



## Mr. Thomas R. Yacovella

February 7, 1938 - January 18, 2018

NORTH UTICA - Thomas R. Yacovella, age 79, passed away on Thursday, January 18, 2018 in the Allen Calder Wing of St. Luke's Hospital in Utica. Tom was born in Utica on February 7, 1938, the son of Bernard and Antoinette (Antone) Yacovella. Losing his mom at age 11, he and three siblings were welcomed by the Masonic Home in Utica. He lived there from 1950 to 1960, graduating from T.R. Proctor High School and Syracuse University with high honors. After stints as a United States Army Medic in San Antonio, Texas and as a Medical Sergeant in the 77th Division, Tom was awarded a fifth year of study at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. Moving to Brooklyn, he was employed as an Art Director at Albert Frank-Guenther Law Advertising in New York.

In 1963, he married Joanne Thomas in Jersey City, New Jersey, who would be his bride of 54 years. In 1967, Tom and his family moved to Apalachin, New York. Employed as a Creative Director for Creative Services in Vestal, Tom was responsible for advertising programs for Corning Glass, IBM, and General Electric. He became known as an award-winning logo designer, creating corporate trademarks for more than 250 businesses. In 1973, Tom moved back to Utica and became Vice President/Treasurer of CYR Advertising. In 1975, he founded Tom Yacovella Advertising and Public Relations, an agency that continued to operate in Utica for over 40 years. Tom was happiest in Utica with the Adirondacks "in his backyard". Many days were spent exploring nature in great detail. As a skillful and devoted

outdoorsman, he was known for both his state record brook trout and wild turkey. One of the founders of Wild Turkey Unlimited, in 1973, he was involved with activities promoting the welfare of the wild turkey. He also took part in annual fishing derbies designed to educate youngsters. As a result of his feats afield and his willingness to help others, Tom was inducted into the Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame in 1985.

Tom's attention to the smallest of nature's details facilitated his second career as an acclaimed wildlife artist. His desire was to explore predator and prey relationships of our North American species. His wild-life painting won national and international awards and are found in collections across the United States and abroad. His signature piece, Keep Looking for a Bluebird, not only won first-place awards in four national competitions, it was rated in the the top 26 watercolors world-wide.

His legacy will be equally supported by his famous piece, Tribute to the Whitetail, a sculpture made totally of naturally-shed deer antlers that Tom found over a 51-year search in the wild. This sculpture piece, purchased by John Morris, founder and owner of Bass Pro Shops, is now front and center in the permanent collection of the Wonders of Wildlife Museum & Aquarium in Springfield, Missouri.

Tom will be remembered as a man who valued friendships as well as art. He often said, "A friend may well be reckoned a Masterpiece of life".

Tom was also a musician, having performed for 15 years with his wife, Joanne. Known as The Plainfolk, the musical group performed frequently at the Ramada and Treadway Inns in the Utica Area, and at many other venues in New York. A devoted Red Sox fan since 1946, he was happy that in his lifetime, his team won it all in 2004.

Tom took great pleasure in teaching good ethics and respect for wildlife to new outdoorsmen through countless talks and lectures covering many subjects. His knowledge and charisma captured the minds and hearts of his listeners. He often ended his programs by saying, "Nature has a picture-book wherein each of us may look, free to all these pictures be, blessed are they

who learn to see”.

Tom is survived by his loving wife, Joanne; his son, Dr. Thomas J. Yacovella and wife, Gabriella, of St. Paul, Minnesota; his daughter, Debra Yacovella of Utica; two grandchildren, Jacob and Linnea; two sisters and brothers-in-law, Natalie and Stanley Esposito of Pleasantville, New York, and Patricia and George Vafiades of Lake Katrine, New York; and one brother and sister-in-law, Bernard and Patricia Yacovella of Vero Beach, Florida; as well as many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

He also leaves a life-long friend Hank Eichenhofer, who since their youth spent many days afield with Tom, as well as close friends Bob Beck and Bob Montesano. In September, Hank and Bob Beck helped make a dream come true for Tom by driving him to Springfield to see his Tribute to the Whitetail sculpture on display at the grand opening of Wonders of Wildlife.

As a Master Mason for over 55 years and President of the Masonic Home Kids Alumni Association for over 20 years, Tom also leaves many “brothers” and “sisters” with whom he grew up at the Masonic Home.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend a Memorial service for Tom on Wednesday, January 24th at 11:00 a.m. at Westminster Moriah Olivet Presbyterian Church, 714 Washington Street, Utica. There will be additional parking in the Radisson Hotel parking garage.

Please consider memorial contributions in Tom’s honor to Feed Our Vets, P.O. Box 1, New York Mills, New York 13417 or online at <http://www.feedourvets.org/contact/>.

The family would like to thank the personnel of Home Based Primary Care of the Veterans Association and the staff at the Allen Calder Wing of St. Luke’s Hospital for their care and compassion during Tom’s illness.

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

JAN 24. 11:00 AM (ET)

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
714 Washington Street  
Utica, NY

# Tribute Wall

Chris  
Lepoint

“ *Chris Lepoint lit a candle in memory of Mr. Thomas R. Yacovella*



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**Chris Lepoint** - April 15, 2018 at 01:44 AM

Chris  
Lepoint

“ *I remember when uncle Thomas helped me get my father Bernard to aknowledge my existence as my father I am Chris Lepoint Thomases nephew I wish I could have known him he was a good man*

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**Chris Lepoint** - April 15, 2018 at 01:43 AM

KC

“ *I am very sorry about the passing of Tom. Artists of the region have found inspiration in his work and in his positive, energized personality. You are in my prayers JoAnn and Family.*

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**karry comfort** - January 29, 2018 at 04:53 PM

AG

“ *Our Deepest sympathies go out to the Yacovella family. We pray that you find the strength during this very difficult time. May your beautiful memories of your dad bring you peace and joy. Warmest wishes,  
Mario, Antonella, Francesca & Allegra Gattino*

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**Antonella Gattino** - January 25, 2018 at 03:51 AM

KF

“ *My sincere and heartfelt condolences to Tom’s family. Tom hunted with our gang in Great Bend, Pa. for many years. We had a lot of good times. May he rest in Peace.*



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**KEN FISH** - January 24, 2018 at 11:53 AM

JD

“ *A true artist and the nicest guy anyone could know. We were truly blessed to know him. God bless you, Joanne, Tommy, and Debbie*

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**joanne destefano** - January 23, 2018 at 05:27 PM

TP

“ *You will always be missed Tommy. I have been so fortunate to have known and shared time with you on this adventure we are all on. Our years at Syracuse were the beginning of a “best friend” stage of life. Many people experience “best friend” stages in their life, but only a precious few have the same one through out life. I will always remember our fishing, hunting and plein air painting trips. The area’s you knew so well in the Adirondacks, the time you saved me from freezing to death in Cortland while bow hunting. That quick heavy snow storm that came up on us and I got all screwed up walking in circles as dusk began to settle in. With your uncanny woodsmanship ability and sense of direction you found your way back to the car and began tapping on the car horn. I probably would not be here today if it wasn’t for your clear headed thinking. Your sense of humor and your positive outlook on life and our talking about art I will miss my friend. Saying goodbye is very heavy now. Grief can eventually take care of itself in time, but to get the full value of the joy of life you must have a kindred spirit to divide it with. JoAnn and family God Bless you all.*  
*Tony Pezzimenti*

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**Tony Pezzimenti** - January 23, 2018 at 02:58 PM

SR

“ *What a multitalented, nice man Tom was. Coming from such a humble beginning, he was blessed with the spirit to overcome and live life to the fullest.*  
*I remember him telling me about his fall from a tree stand and what it took to recover from that. Amazing.*  
*To his wife and family , my deepest sympathy. He will be missed.*  
*Sandy Roberts*

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**sandy roberts** - January 22, 2018 at 08:53 PM

RB

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



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**Robert Beck** - January 22, 2018 at 06:07 PM

RB

*Rest in peace my brother 🙏*

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**Robert Beck** - January 22, 2018 at 07:14 PM

RB

*One of many ADK treks!*

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**Robert Beck** - January 22, 2018 at 07:22 PM

WH

“ Dear Deb and Family,

*I am lost for words to express my deepest sympathy for your loss. You all are in my thoughts and prayers .*

*Wendy Higgins and family*

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**Wendy Higgins** - January 22, 2018 at 03:32 PM

 Jane Taylor

*A fine man for certain. We will miss you*

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**Jane Taylor** - January 23, 2018 at 10:11 AM

LH

“ *Our hearts are with you, dearest Joanne, Tommy, Debbie and all Yacovella/Thomas family at this sad time of Tom's passing. Snow is falling in Minnesota as I cry and type and each flake is a frozen tear from heaven and Tom's assuring us, "There, there, child, all is well." What a beautiful, talented, loving man we will miss. The video in this online tribute is so beautiful and I'm so thankful to have it to watch over and over and send prayers to Tom's amazing family. We love you, Joanne, Tommy/Gabriella/Jacob/Linnea, Debbie. Lydia and Ted and family*

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**Lydia Holsten** - January 22, 2018 at 12:24 PM

JF

“ *Dear Joanne & Family,*  
*We send our deep heartfelt sympathy for the loss of Tom. He was a remarkable man in many ways and will be missed. Our prayers to you and your family. Edward & Joan Freeman*

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**Joan Freeman** - January 21, 2018 at 09:20 PM



“ *Lavender & White Sympathy Floor Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Thomas R. Yacovella.*



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January 21, 2018 at 08:10 PM



“ *I was always impressed with Tom's love, knowledge and reverence for nature. Pat and I attended a show of his and were able to feel, through his words, how much the outdoors meant to him; how you "never looked an animal in the eyes, always a sideways look so that you wouldn't 'spook it'" I recall his relating to me that when you caught a fish you would look into its stomach to see what it was feeding on and therefore learn the type of bait or lure to use. From his art you could sense his "oneness" with the subject - capturing the essence of the animal along with its beauty and majesty.. We are fortunate to own some of his work and it occupies special places in our home. We are fortunate to have these to remember him by.*

*Lastly, is his voice; a strong, rich baritone that was pleasing to the ear and soul. Hie duets with my sister are doubly touching for me because of my love for her therefore to Tom.*

*He was blessed with a multi-faceted talent talent which gladly and generously shared and all those he touched are blessed for it. Heaven is a richer place because of him and I'm sure that he is walking in its wonder enjoying family and friends and regaling them with stories and jokes from this side of paradise.*

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**Jack Thomas** - January 21, 2018 at 05:42 PM

JS

“ Dear Joanne and family---how saddened we were to hear of Tom's passing. During this difficult time may you find memories to bring a smile----God's peace, love to give you comfort, Friends to share your loss and Hope to give you peace. Our thoughts and prayers are and will be with you.

*Jerry and Kathy Sakowski  
Greenville, North Carolina*

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**Jerry & Kathy Sakowski** - January 21, 2018 at 05:01 PM

 Dana  
Kamer

“ Dana Kamer lit a candle in memory of Mr.  
Thomas R. Yacovella



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**Dana Kamer** - January 21, 2018 at 04:44 PM

 Steve  
DuMond

“ Tom JR,  
*I never knew your father just like you never knew mine. I watched your Uncles video and was very impressed. Fathers help mold us to what we are today.  
I thank you for coming to my Dad/s visitation and if I can do anything for you and your family let me know. I'm glad that we got to know each other and may your father RIP.  
Steve DuMond, "Big Shot" aka at LTF*

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**Steve DuMond** - January 21, 2018 at 11:24 AM

KC

“ I am deeply saddened by the death of Tom. He was instrumental in helping me understand and develop lasting tributes on campus to our Masonic Home Kids. A talented artist, and man who respected nature, Tom had a gentle spirit that will be long remembered, especially at Round Lake where he loved to visit.

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**Kathy Contino-Turner** - January 21, 2018 at 11:23 AM

SC

“ Scott Coombs lit a candle in memory of Mr. Thomas R. Yacovella



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**Scott Coombs** - January 21, 2018 at 10:41 AM

SC

“ So sorry for loss Mr. Yacovella was a great guy i spent time growing up with his Son Tom a lot of fun times and you always made me feel welcome.He will be missed by all whose path he crossed

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**Scott Coombs** - January 21, 2018 at 10:40 AM

TD

“ Tom was always "Mr. Yacovella" to me! His son Tommy & I have been dear friends for many years now. A truly talented artist, outdoorsmen and musician indeed, but I believe his true talent was in how he raised his wonderful family along with Mrs. Yacovella. I spent many days at their home, and couldn't be more thankful for that opportunity because I truly feel I'm a better person for it.



Mrs. Yacovella, Tommy & Debbie, please know how sorry I am for your loss.

Love,  
Tommy DeCarlo

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**Tommy DeCarlo** - January 21, 2018 at 09:55 AM



“ White Standing Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Thomas R. Yacovella.



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January 21, 2018 at 09:32 AM

FM

“ So sorry for your loss of such a wonderful person. We have so many memories of Tom's music and spending Friday and Saturday nights at Orchard Hall with Tom and Joanne. Fred enjoyed hunting with Tom and wild turkey dinner was so great that he made for us. Thoughts and prayers are with you all at this sad time, and he will always be in our hearts.

Sincerely, Fred and Patricia Morgan

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**Fred & Patricia Morgan** - January 20, 2018 at 02:24 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Thomas*



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**Eannace Funeral Home** - January 20, 2018 at 11:41 AM

SH

*A lasting impression is not an easy to thing to leave when departing. Tom touched my heart with his knowledge, experience and art. I will truly miss our conversations of the such. Fly High Tommy!!!*

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**scott hastings** - January 21, 2018 at 09:45 AM

JM

“ Tom was a longtime friend to my father Bill and me. We enjoyed the outdoors together while both fishing and talking about fishing. He would speak of his many interests and was known to be a very talented artist. He also loved and spoke proudly about his family.

My wife Kim and I are most grateful for time he spent with my son-in-law Shawn a few years ago, as he was an aspiring graphic artist and designer. Tom reviewed Shawn's portfolio, was very supportive and invited him to his home studio. His willingness to help and encourage a good young man at a crossroads in his life meant so much.

We had many memorable fishing trips together dating back as far as fifty years ago, but just being in "God's outdoor cathedral" in the Adirondacks was inspiring enough.

On behalf of the entire Marscher family, my heartfelt condolences to the Yacovella family.

Rest in peace, Tom.

Jim Marscher

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**James R Marscher** - January 20, 2018 at 11:30 AM

JP

“ I learned quite a bit about the outdoors from Tom, and I very much appreciated his presence at the kids fishing derby at Graffenburg Reservoir each year. My sincere condolences to the Yacovella family.

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**John Pitarresi** - January 19, 2018 at 09:51 PM