October 03, 2019 at 04:40 PM

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“ You are in my prayers. What a great man!

Virgil Adams



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas "Tommy" William Malone, Sr..



October 03, 2019 at 01:43 PM

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“ Deepest condolences to the Malone family. Tommy and I grew up t together riding his horse Trigger. We were neighbors for years, and 12 years of elementary, junior high, and high school. Debbie, you and Adam are in our thoughts and prayers . Always enjoyed time with you both when we were in Atlanta.

Jane Jordan & Larry Styles

jane - October 03, 2019 at 10:44 AM

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“ I first met Tommy at the Musgrove sand pits while my friend Jack Beasley was putting on a Rodeo. Later in the Albany Jaycees. I sold him half interest in my plane. He was a mighty fine man and a great friend. Prayers for the family, RIP

Bill Connell - October 03, 2019 at 09:51 AM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



wendy lustgarten - October 02, 2019 at 08:46 PM



“ I wonderful friend  
RIP Tommy

Gail Mitchell - October 03, 2019 at 11:20 AM



“ Debbie, Adam, and Malone family, please accept our condolences. We miss our larger than life friend.

Patricia and Gary Green

**gary green** - October 03, 2019 at 11:50 AM



“ Debbie and Adam--you were a wonderful wife and son to Tommy who was a great man and lawyer. Please accept my sincere condolences. I am thinking of you. Mary Alexander

**Mary Alexander** - October 03, 2019 at 04:52 PM

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“ One of the best. He treated me like family most of my life. I'm better off for having known him, and I'm sure Heaven is excited to get him.

**Bill Bulloch** - October 02, 2019 at 08:03 PM