



Thomas Michael Garmaker

February 16, 1943 - February 2, 2023

Thomas Michael James Garmaker passed away on Thursday, February 2, 2023 at the age of 79 after a long battle with Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma. His battle dated back to Feb. 2002, his cancer was deemed terminal in 2004, and he was then placed on a lymphoma clinical study with a "wonder drug infusion of 'Rituxin'". After all these years, our dear Lord spotted him working on the pontoon and decided "enough is enough". So here he is, preparing to meet his beloved family and friends, including Father Reiser from The Church of Epiphany, Coon Rapids, MN. We would like to give a special thanks to Dr. David King and his entire staff at MN Oncology, Unity Hospital Campus, Fridley, MN.

Tom is preceded in death by his parents, Martin J. Garmaker Sr. and Sophia Cecilia Rapinac-Garmaker; Siblings Martin Jr. (Sonny) (wife Phyllis; sons Richard (deceased), Randy, Rory, Ryan, Ronnie; daughters Karen, Kathy (deceased), Kimberly, Kristen (deceased), Kandace, Kelly, Kasey), Kenneth J. (passed away in 1930 @ 3yr old), Clarence E. (wife Peggy (deceased); wife Kathleen (deceased); sons Kenny, Matthew) , Margaret A. (husband Lucky Skinner (deceased); husband Howard Sutherlund (deceased); sons Casey, Darren; daughter Tami), Richard E. (wife Darlene; sons Stuart, Steven (deceased)); Mother of Tom's children Marianne F. Garmaker (Sparby).

Tom is survived by his loving wife of 11 years, ZuHui Wang-Garmaker. They

were married in Songzi City, Hubei, China on Nov. 30, 2010.

Tom is lovingly remembered by his son Kraig Steven (wife Jeanette; son Calvin Richard, Andover, MN), daughter Dawn Madrene Garmaker (sons Clinton Steven, Clifton Wyatt, Clayton Raymond, Clarkston Dennis, Christian William, TX) and daughter Deanne E.S. (Esperance-Sophia, maternal/paternal grandmothers) McCullough (husband James; sons Hunter Thomas, Colton James, Brimson, MN); sister Joan O'Neil (husband Terrance (deceased); sons Shawn, Jeffrey (deceased), Russell (deceased), Timothy; daughters MaryBeth, Jean, Coon Rapids, MN), sister Jean Barto (husband Thomas (deceased); son Brett; daughters Debra, Stacy, Coon Rapids, MN)

Tom was born in Hibbing, MN on Feb. 16, 1943. He attended the 'Glass Block School', Assumption Hall Catholic School, and Hibbing High School, class of '61. He moved to Denver, CO in 1960, received his GED, and studied sheet metal and HVAC at a technical school. He moved back to Coon Rapids, MN after finishing and attended Anoka Ramsey Community College for prerequisite classes to attend Anoka Community College for electrical construction and design. After graduating, he had to take a little detour for a 4 disc spinal infusion. He took a little 'healing time', and then jumped into his life's work! As Tom always said, "if I had to do it over, I wouldn't change a thing!" He ended up being a Senior Project Manager and handled many large multi-million-dollar projects. Over his career, he roughly had over \$300 million in contracts, and made many cherished friends along the way. He was very lucky to be involved in business marketing, which allowed him to team up with suppliers and entertain clients with the NASCAR World, which also tickled his "itchy spot"!

Tom always enjoyed spending time with the family; be it camping, fishing, traveling, trips to Valley Fair, and taking his kids and their neighborhood friends to the Coon Rapids section of the Mississippi River to go boating,

tubing, water-skiing, and fishing. He also enjoyed his classic cars, and belonged to the Twin Cities Model A Ford Club of Minneapolis. He also belonged to MSRA, which was way too much to enjoy and never enough time to really enjoy it. Tom and ZuHui have had much fun with both clubs, but the past 25 years have held much drama for him medically. Tom belonged to the St. Croix Horse and Carriage Society where he was able to show all the carriages and sleighs he rebuilt or purchased, along with one covered wagon he rebuilt, which was one of his favorites. At one time, he had 18 horses to supply 'horse-power' to these circa 1800 era vehicles.

Tom enjoyed fishing and anything to do with racing (be it NASCAR, Indianapolis, snowmobile, go carts, and so much more). He cherished America, so road trips around the country and NASCAR races in Vegas were next to Heaven!!

The visitation will be held at The Church of Epiphany, 11001 Hanson Blvd. NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55433 on Feb. 17 at 9:30 am (February 17 was the birthday of his mother, Sophia Cecilia Rapinac-Garmaker, whom he loved dearly). Mass of Christian Burial will follow at 10:30 am, with the burial to follow the service. All will take place at Epiphany. The officiating Priest will be Fr. Paul Baker.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to either Union Gospel Mission, 77 East 9th St. St. Paul, MN 55101 or St. Joseph School for Indians 1301 North Main St. Chamberlain, SD 57325.

Condolences for the family may be offered online <https://www.washburn-mcreavy.com/obituaries/Thomas-Garmaker/#!/TributeWall> .

Cemetery Details

Epiphany Cemetery

10955 Hanson Boulevard
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 17. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

Church of the Epiphany (Coon Rapids)
11001 Hanson Boulevard Northwest
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Mass of Christian Burial

FEB 17. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Church of the Epiphany (Coon Rapids)
11001 Hanson Boulevard Northwest
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Tribute Wall

ML

“ Papa Tom has been missed dearly for a long time, so many wonderful memories of visiting my mom Jeannette and Tom together when they were married. He taught my husband how to drive a tractor, let our kids feed the horses candy mints, had all the relatives over for New Year’s bon fires and parties... Tom worked hard and play hard. One year Sean and I got him huge tires from a NASCAR auto that actually was in a race. He was perplexed what to do with them, but I’m sure the horses enjoyed them or were made into a planter or something. We talked a few times since Jeannette and Tom were divorced and he was still the best “dad” I ever had. Thank you Tom for your generosity to all of my family, letting us stay with you when we were in town, sharing your hobbies and experiences, the laughter, all the times. I know you will be so missed by your family and am so happy to learn of your grandson’s band. I know they will sing a special tribute to you (if they haven’t already). The world lost its sparkle the moment I learned of your passing. Until we meet again, we will miss you and remember you lovingly.

Michelle Larkin - April 10, 2023 at 04:23 PM

LN

“ We love you Tom and miss you!! You always had a smile and great advice . Until we meet again our friend. Rest In Peace ❤️
Lorna and the rest of the Smith family

Lorna Smith Ninow - February 17, 2023 at 01:43 AM

WT

“ Dawn M Garmaker thanks for sharing your dad's obituary. I am praying for ease of grief as you walk without him. Cherish the memories.

Wanda Tuley - February 15, 2023 at 12:28 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of *Thomas Michael Garmaker*.



February 06, 2023 at 10:14 AM