



## Dr. Thomas Cobb Lowe

April 21, 1937 - February 13, 2026

Dr. Thomas “Tom” C. Lowe, formerly of Gaithersburg, MD, passed away peacefully on the evening of February 13, 2026. At the time of his death, he was residing with his son and daughter in-law in Arnold, MD. Tom will be remembered as a brilliant man with a delightfully quirky sense of humor – a combination that made him a one-of-a-kind father, grandfather, and friend.

Born in Cambridge, MA, April 21, 1937, Tom was the son of author Victoria Lincoln and Professor Victor Lowe. He grew up with his sisters, Penelope and Louise, in Massachusetts and Ohio, before settling in Baltimore, MD, where his father served as a professor of philosophy at Johns Hopkins University. Tom graduated from Friends School of Baltimore in 1955 and went on to Swarthmore College. In 1959, he earned a degree in electrical engineering and membership in the Sigma Tau Engineering Honor Society. He continued his studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received both a master’s and PhD in electrical engineering.

Tom began his professional career at Informatics in 1967. Later, he was hired by the National Bureau of Standards (now known as NIST), and then the Department of Commerce. He retired from the federal service in 1997. Tom was a dedicated leader, earning the affectionate nickname “Chief” from his family, reflecting his roles both at work and in the YMCA Indian Guides and Indian Princesses (which, in retrospect, he acknowledged with his trademark

dry wit, was a product of a different era).

Tom's personal life was rich and full. He married Vivi-Ann Hall Lowe, whom he met at Swarthmore. They were married for 20 years, and together raised three children, Jonathan, Abigail, and Benjamin. After their amicable divorce, Tom found sobriety, and married Marylin (Lynn) Petersen Rainone, embracing her three adult children, Phyllis, Lewis, and David. Tom and Lynn were married 14 years until her passing in 1998. In 2000, Tom met and married Kathleen Thomas Dowd Lowe, welcoming two more adult children, Kate and Timothy into his life. They were married until her death in 2025. Tom cherished time with his blended family, which grew to include 23 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren.

A man of deep faith, Tom was a member of Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church for nearly 50 years, serving as an elder, was on the pastoral search committee, taught Sunday School and joined various bible study groups.

His engineering brilliance was often applied in quirky and creative ways; he was always ready to repair anything around the house or invent learning devices for his children and grandchildren, including intricate electrical boards and an infamous potato launcher.

A lifelong learner, Tom was passionate about reading and absorbing new information. When reading became difficult, he turned to YouTube, exploring topics from piloting to classical composers to engineering marvels. Everyone who knew Tom knew not to call after 9:00 at night, or after 7:00 on Sundays, as that reserved for his sacred ritual of listening to The Big Broadcast program on WAMU.

Tom is survived by his sister Louise (Bob) Kittredge, his children Jon Lowe (Denise), Abby Minnick (Sam) and Ben Lowe (Megan), his stepchildren Phyllis

Rainone-Hader, Lewis Rainone (Lisa), Dave Rainone, Kate Dowd, Tim Dowd (Sabrina), as well as his 23 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren, and four nieces.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 1:00pm on April 10 at Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church, 610 South Frederick Ave., Gaithersburg, MD with a reception to follow. Donations in Tom's name can be made to Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church.

# Tribute Wall

PH

“ I was about four years old when Tom went off to college, but I do remember him at Christmas Eve gatherings at our house in Riderwood, MD on Joppa Road and then on Cloverhill Road for Christmas dinner the following day. I remember Vivian, too, her warm smile and laugh. I was so happy to see Tom online for Neppy's memorial and was delighted to hear him reminisce about his big sister. I thought he looked great.

Love,  
Polly (Neice)



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**Polly (McKay) Hansen** - February 22 at 07:20 PM