



Thomas Andrew

April 14, 1943 - June 24, 2022

Thomas Andrew, 79, died just after sunrise on Friday, June 24 at his home in Florida, Ohio with his daughter Angela by his side. Tom was born on April 14, 1943, at the Andrew family home in Florida. Because an ice storm prevented the doctor's arrival, two neighbor ladies delivered him. He began working at the age of 6, farming with his Grandpa Frederick and loving every minute of it. He had a variety of jobs all through school including newspaper deliverer, bowling alley pinsetter, pickle sorter, popcorn husker, and strawberry picker. Tom graduated from Florida High School in 1961 and joined the Air Force after graduation. He served his country as a guidance system specialist in Okinawa, Cape Canaveral, and Michigan, earning the rank of E4 Airman First Class. He was honorably discharged in 1965. He always said his country gave him more than he ever gave to her, including an education, food, housing and clothing.

After the military, he bummed around (his words) for four years, finally settling on a career as an ironworker with Ironworkers Local 147 in 1969. He married Lillian Rausch in July of 1969, and they divorced. On May 1, 1998, he married Ruth Whitman and retired the very same day at the age of 55. Ruth died on November 2, 2021.

In 1990, Tom became a part of the Advanced Racing Team and was a body/tire man for their Formula Ford 1600 and 2000. The team also made parts for Roush Racing.

For 17 years during his retirement, Tom constructed trailing frames for PET

Carts. These hand-pedaled carts were sent all over the world and gifted to people who had lost their legs to war, accident, or disease. This gift enabled them to get their goods to market, provided them with the means to get to work, and increased their quality of life. Tom, along with his brother Dallas, made 22,000 carts at their shop in Florida. Tom made another 1,000 carts at the shop in Mission, Texas. He was part of a team that erected small residential houses in Mexico, helping to build 20 homes in total.

Tom enjoyed many fishing trips to Lake Erie and Agnew Lake, Canada, he grew tomatoes and zinnias from seed, and was proud to be a Winter Texan for 22 years. Tom especially enjoyed polka music, travelling extensively all over the country and winning trophies for his dancing.

Tom is survived by his daughter Angela (Mark) Tonjes of Malinta, and daughter Tina (Scott) Lawrence of Kernersville, North Carolina. His beloved son Steven died in October 2014. Tom has three grandsons: Zachary Tonjes of New Albany, Dylan (Courtney) Tonjes of Deshler, and Seth Tonjes of Malinta. He has one granddaughter, Sienna Lawrence of Kernersville.

Tom is also survived by siblings Grace, Dallas, Kay, Dorthy, Willie, and David. He was preceded in death by siblings Ruth, John, Dick, Nancy, Mary, and Randy.

His many friends from all over the country were a very important part of his life, and he considered his fellow polka dancers as family. The Tonjes family is eternally grateful for all the cards, letters, food, and visits over the last months. With his sense of humor intact, Tom was kind, generous, and grateful until the end.

Visitation will be held at Rodenberger Funeral Home in Napoleon on Saturday, July 2 from 2:00-8:00 p.m. A funeral service will be held at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Florida on Sunday, July 3 at 1:00 p.m. with visitation at 12:00. Lunch will be served after the funeral at the Emporium in Napoleon, with German food and live polka music.

Memorial contributions will be designated to Handcrank Transportation in Penitas, Texas, to enable the construction and delivery of more carts to

Mexico. Online messages and condolences may be shared with the family at rodenbergergray.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 2. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Rodenberger Funeral Home - Napoleon
1010 Westmoreland Avenue
Napoleon, OH 43545

Visitation

JUL 3. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

St. Peter's Lutheran Church-Florida, Ohio
K980 County Road 17D
Napoleon, OH 43545

Funeral Service

JUL 3. 1:00 PM (ET)

St. Peter's Lutheran Church-Florida, Ohio
K980 County Road 17D
Napoleon, OH 43545

Tribute Wall

TA

“ *Condolences to all my family members. I will miss him even more.
RIP Uncle Tom. Peace and Love Tammy Andrew*

Tammy - July 02, 2022 at 10:53 AM



“ *Condolences to everyone. I will miss Uncle Tom even more that
he's gone.*

Love always

Tammy S. Andrew-Dagne

Tam N Lou Dagne - July 01, 2022 at 10:40 PM

TK

“ *The Spataro's (Laura, David & kids) purchased
the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of
Thomas Andrew.*



The Spataro's (Laura, David & kids) - June 30, 2022 at 07:22
PM

“ From the frozen tundra of Korea to fields and forests of war-torn Europe to the jungles of Southeast Asia, from the deserts of Kuwait and Iraq to the mountains of Afghanistan, brave patriots have protected our nation’s ideals, rescued millions from tyranny, and helped spread freedom around the globe. America’s veterans answered the call when asked to protect our nation from some of the most brutal oppression the world has ever known. Military service demands a special kind of sacrifice. The places where you are sent to live and serve bring risk every day. From the time you put on that uniform for the first time, the interests of the nation move to the forefront and define your life. Those duties are shared by family members who make many sacrifices of their own, sometimes bearing the burden of losing a loved one. Service brings rewards as well. There is the pride in developing one’s own character, serving a cause far greater than self-interest. Every person who wears America’s uniform is part of a long, unbroken line of achievement and honor. No single military power in history has done greater good, shown greater courage, liberated more people or upheld higher standards of decency and valor than the Armed Forces of the United States of America. That is a legacy to be proud of and those who contributed to it must never be taken for granted. To honor our veterans, we must keep the promises we have made to them. We must care for those who have been injured in the service of our country. We must honor and remember those who have died. And we must remember those whose fate is still undetermined. We fly the Prisoner of War flag on Veterans Day for a reason, to show that this nation will not relent until we have accounted for every one of our missing Americans. Thank you for your service. Thank you for all that you have sacrificed for this great nation. Thank you for being the backbone of America.

COL (Retired) Mark W. Lee, USA

Dr. Mark W. Lee, COL (Retired) USA - June 29, 2022 at 07:47 AM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Thomas Andrew.*



June 28, 2022 at 02:30 PM



“ *On the trail with Tom and Ruth!!
Ruth was notorious for getting lost while driving; so we gathered leftover popcorn at the dances for her to "leave a trail" to find her way home! Tom was notorious for his outside "breaks" during dances and for his trail of "butts"! So, both are on new trails now. And, as Roy Rogers used to say, "May the Good Lord take a liken' to you"! Tom could shuffle his cowboy boots on the dance floor faster than anyone on earth- for certain!! And, many good times were had by us all; making wonderful enduring memories with the best of friends! Don't fret now, we will be catching up with you both; just by following the trails of popcorn and butts!!*

Our sympathy and prayers for your family.

Jim and Kathy Snyder

Jim & Kathy Snyder - June 27, 2022 at 09:42 PM



“ *So sorry to hear of Tom's passing. He was a good man and a good friend and he will be missed. You are in my thoughts and prayers.*

Tom Miley - June 27, 2022 at 07:15 PM

DA

“ Tom was such a pleasant figure when he would come into Clubhouse in Florida He was kind to all the workers. The kids would always smile when he ordered and yell out Mr. Andrews is coming We will miss him and his smile



dawn - June 27, 2022 at 02:36 PM

HU

“ My Brother in Law with many talents fixed alot of things for me that I would resell at flea markets wouldn't take a dime me but I would take him to breakfast several times .He would want to pay and all I said paybacks are hell and he would smile and say thank you hutch like a brother which I never had.



Hutch - June 26, 2022 at 08:08 AM