

## A tribute to my Mom

By Tim Echols

My mom was a fighter. She fought arthritis, lupus, scoliosis, and ultimately cancer, and [at 7:15pm](#) on Maundy Thursday, she stopped her fight and departed this earth for a much better place.

As I sat there and looked at the empty shell that remained, so many thoughts raced through my mind. This is the woman who invested countless hours in raising me and my three brothers, and any success we have experienced at any level should rightly be credited to her commitment as a mom.

Raising boys is not easy, and never has been. But my mom was especially equipped. She loved to go fishing, ride horses, shoot guns, watch us play sports, start business ventures, and most important, be in church.

With that preparation, it was her destiny to raise a bunch of boys. My mom didn't ask me if I wanted to play football, baseball and basketball—she made me. Despite being small in stature, she signed me up for Morrow-Lake City recreation teams and became team mother. She cheered me on from the sidelines and celebrated any success I had. All the while, helping me with homework and expected nothing less than straight A's.

But on the weekends we would go fishing or horseback riding at the Echols family farm in McDonough, and then vacation in Steinhatchee, Florida, where I learned to wreck boats and get sea sick while trying to catch sea trout and flounder. She bought me guns and sent me to the woods with her Sergeant Major dad, Lester Tumlin, who taught me to shoot quail, deer and dove.

Since my dad was in a family business with his father and brothers, my mom sent me to Bishop Brothers Auto Auction to sell roasted peanuts. But that involved taking me to the Forest Park State Farmer's Market and buying a 50 pound bag of raw peanuts, learning to parch them, bag them, and ultimately to sell them.

Without my mom to handle all of these logistics, I would never get to a practice, sell a single bag of nuts, and experience the outdoors in the same way.

But most importantly, my mom pro-actively instilled values in my life: entrepreneurism, work ethic, honesty, family and faith. These values guide my life today as a state regulator, father of 7, and ordained minister.

In these modern times when moms are encouraged to focus on their own fulfillment and ambition, I salute my mother, Judy Tumlin Echols Tallent, and her extraordinary investment in my life and the lives of my brothers, Terry, Ted and Tommy.

Her efforts were not in vain and we are who we are today because she fought for us and insisted that we live and experience the best life had to offer. She sacrificed to build our character and

give us opportunities that helped to shape our lives. Most importantly, she introduced us over and over to the God of the universe whose endless truths continue to direct our lives. We love you mom.

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