



## Timothy Anthony Fortier

June 13, 1948 - January 26, 2020

Timothy Fortier was born on June 13, 1948 to Sarah Margaret McDonald at the Mother and Baby's Home in the Castlepollard, Delvin, Ireland and adopted from a Catholic orphanage in Dublin, Ireland by Russell and Mary Fortier of California two years later.

Tim was one of four Irish toddlers adopted by the Fortiers that year and brought to the USA in the first of many adoptions by Americans seeking children from Ireland, which was struggling economically in the post-WWII years.

He joined the large and boisterous Fortier brood which grew to nine children, including three older children adopted in America and two biological children.

Tim's education started with parochial school in the elementary grades, graduating to San Joaquin Memorial, and Saint Mary's College in Moraga, California, and ending with a master's degree from the University of San Francisco, another Catholic institution. In school he played football and starred in track as a sprinter and studied business and philosophy, with philosophy being his primary academic interest. He credited his Catholic education for his strong sense of ethics and named his two sons after two favored Catholic educators, dedicated religious teachers who helped shape him into a man to be proud of.

Early in his career, Tim was employed by Commercial Transfer, Inc., a trucking company owned and operated by family. He eventually purchased the company and operated it. Among his many accomplishments was to be selected by his peers in the California Trucking Association to serve as President in 1996, representing the thousands of Californians who make their livelihood in the transportation industry. In this capacity, he and his wife Suzanne were fortunate to travel and meet with industry and legislative leaders in California and Washington, D.C., as well as thousands of rank-and-file, hard-working truckers and their families. Tim was well-known by legislators for his well-informed activism on behalf of his industry and enjoyed lengthy relationships with numerous local, state, and national leaders. During family friend Jim Costa's first swearing in as

Congressman, he happened to encounter a newly elected Barack Obama and was proud to say he knew the newbie senator from Illinois was “a great guy who is going places.” Tim was a life-long Democrat and a voice of support for many Democratic causes.

Tim was also active in local civic and industry organizations, rising to positions of leadership in the Fresno Transportation Club and Kiwanis. He recognized how fortunate he was to have been afforded the opportunities being raised in America provided him and was dedicated to assisting other children and young people reach their potential.

Tim enjoyed his life of travel, social engagements, and life-long learning that were hallmarks of his 26-year marriage to Suzanne Ninkovich Fortier. He liked to tell the story of going to Macy’s to pick out crystal Christmas gifts (he had a life-long enthusiasm for all things crystal, especially Waterford, which is, of course, Irish) and discovering the woman destined to become his wife, who was busy indulging her interests in all things china and dinner-party related. A highlight of his personal life was when he introduced her as his bride at the CTA’s annual conference at the Del Coronado. At his request, she wore the red evening gown from *Pretty Woman* and the orchestra spontaneously broke out in “The Lady in Red.” Tim was a true romantic.

Tim was also a devoted father to his sons, squiring them to soccer and football games throughout California and Europe, encouraging them academically and athletically and imparting to them many lessons about business as relational not transactional, the importance of keeping and being a friend, and the need to be active and dedicated fathers. His never ended a telephone conversation without his signatory “Love you.”

Tim is survived by his wife, Suzanne, his sons Warren and Matthew and their wives Melanie and Alynn, his grandchildren Ava, Zachary, Liam, Kiera, and Cavan, his brothers Roger Fortier of August, GA and Paul Fortier of Reedley, CA, and his sisters Kathy Rodriguez of Fresno and Mary Jay Davis of Southern California, as well as his recently discovered half-sisters in Ireland, Carol, Susan and Mary.

Services will be held at Chapel of the Light in Fresno on Wednesday March 4, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. with a luncheon reception following.

In lieu of flowers and in keeping with Tim’s request, donations may be made to institutions of Catholic education (most specifically Saint Mary’s College) and to the Key Club of Kiwanis at Fresno High School.

# Events

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**MAR** **Memorial Service** 10:00AM

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Chapel of the Light Funeral Home

1620 W. Belmont Avenue, Fresno, CA, US, 93728

# Comments

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“ Multicolor Bright Sympathy Standing Basket was purchased for the family of Timothy Anthony Fortier.



March 03 at 04:42 PM

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“ Tim was a friend of mine. He and his entire family were strong supporters when I ran for the Assembly and Congress. He had unimpeachable values. I am sorry I had not seen him in quite a while and his passing is another lesson to stay connect to the ones you will miss one day.

Richard Lehman - February 28 at 07:55 PM

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“ I first met Tim when I was working for Calmat, I was batching concrete and CTI was delivering our powder. Super gentleman... Super friend..... A really great person. The world with out Tim will be a lesser place. I can say.... I loved my friendship with Tim. You will be missedmy friend.

John McEwen - February 26 at 11:36 AM



“ I was so fortunate to have met Tim through his passion for Democratic politics after having known one of his late brothers many years before. It's a small world...and when I met his wife, Suzanne, we both realized we had been friends in school many years before but had lost contact with one another. Coincidentally, I again lost contact with Tim and Suzanne for a few years until just weeks before he died...we all had planned to get together soon to catch up. It's not too late for Suzanne and I to do just that, but, alas it is for Tim and I in this world. So, my friends, as you read this, please don't let another day go by without reconnecting with old friends when the opportunity arises. I will always remember Tim for his kindness, his keen insight into what makes people tick and for his real concern and interest in others. When he would give testimony at a legislative hearing, legislators listened intently because of his genuine sincerity—you knew what he was saying was coming from his heart. He had an uncanny ability to express his position softly yet his words were compelling. You definitely wanted him on your side! And, you also wanted him as a friend. I will miss Tim. Suzanne: thank you for sharing him with our community for so many years and know our thoughts and prayers for strength are shared with you at this time.

Susan Good - February 29 at 12:54 AM