



## Thomas Gaylen Uppman

March 8, 1946 - January 8, 2025

Thomas G. Uppman, 78 years and ten months, has officially left the building, likely muttering, "I could've fixed that door on the way out." Born in Bemidji, Minnesota, and raised in Lancaster and Babbitt, Tom lived a life that could only be described as "well-worn but expertly fixed."

Tom got his start in his father Harland's TV repair shop, learning how to tinker, troubleshoot, and make things work-skills that would serve him for a lifetime. His talents as an amateur electrician were so impressive, inspectors often left shaking their heads in awe (and maybe a little fear).

A proud Army veteran, Sergeant Uppman was an expert with the rifle and machine gun, a Radio Telephone Operator, a .50 caliber gunner, and a proud member of the battalion known as the Panthers. He earned the Combat Infantry Badge and participated in three different campaigns in Vietnam. Tom was posthumously awarded the prestigious Order of St. Maurice Medal, which supports the infantry and embodies the traits of St. Maurice: integrity, moral character, and professional competence.

While helicopter building was just a hobby, Tom was, hands down, the greatest in the world at it-confirmed by a trophy and several astonished onlookers. He was also an above-average cribbage player (just ask him), an avid fisherman (with honest stories to prove it), a golf enthusiast who loved

hitting the links, and the kind of guy who could turn a pile of parts into a functioning whatever-you-need-it-to-be.

Tom spent much of his career at Todd Communications, traveling to continents far and wide, though he always made it back to Minnesota-proving that one could, in fact, travel to multiple continents and still misplace their luggage. Later, he started his own company, Uppman Technical Services, where his dedication to excellence and problem-solving shone brightly. In time, his son, Tom Jr., joined the business, making it a family legacy of innovation and ingenuity.

Through the most challenging chapter of his life, Tom had the steadfast love and support of his wife, Kristine, who navigated the difficult journey of his illness with unwavering strength, grace, and sometimes a little kick ass. Her care and devotion gave Tom the courage and comfort to face every step with dignity and peace.

Preceded in death by his parents, Harland and Anne, and his brother Dennis, Tom is survived by his wife Kristine, his sister Susan Berg (Tom), his children Tara (Joel) and Tom Jr., and countless half-finished projects that no one else can figure out.

Tom's greatest honor may have been raising two kids who turned out pretty okay-and are now left to wonder how to fix things without him.

Special thanks to Tom's friends for introducing him to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, where he strengthened his faith, swapped fishing and golf stories, and enjoyed good company.

Tom, your tools are down, your cribbage hand is dealt, and your next great adventure is calling. May Heaven's fish bite often, the cards fall in your favor,

the golf shots land on the green, and the helicopters fly true.

A visitation will be held on Friday, January 17, at 10:00 a.m., followed by a service at 11:00 a.m. and a reception in the Commons Room at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 4439 W. 50th St., Edina, MN 55424. Services are provided by Washburn-McReavy. Interment at Fort Snelling will take place at a later date when the weather is warmer. In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 17. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
4439 W. 50th Street  
Edina, MN

## Memorial Service

JAN 17. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
4439 W. 50th Street  
Edina, MN

# Tribute Wall



“ Prayers/Thoughts go out to family and friends. I knew Tom in Vietnam. We served together with Charlie Co 2-47th MECH, 9TH INF DIV. He was a good soldier and more importantly a great guy. He will be missed. RIP BROTHER.

*John Ax*

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**John Ax** - January 13, 2025 at 04:55 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Thomas Gaylen Uppman.

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January 13, 2025 at 03:36 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas Gaylen Uppman.



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January 13, 2025 at 03:36 PM

RJ

“*Kristine and family for your loss and our loss the 47th Infantry Regiment. Tom served his country in the Vietnam War in Major Battles and served with Dignity and Honor and those traits carried on in his family life with the love of them. RIP Brother Tom!*

*Russell E. Vibberts Jr.  
48th Infantry Regiment Association  
Reunion Chairman*

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**Russell E Vibberts Jr** - January 13, 2025 at 10:13 AM