

THE

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117th Annual Convention

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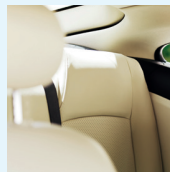


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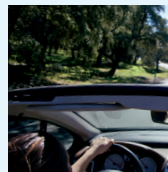
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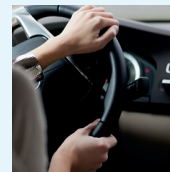
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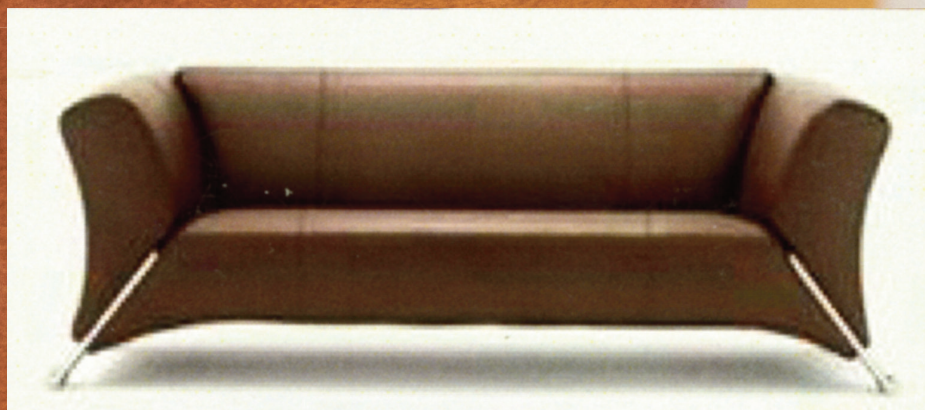
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Obituary

Thomas R. Bley 59, Lincolnton, North Carolina (formerly of Fremont and Derry, New Hampshire), passed into the arms of his maker on March 24, 2022, after a lengthy illness. Following in his family's footsteps, Tom proudly represented the 3rd generation in the leather industry and often stated it was "in my blood". He was widely known for being veracious in his work ethics. When faced with a tough question or situation, his stoic German traits of wisdom and thoroughness were his strong suit. Prior to his illness, Tom was employed by Stahl USA as Sr. Technical Sales Advisor for NAFTA Leather accounts. Prior to that he worked for Tannin Corp., BASF Corp., Corium Leather & Supatco. He started his apprenticeship and worked his way up to assistant finisher at Hoyt and Worthen Tanning Corp.



Tom enjoyed working on and repairing small engines. In all the years, only one weed whacker earned a ride to the dump. His favorite pastimes were fishing, hunting, skiing, pushing his luck as an occasional lumberjack and his leather recliner (yes, he

handpicked the leather). He loved living out in the woods of North Carolina, surrounded by wildlife. Occasionally, someone would be the recipient of the latest photo of "Blacky", our resident snake, or perhaps an oversized cutout of Big Foot in the woods.

Tom developed a love of live musicals and intimate singer/songwriter concerts. He was known to swipe a poster or two off the venue wall and have it autographed. One of his highlights was a trip to NYC, sitting front row center, for the Carol King play "Beautiful". Dislikes? Besides heights, he hated surprises, even if they weren't his, and felt it was his duty to inform the recipient beforehand.

Known to his close friends as "Big T", his genuine smile, infectious laughter, and his appreciation of a good joke, always insured a great time. Apologies go out to friends and coworkers who put up with his ear-piercing whistling. After all, those factory buildings had excellent acoustics.

Tom's soul has taken flight but will linger in the lives of those he loved: Wife Dorothy "Dodo" Dixon; brother and childhood partner in mischief, Michael Bley; sisters Iris Bley-LaFlamme, Regine Bley and Monika Sullivan; parents Ernst and Renate Bley; extended family, friends and his beloved dogs Ellie and Boomer.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

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STAY
DIFFERENT.**

WARDROBE MALFUNCTION

LEATHER. IF WE DON'T USE IT, WE DO MORE THAN JUST LOSE IT.

From food to fashion, a burger and shake is just the start of the story of waste and recklessness. We live in a world where the cheap and easy option is to throw away the byproducts of our society. Instead we crop new land, drill or frack for short lived replacements. Isn't it time to shake things up, to think slow instead of fast. To think of our future and that of the planet?

300M HIDES COME
FROM THE
MEAT
& DAIRY
INDUSTRIES
EVERY YEAR

60%
IS USED FOR
LEATHER. THE
REST IS JUST
TROWN AWAY

THAT IS
120M 3M TONNES OF LANDFILL
& 2.7M TONNES OF
GREENHOUSE GASES.
EVERY YEAR.

THE FASHION INDUSTRY PRODUCES
144 BILLION ITEMS OF CLOTHING
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WE NEED 3.5M ACRES OF FOREST, JUST TO RE-CAPTURE
THE CARBON CREATED BY THIS WASTE.

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CLOTHES ARE
PLASTIC, SOURCED
THROUGH **DRILLING
& FRACKING**

EACH HIDE
COVERS **4 SQM**

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480 MILLION SQM

OF MATERIAL EACH YEAR, ENOUGH TO COVER
78,000 FOOTBALL PITCHES

OR TO PUT SHOES ON THE
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WOMAN & CHILD** IN AFRICA

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