



## John Valentine "Jack" Thompson III

June 25, 1953 - July 21, 2023

In cherished memory we honor John Valentine "Jack" Thompson III, who passed away unexpectedly at the age of 70 on July 21st, 2023, while doing what he loved, playing doubles with some of his dearest friends. Jack was born June 25th, 1953, in Hampton, Virginia. He had an idyllic childhood, raised by adoring parents with his brother and sister in Newport News, Virginia.

Jack developed a love for track and cross country at Ferguson High School. Under coach Virgil King, Jack and his teammates held the record for the two-mile relay at the prestigious Peninsula Relays for over 25 years. He was recruited by Virginia Tech, but chose to focus on his studies and the development of his new passion- tennis! His weekends during those college years were always reserved for Pam, the love of his life, and his dearest passion. They were married for 46 years.

Upon graduating with honors, Jack continued his studies in Exercise Physiology in graduate school. He kick-started his journey in education as a middle school teacher and high school coach, which marked the beginning of a lifelong dedication to teaching, competing, and coaching.

Jack became a prominent tennis teaching professional, achieving the prestigious title of International Master Pro from the PTR, a truly distinguished honor bestowed upon only a select few. He won the award for "Tennis Professional of the Year" from this world-wide organization in 2015.

Although always ranked highly in singles, doubles and mixed doubles in North

Carolina, Jack always chose to channel his enormous energy to his students. His expertise and passion for tennis led him to coach at all levels, including college, inspiring countless students of all ages to develop a deep appreciation for the sport. Both on and off the court, Jack cared deeply for his students, leaving a lasting impact on their lives.

Jack extended his teachings as a talented author, publishing two books, one recently. He also authored numerous thought-provoking articles published in many tennis magazines.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Jack's true pride and joy lay in his role as a husband and father to his two daughters, Jacquelyn Leigh and Virginia Wingfield. As a loving father, he nurtured their passions, teaching both Jacque and Ginny how to play tennis. Jack was also an accomplished musician, forming a family band with his equally talented daughters during their early high school years. His mother Myrna was also a skilled pianist, and sought after piano teacher in the Tidewater area. Myrna received a prestigious scholarship to study at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. Surely, Jack is encouraging Ginny and Myrna to play the blues with him in heaven.

He took immense pleasure in encouraging them in their pursuits of tennis, track and cross country (Jacque), and music (Ginny). Jack's kind spirit and sense of humor endeared him to his family, and he created countless cherished memories alongside them. Infamous for his humorous practical jokes, he viewed all family members and close friends as "prey."

Bonds with friends and family were deeply treasured by Jack, and he shared a close relationship with his siblings, Larry and Leigh. All three Thompson siblings shared a love for racquet sports. Jack's exceptional talent extended to various racquet sports, including tennis, racquetball, paddle tennis, ping pong, and badminton. A recently certified pickleball instructor, Jack steadfastly maintained his ode to tennis "purism". It is humorously fair to say he hadn't fully embraced the new sport of pickleball just yet.

Larry, gifted in multiple racquet sports, pursued a successful career in Athletic

Training. Jack often sought the advice of his brother for students' injuries. Leigh, enriched with Jack's wisdom, support, and coaching, achieved an impressive world ranking of #27 in the 1980s.

For those fortunate enough to have known and loved Jack, it's evident that he made a divine pact to leave this world doing what he loved most - playing tennis. Jack left this world while playing a doubles match with dear friends, and rumor has it, he and his partner were winning! With well-deserved angel wings, Jack is now reunited in heavenly embrace with his beloved daughter, Virginia Wingfield, his parents, Myrna and John, and his uncle Bill – all united by their shared love for tennis.

Jack is survived by his wife, Pamela, his daughter Jacquelyn Thompson Jensen and her husband, Chace. His memory also lives on through his siblings Lawrence "Larry" Edward Thompson and Leigh Coss, niece Sophie Coss and nephews Matthew Coss, Nicholas Thompson, and cousins Kathryn Miko, Randy Gibson, and Jessica Leigh Anderson, and with many other beloved extended family members and close friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held in honor of Jack on Friday, August 18th, from 4 to 6 pm at the Country Club of Salisbury in Salisbury, North Carolina. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Virginia Wingfield Endowed Scholarship at Catawba College or a charity of your choice.

May the memories of Jack's vibrant life, his love for family and sports, and his impact on countless lives remain etched in our hearts forever.

Summersett Funeral Home is serving the Thompson family. Online condolences may be made at [www.summersettfuneralhome.com](http://www.summersettfuneralhome.com).

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

AUG 18. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Country Club of Salisbury  
747 Club Dr.  
Salisbury, NC 28144

# Tribute Wall

KW

“ Karin W. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Valentine "Jack" Thompson III.

Karin W. - March 25, 2024 at 08:36 PM

GK

“ With Loving Memories..  
I being of a questionably sound mind (as noted by Jack many times) and having also attained the ripe age of 70 on July 22, this Ferguson High Class of '71 Mariner and multiyear Blacksburg Hokie is now shaken by the loss of a good friend... (that I could never catch on the track in gym class). Jack is and will remain in my Soul as a true Compadre.  
My heartfelt Prayers and Blessings go out to the remaining Thompson Clan...Especially to Pam (a part time McDermon) who was indeed "Courted" by Jack to a future Thompson Life and a "Net" result of many Memories & Legacies. May his Life live on in each person touched, trained or encouraged by him over his span here on this Earth...  
It is with Love that Peace be with you all...God Bless.... Garnett Knabe

Garnett Knabe - August 18, 2023 at 02:29 PM

SD

“ Savina D. planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Valentine "Jack" Thompson III.

Savina D. - August 10, 2023 at 10:34 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of John Valentine "Jack" Thompson III.

August 07, 2023 at 10:52 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of John Valentine "Jack" Thompson III.



August 07, 2023 at 10:52 PM



“ Jack taught my daughter and her doubles partner the last couple years. He would arrange one-hour lessons which would extend for two or three hours. He would arrange matches against other kids. He would watch their matches for hours. He would call me at home to check on how they did in tournaments or school matches. He even helped the dads with our games. He did so much more for our kids than could have ever been expected. He improved their games tremendously, but he also demonstrated what giving to others means.

Jack was an outstanding tennis coach, but also a great and giving person. I hope our kids always remember Jack's example and will share his wisdom with others in the future. We have missed him so much already.

Dave Flynn - July 31, 2023 at 10:32 AM

PE

*More than a brother to me. We shared the passion of teaching tennis and life together. Pete Collins*

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**Pete** - July 31, 2023 at 11:23 AM

SZ

*As Jack's publisher I have had the honor of working with him for the last couple of years, getting to know what an amazing man and dedicated teacher and mentor he was. His desire to pass on his teaching and knowledge in the written word was somewhat of a passion for him. He had a genuine gift for instructing pupils and players at all levels, offering everything he had learned in an accomplished career, as well as sharing extensive life lessons to all he could help. He was a truly caring individual, whose loss will leave a hole in his community of friends and acquaintances.*

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**Sharon Ziemek** - August 12, 2023 at 07:20 PM

SH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Summersett Funeral Home** - July 28, 2023 at 02:13 PM