



Thomas James Higham Jr.

July 24, 1945 - October 5, 2018

Thomas James Higham Jr. was born on July 24, 1945 in Youngstown, Ohio, to Thomas James Higham Sr. and Gladys Higham, and passed away October 5, 2018, at his home in Fresno, California.

While growing up, Tom developed an avid interest in restoring cars and trucks, often helping his friends with their repair and restoration projects. His first restoration project was a 1956 Ford F-100 Pickup truck, originally owned by his father-in-law, that was one of the first off the showroom floor. He enjoyed showing off his new toys in car and truck shows and won many awards over the years, including one for creativity when he used the shell of a Budweiser can to hold together a bunch of wires in the engine compartment. Tom's passion for cars never changed and in 1982, he traded for a 1965 Mustang which he restored. His eldest daughter, Chris had the enviable pleasure of driving it to high school.

Tom graduated from Clovis High School and thereafter attended Fresno State University. In 1966 Tom joined the United States Army where he was quickly deployed to Vietnam. During his tour, he was assigned as a sharp shooter on the ammunition trains. As far as his family knew, he was a microwave technician (before the microwave was associated to a kitchen appliance), which the family thought was a safe job in communications. His family never knew that little detail until he returned home. Sergeant Higham served his

country proudly and continued to support and respect his beloved county as a 100% service connected, Disabled American Veteran.

Tom married his first wife, Linda Sue Wilson on September 17, 1966. They had known each other since 5th grade. Initially, they lived near Ft. Bragg until his discharge from the Army, then moved to Hayward, California in 1970; they stayed in the Bay Area until 1997. When Tom's girls were younger, they remember taking many road trips, going camping and, of course, fishing. Tom really loved fishing and made sure to teach his girls the "proper" way to cast, catch, and clean a fish. On these road trips, Tom, like so many others during that time, enjoyed chatting with the truckers on his CB radio. His CB handle was "Tailgate Tom", for the obvious reason.

In 1997, widowed Tom moved back to Fresno, California and decided to join "Parents without Partners" where he met Linda Fay Lowry at the Halloween Social. Linda fondly remembers sighting Tom for the first time across the room. "He looked as if he was a deer caught in the headlights and would have bolted out the back door if I had said Boo!" They finally did speak and the rest is history. They fell in love and were married less than four months later on Valentine's Day 1998.

Tom and Linda really enjoyed traveling together and lived the motto "Have car - Will travel". Once Tom retired from Bank of America, they joined the PT Cruiser Club and traveled all over the United States with the car club. When Tom purchased his cherished Ford Roush Mustang they, naturally, joined the Mustang Club and traveled all over the US again, including a pilgrimage road trip to Dearborn, Michigan for the 50th Anniversary of the Mustang. They didn't limit themselves to road trips, however. They also went on many ocean cruises, visiting Alaska, Mexico, New England and Canada. One of their highlight trips was a combination rail and cruise vacation, where they traveled by train across the United States, cruised New England and Eastern Canada,

then returned by train across Canada. Linda considered him an easy travel companion as they journeyed through 49 states together, only missing Tennessee due to severe weather.

Tom mentioned several times that he was not allowed to have a dog as a child. As an adult, he enjoyed several. His last canine companion was his little brown Pug named Charlie, who was very dear to his heart. When Tom returned home from the hospital for the last time and took his final breath, Charlie was at his feet. Tom had a smile on his face.

The most important thing in Tom's life here on earth was his family. He was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas Sr. and Gladys Higham; his sister, Karen; first wife, Linda Sue; and grandchildren, Robbie and Mathew. He is survived by his wife, Linda Fay Higham, of 21 years, and his proudly claimed blended family of five daughters: Chris, Kathy, Jennifer, Teresa, and Larissa; twelve grandchildren: John Thomas, Christopher, Allie, Tabitha, Paige, Lane, Robert, Fionna, Ronnie, Chris, Jordan, and Ryan; and five great-grandchildren: Madison, Mason, Isabel, Amelia, and Justice. Tom was greatly loved by his family and friends. He will be missed.

May Tom forever rest in peace in the arms of his Lord.

Cemetery Details

San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery

32053 West McCabe Road
Santa Nella, CA 95322
<http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/sanjoaquinvalley.asp>

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

NOV 17. 11:00 AM (PT)

Woodward Park Church of Christ
7886 N Millbrook Ave.
Fresno, CA 93720

Committal

NOV 19. 2:00 PM (PT)

San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery
32053 West McCabe Road
Santa Nella, CA 95322
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Tribute Wall



“ *Thomas James Higham Jr.*

September 15, 2022 at 09:34 PM