

# Dr. Thomas J. Vergo, Jr.,

May 29, 1943 - March 7, 2022



Dr. Thomas J. Vergo, Jr., esteemed prosthodontist and maxillofacial dentist, beloved husband, brother, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, passed away after a long illness on March 7, 2022. Tom was born on May 29, 1943 in New Orleans, Louisiana, the oldest son of the late Hazel and Thomas J. Vergo, Sr.

Tom was born into a big family, as one of four boys, and then had a large family himself. He had four children of his own, additionally welcoming three children by marriage into his life. In turn, he was blessed with many grandchildren and even a great-grandchild. His big, loving, blended family was the pride and joy of his life.

Tom is survived by Elizabeth, his wife and beloved partner of twenty-five fulfilling years, of Westborough, MA; his three brothers, Joseph Vergo, Timothy Vergo, James Vergo and their wives; his four children, for whose love and friendship he was most grateful: Matthew Vergo and his children Aiyana and Jasper, of Wilton, NH; Bethlyn Vergo Houlihan, her husband Tim, and their children Chloe and Calvin of Maynard, MA; Maxwell Vergo, his wife Amelia, and their sons Finn and Gavin of Etna, NH; and Heather Dame, her husband Jason, and their children Harper, Georgia, Francesca and Marshall of Los Angeles, CA. Tom is also survived by his children by marriage who brought much added joy to his life: Christina Susan Astrove and her husband Steven, of Wellesley MA, and their three daughters Sara-Kate, Erica and Molly Potts and her husband Kenny; Pamela Elizabeth Scully and her husband Robert, of Higganum, CT, and their children Cassandra Driscoll, her husband AJ and their daughter, Charlie, the family's first great-grandchild born in November 2021, Ashley and Rob; and Diana Irwin Beck, her husband Steve, and their children Natalie and Andrew of Hopkinton, MA.

Tom grew up in East Rochester, New York, and graduated from East Rochester High School, where his four-year undefeated record as a heavy-weight wrestler still stands today. Tom graduated from the School of Dental Medicine at the University of Buffalo in 1971. He completed a Dental Internship at the Buffalo V.A. Hospital in 1972, followed by a year as a Staff Dentist. In 1975, he completed his Prosthodontic training, receiving certificates from the School of Dental Medicine at the University of Buffalo and the Buffalo V.A. Hospital; followed by a Maxillofacial Prosthetic residency program at Roswell Park Memorial Hospital in Buffalo, N.Y.

Upon completion of his Prosthodontic and Maxillofacial Prosthetics training in 1976, Dr. Vergo accepted a full-time faculty position at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM) in the Department of Prosthodontics and Operative Dentistry (formerly, Department of Restorative Dentistry). During his tenure at TUSDM, he was the Director of the Pre-Clinical Removable Partial Denture Course, the Division Head of Maxillofacial Prosthetics and, for his last eight years at Tufts, the Director of Divisions: Prosthodontics-Fixed Partial Dentures, Removable Partial Dentures, Complete Dentures and Maxillofacial Prosthetics. In January 2004, Dr. Vergo retired from Tufts University as a Professor Emeritus. In addition to his full-time teaching responsibilities, Tom maintained a part-time private practice over the past 50 years, and, at the time of his

death, had recently retired from his “work family” of Emirzian, Mariano & Associates in East Longmeadow, MA, after 16 years. Additionally, Dr. Vergo lectured locally, nationally and internationally, and has published 40 articles in various professional reference journals.

Tom was a valued member of many illustrious professional groups: the American College of Prosthodontics, the Academy of Prosthodontics, the American Academy of Maxillofacial Prosthetics (Past President), the International Society of Maxillofacial Rehabilitation, the American College of Dentists and the Greater New York Academy of Prosthodontics. Not surprisingly, Tom was also thoroughly involved in several foundations helping children and underprivileged patients receive the maxillofacial care that they needed and deserved.

Tom’s passion and enthusiasm for work and life were unmatched. He was a devoted and greatly respected practitioner, teacher and colleague who profoundly impacted the lives of hundreds upon hundreds of patients through his outstanding restorative facial and dental work. He cherished his many friends and colleagues and his large family, leaving each person better off for having known him. Tom was incredibly kind and always made himself available to help others both personally and professionally. He welcomed everyone he met with a generous smile, warm hospitality and often a ridiculous dentist joke; upon meeting him, people felt they had known him all their lives.

The joy Tom derived from his large, blended family is evident in how he thrived on being involved in his children’s and grandchildren’s lives. He loved attending (and cheering loudly) at all of their soccer games, theater, music and dance performances, baptisms, birthday parties, communions, graduations and weddings. You name it, he was there. He had a sharp sense of humor and loved forwarding memes and jokes to his entire family, sometimes multiple times per day! His grandchildren all remember his silly jokes, his larger-than-life joyful laugh, his dressing up as Santa Claus at family Christmas gatherings and his loving advice on everything from their teeth to favorite sports teams. Always a dentist, he rarely greeted them without saying “show me your teeth”.

Among his many passions throughout the years, Tom loved traveling around Europe with Elizabeth, curling with the Norfolk (CT) Curling Club, listening to classical music by the Boston Symphony Orchestra on the lawn at Tanglewood, singing in the choir at church, cuddling with his Norfolk terriers and Havapoo dog and building rock gardens at the house in Colebrook CT where he and Elizabeth lived after his retirement from Tufts.

During the last year and a half of Tom’s life, he and Elizabeth were so grateful for the outstanding and compassionate care provided in their home by the nursing staff from Brightstar and VNA hospice care; additionally, the family extends tremendous thanks and gratitude to the caring staff at the Rose Monahan Hospice House where Tom spent his final weeks until his peaceful passing.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, donations in honor and memory of Tom can be sent to:

Rose Monahan Hospice House

<https://vnacare.org/donors/ways-to-give/memorial-tribute-gifts%20>

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