



# Bradley Stephen Bessant O.D.

APR 5, 1962 - APR 30, 2025



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## **Bradley Stephen Bessant O.D.**

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**B**radley S. Bessant, 63, of Seffner, Florida, passed away in Brandon, FL on April 30th, 2025. Born in Plant City on April 5, 1962, Brad was preceded in death by his parents, Marian Jane Dugger Bessant and Leonard Stephen Bessant; he is survived by his wife Mary Pacheco, his two four-legged children Emily and Virgil, his brother Leslie and sister-in-law Ruth, and by his brother-in-law John Pacheco, sister-in-law Tammy and nephew John Michael.

Brad crammed two lifetimes worth of interests into his short time on earth. He played trumpet in the Plant City High School marching band, concert band, and jazz band. He took up scuba diving while he attended the University of Florida, and he met his wife Mary while working in the university neuroscience labs. He went on to become an optometrist, studying at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry, and then doing his residency in pediatric optometry at the University of Alabama - Birmingham. While in Birmingham, he learned to fly and earned his private pilot license.

After completing his residency, Brad and Mary returned to Seffner, Florida, and Brad began an optometric practice in the Tampa Bay area that spanned thirty years. Settled but not sedentary, Brad took up flying radio-controlled model aircraft, woodworking, barbeque/grilling and astronomical photography. Brad's greatest joys came from his hobbies and spending time with family and friends including all his dogs (Gromit, Sophie, Jackson, and Stella) over the years. He especially liked going to Disney with Mary and the dogs for relaxation and fun.

While Brad always had something going with one or more of his hobbies, he always had time to help his friends and neighbors. He loved his optometry patients, and always told them, "Just call me Brad."

A celebration of life gathering and service will be held on Saturday, May 31st, 2025, at Sunset Memory Gardens, 11005 N US Highway 301, Thonotosassa, FL 33592. In lieu of flowers, please make memorial contributions to Dogs Inc (Home). <https://dogsinc.org/>




## Events

**Bradley Stephen Bessant O.D.**

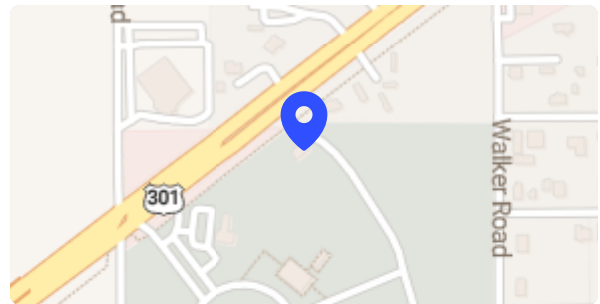
APR 5, 1962 - APR 30, 2025

### Gathering of family and friends


 **Saturday**, May 31, 2025


 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET


 **Sunset Funeral Home**  
11005 N US Highway 301, Thonotosassa FL  
33592

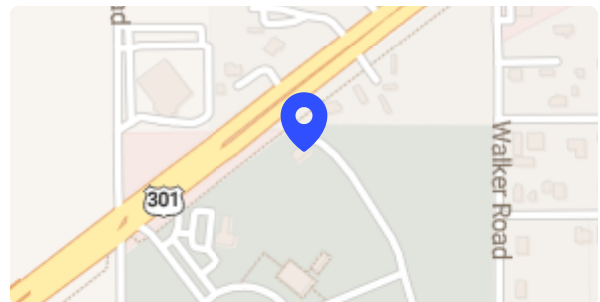


### Celebration of Life

 **Saturday**, May 31, 2025

 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM ET

 **Sunset Funeral Home**  
11005 N US Highway 301, Thonotosassa FL  
33592





# Tribute Wall

**Bradley Stephen Bessant O.D.**

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**Samuel Edwards** posted:

Charlotte and I were shocked and very saddened to receive the news today in the Christmas card from Mary that Brad had passed away this past April. We first met Brad and Mary when she joined the laboratory in which I was working at USF. What a nice and caring couple! And Brad was very caring when treating us as his patients. Our deepest sympathy and best wishes for Mary, her puppy dogs, Emily and Vigil, and Brad and Mary's families. With love and prayers, Charlotte and Sam Edwards

December 31 at 8:00 PM



**George Bonzagni** lit a candle in honor of Bradley.

George Bonzagni lit a candle in memory of Bradley Bessant

December 29 at 8:37 AM



**Stacey O'donovan** posted:

Brad was funny and smart an unbeatable combination. I'll never forget him or his Steve Martin "I'm a wild and crazy guy!"

June 8 at 8:49 AM



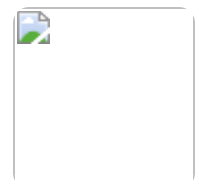
**Sunset Funeral Home & Memory Gardens** shared an album called **Brad's Celebration Video.**

June 6 at 1:14 PM



**Mary Bessant** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

June 6 at 9:07 AM





## Tribute Wall

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**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Bradley.



May 31 at 11:04 AM



**Mary Bessant** lit a candle in honor of Bradley.



Brad and I would have been married 33 years on May 23rd. He was my best friend, my husband, my life partner and the love of my life. His smile would always light up my heart and he could make me laugh in the toughest of times. His great big hugs would melt away all my worries and take away my tears. Through all our years with the good and hard times, we had God's love and guiding hand, each other and the support of our families. Brad had an amazing moral compass and would always say just do what is right and all will be fine. One of my favorite memories was when we were in Ireland and were having to cross a very narrow wood and rope bridge over a large ravine below. The bridge was old and the wood boards were spaced a bit apart from each other. I have a fear of heights and was scared. I gingerly stepped onto the bridge and had gone a few steps when the entire bridge began to sway violently and I yelled back to Brad "What happened?" He said, "If you fall, I don't want you to go alone into the ravine, so I am here with you. Now hurry up and get across!" He made me laugh so hard, the fear disappeared momentarily and the bridge was crossed. Brad really was a kind, gentle and sensitive soul who loved his family and friends very much. He would tell me how proud he was of me, his brother and his friends many accomplishments.

May 5 at 5:39 PM



**Roger Dawson** posted:

Brad was the first person I met when I moved from Ohio to Plant City in 1979, and he was my first friend here. Since Brad was everyone's friend he introduced me to everyone, and he became my best friend. Over time after college we went our separate ways but reconnected in his Optometry office, and it was like nothing had changed. He was a great listener and was genuinely concerned and interested in my life and Sherri's and the kids. I am so sorry for your loss, Mary and Leslie.

May 30 at 7:41 PM



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BG

**Betty Lue Gordon** lit a candle in honor of Bradley.

Dr. B was a colleague and a friend. He was always willing to go the extra mile to help. Always had a good word to say or a word of encouragement to me and to his patients. We worked together for many years. He is certainly missed by our clients and by PRN Eye Associates. Betty Lue Gordon

May 28 at 11:28 AM



DB

**Dave Byars** sent a virtual gift in honor of Bradley.

Brad, what can I say? Gone to soon my brother, my friend! You made me smile and laugh whenever I was with you. You treated me like family. Life would send us in different directions, yet when we would reunite it was like we were never apart. Your Dad used to jokingly ask me random questions and if I was unable to answer to his satisfaction he would say "it's been a waste of time talking to ya David", LOL! Well, it was never a waste of time talking to you Brad. I miss it already. Rest in peace brother, Love ya my friend ❤️

May 27 at 11:04 PM



KC

**Kay Carlile** lit a candle in honor of Bradley.

I am so heart broken, may you rest in peace and fly high. Hugs and Prayers for your family and friends.

May 26 at 10:59 AM



ZN

**Zalina Nick** lit a candle in honor of Bradley.

Dr. Bessant was always a delight to work with. He knew how to brighten your day with a well timed joke and a warm smile. His kindness was inspiring as it was easily noticeable and greatly appreciated by his patients and his coworkers. We will miss him dearly and our thoughts are with his family. -Nick and Zalina from Visionworks.

May 8 at 4:12 PM



MB

**Mark Baxter** posted:

Very sorry to hear of Brad's passing. We were in Band together in Jr High and High school. Brad, Scott and I on Trumpet. We have been out of touch for many years, but Brad was an amazingly accomplished person. Our condolences to his family and friends. Mark L. Baxter

May 6 at 3:53 PM



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DB

**Daniel Brienza** posted:

Brad and I first crossed paths at Plant City High School, where we spent years making music together in all the bands. No matter the situation, Brad had a rare gift—an unwavering good nature that lifted those around him. He had an effortless way of brightening the room, always ready with a joke, a kind word, or simply his steady presence. Looking back, my high school years were shaped by a few friendships that felt like family, and Brad was always one of those brothers. After my Navy career took me around the world, I reconnected with him back home, and for a time, he became my optometrist. What struck me most wasn't just his professionalism, but his genuine curiosity and enthusiasm about my experiences traveling on submarines. Every single time I saw him, he made sure to leave me better than he found me—with laughter, encouragement, and warmth. Brad was truly one of a kind. His presence made life a little lighter, a little brighter. And now, his absence leaves an undeniable void. I'll miss you, brother.

May 6 at 1:31 PM

TP

**Tera Parks** lit a candle in honor of Bradley.

My thoughts and prayers are with the family and close friends of Dr. Bessant. I am so thankful to know such a funny and nice man. He was a pleasure to work with. Sincerely, Tera Parks Visionworks Palm Harbor



May 5 at 6:59 PM

TR

**Terry Rainey** lit a candle in honor of Bradley.

I always enjoyed making him laugh to get through long days at work. He had an excellent sense of humor. He always said "that's better than a poke in the eye." God bless him and his family.



May 5 at 5:39 PM



# Media

**Bradley Stephen Bessant O.D.**

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Sunset Funeral Home & Memory Gardens shared a video to the **Brad's Celebration Video** album.

June 6 at 1:14 PM



SCAN TO WATCH



## Media

**Bradley Stephen Bessant O.D.**

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**Mary Bessant** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

June 6 at 9:07 AM





# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Bradley by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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