



Thomas Bailey Tower

November 13, 1946 - February 21, 2025

Thomas Bailey Tower

Nov 13, 1946 – Feb 21, 2025

Plano, Texas - Thomas Bailey Tower, age 78, passed away on Feb 21, 2025, at the Dallas VA Memorial Hospital.

Tom was born in Glenn Ridge, NJ on Nov 13, 1946, to the late Richard A Tower and Gladys S Tower.

Tom lived in Chatham, NJ as a youngster and teenager and enjoyed summertime on the New Jersey shore at Seaside Park where his family had a summer home. Summers Tom worked on the beach and was also a lifeguard at Island State Park where he picked up his nickname, "Toad." Tom loved the shore, you could find him out in the water surfing with his buddies if he was not working, he also loved surf casting on the beach with his brothers for Blues and Striped Base. Tom attended the Chatham, NJ public school until he graduated. He moved on to college at Yankton College but did not complete his studies there. Tom returned to his hometown and enlisted in the Army on November 8, 1967, and attended the Army Officer Training Program and graduated and received his Commission as a 2nd Lieutenant.

During his time in the Army, he served in Vietnam as an Infantry Unit

Commander. He served Honorably and receive numerous awards including Purple Hearts (with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters), Vietnam Service Ribbon (with 1 Silver Star), Vietnam Campaign Medal (with 60 Devices), Parachutist Badge, and the Combat Infantry Badge. After recovering from his injuries at an Army hospital in Japan and numerous other hospitals in the States before being transferred to Fitzsimons General in Denver, Colorado. Upon release from the hospital, he was assigned to Ft Carson, CO, promoted to Captain and retired from the Army on June 8, 1970, and began his civilian career while also attending the University of Miami where he earned his Bachelor of Science.

Tom's civilian career included employment at Texas Instruments before moving on to become VP of Marketing with TopSearch in Austin Texas where he also enrolled at the University of Texas and graduated with his MBA. Tom eventually left TopSearch and founded his own company T2. Marketing, which helped companies develop their marketing skills. He was an Independent Sales Representative for numerous companies and his job took him to many places in the United States and Asia. If Tom wasn't in the office or working, you could easily find him on the golf course. He was an avid golfer and often talked about his chipping and putting to anyone who wanted to listen. Tom loved to travel and enjoyed numerous hiking and camping trips in remote place in the western United States.

Tom is survived by Carol Tower and his children Jason Decker and wife Tara and his grandson Rory and his daughter, Stephanie Tower. He leaves his brothers John and spouse Brenda Tower of Monument, CO, Robert and spouse Deborah Tower of Penfield, NY, Jim Tower of Plano, TX, Brother-in-Law Leonard Wyngarden of Provo, UT, and many nieces and nephews. In addition to his parents, Tom was predeceased by his oldest brother and sister, Richard Tower Jr and Margaret Wyngarden.

The Tower Family will be hosting a Celebration of Life on March 19, 2025, in

honor of their brother, Thomas B. Tower. The service will be held at The Course at Waters Creek, located at 7201 Chase Oaks Boulevard, Plano, TX 75025. Prior to the celebration, the family will spread Tom's ashes along some of his favorite golf holes, a gesture that holds deep sentimental value and reflects his love for the sport.

The celebration of Tom's life will follow at the clubhouse from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. This gathering is intended to bring together family, friends, and all who knew Tom to share in the remembrance of his life. Attendees are encouraged to share their fond memories and stories about Tom, celebrating the moments that made him such a special and cherished individual.

Refreshments will be provided at the clubhouse, and there will be a display of photographs and memorabilia highlighting Tom's life and achievements. The Tower Family extends their heartfelt gratitude to all who join them in this celebration, as your presence and support mean the world to them during this time of remembrance.

All are welcome to attend and participate in honoring Tom's life. Let us come together to celebrate the impact he made and the beautiful memories he left behind.

For those who wish, contributions in Tom's memory donations may be made to Wounded Warriors www.woundedwarriorproject.org/donate or the Veterans of Foreign at P.O. Box 941390 Plano, TX, United States, 75094.

Condolences, photos, and favorite memories may be shared through Distinctive Life Cremations and Funeral Services, 1617 N Central Expressway, Plano, TX 75075 <http://www.distinctivelife.com/>

Previous Events

Celebration of Life for Thomas B. Tower

MAR **19**. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

The Course at Waters Creek
7201 Chase Oaks Blvd.
Plano, TX 75025

Tribute Wall



“ *Distinctive Life Cremation and Funeral Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Thomas Bailey Tower*



Distinctive Life Cremation and Funeral Services - March 06, 2025 at 02:27 PM

JT

“ Casey Joyce All America VFW Post 4380 <vfw4380@gmail.com>
10:56 AM (2 minutes ago)
to bcc: me

*Comrades,
Another comrade and brother-in-arms has passed. Tom Towers was
the brother of our own James L. Tower. He passed away in
February and a service was held on March 19, 2025. We recently
found out about Tom's passing from his brother-in-law, Leonard
Wyngarten.*

*Please watch this to Tom, an Army officer and a Purple Heart
recipient with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters in Vietnam.*

Rest in Peace, Sir.

<https://www.tributeslides.com/tributes/show/WPFPDZBMPZ2JX9GZ>

Richard Amato

Richard L. Amato

Post Commander 2022-25

Plano Casey Joyce All-America Post 4380

An All-American and All-State Post 2023-2024

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States of America

James Tower - March 30, 2025 at 12:01 PM

JT

“ *Quotation for the Day*
"There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge
is love, the only survival, the only meaning." ~ Thornton Wilder

James Tower - March 27, 2025 at 01:42 PM

KR

“ Tom was always a great person. It seems everyone that knew him in High School had stories to tell. We spoke at several CHS Class Reunions, and on Facebook at times. Tom will be missed by us and everyone that loved him.
R.I.P. Tom.

Kathi Brydon Ryan CHS Class of 1964. (Rochester, NY).



Kathi Brydon Ryan - March 20, 2025 at 10:29 PM

“ *Final Blessing*

Heavenly father, as we say goodbye to our brother Tom and friend, we entrust his spirit into your loving arms. May Tom find Eternal rest and Peace in your presence, and may we find comfort in the hope of seeing him again in your Kingdom. Thank you for the precious memories Tom...

*“You are my brother not by choice,
but by the nature of our birth
I could not have chosen a better one,
you were the best on earth.”*

Stephanie can read this, or I can read it for her:

Tom’s daughter wrote on Face Book: My dad, Thomas Bailey Tower, after three Purple Hearts, two hip replacements, 3 heart attacks, swam 10 laps alongside me just 6 months ago, before learning he had lung and bone cancer. He played a round of golf just last month. After he stepped on a land mine in Vietnam, he was told he would never walk again.... And he went on to coach soccer and ran 6 miles a day. When I was 6 I’d hold onto his shoulders while he flew through the water doing the butterfly at the deep end...Dolphin dad...Otter dad...Bionic dad. My hero!

He knew one song on the guitar- house of the rising sun. He played the spoons on his knee when his soccer buddies would come over and party. He taught me how to make a dove call with his hands cupped just right. I still practice calling the doves, especially when I am feeling lonely or just yearning for peace in my life and in the world.

He had one cassette tape in his car that he drove me to school every day- for 6 years - Beatles Abby Road.

Once I was ironing my clothes when I was about 12 and singing “The land of Submarines” at the top of my lungs. I thought I was

alone in the house. Then I looked out the window and saw dad standing on the deck fresh from his daily 6-mile run- I'll never forget the look on his face- like he couldn't believe I was able to sing so well- head slightly tilted with a sort of confused and curious smile. He asked me "so when are you gonna make us rich with that voice?"

Every weekend he would wake me up and say, "pancakes or waffles?" He taught me how to make the best pancakes in the world. He was the only man in my life who ever asked me on a dinner date. He always wanted to take me out to dinner when he visited.

He called me every day for the last 7 years. I am so grateful for those days we swam together two days in a row.... It was the next day that he went home and went to the VA for his cracked rib. He swam right alongside me and I knew that day was one of the most perfect days of my life.

He wasn't just my dad; he was truly my friend! We will swim together again. I love you so much. Thank you, Dad! RIP.

Cristela Edwards - March 20, 2025 at 12:42 PM

“ Family and Guest Tributes and Memories

My brother Tom, also known as “Toad” was a hoot growing up in Chatham, NJ. Some of Tom’s high school classmates remember Tom as a practical joker and wanted to share their special moments, but as his brother I also remember some of his mischievous deeds in and around Chatham, NJ that keep him a few steps ahead of the Chief of Police, which we will not elaborate on today.

Trip Westcott knew Tom well and one summer day they went to the NJ shore for surfing lessons for Trip. Trip wrote to Jim, “Tom was my instructor. I had never been surfing before, Tom said it was easy, I just had to get out and go through the waves. He did a super short demo in 2 feet of water then handed me a big yellow surfboard. I had waxed it up just like in the Beach Boys song. I started out from shore and struggled through the surf. Tom yelled, “Keep going out further.” I was way out, and he kept yelling, “Go out further, way out.” He yelled, “Keep going, there are bigger waves out there.” When I thought I was halfway to Europe, I turned around and saw him laughing so hard he doubled up on the sand. Good joke, Tom, I was a dope. It took me a long time to get back to shore in the current. Then I retired my surfing career.”

When Tom would visit Trip, who lived in Vermont, they would embark on epic hiking adventures through the mountains and woods. Tom, always the military strategist, would point out the best places to set up an ambush or where the enemy might hide for a surprise attack. It was like hiking with a kid who had an overactive imagination and a collection of invisible wooden guns and water pistols.

After a long day of playing “soldier,” they’d always end up back at the house, sharing stories and laughing over a glass or two of scotch ‘neat. Trip often joked that he had earned his scotch by enduring Tom’s “tactical maneuvers” through the wilderness.

Tony Nagle, another classmate, remembers growing up with Tom as little kids down at the shore in Seaside Park. Tony said, “I talked to Tom several times while he was going through chemo, and his only

complaint was that it took time away from his golf game. I spoke with our high school classmates to let them know that Tom did not seem to suffer, and, despite all his ailments, he was happy to the end.

Closing Remarks / Refreshments and Social Time

In closing, please join us for refreshments and a time of fellowship. Jim has carefully organized the collage of photos that has been displayed on the screen, taking us through Tom's journey from his youth in Chatham, New Jersey, to his high school and college years, and beyond.

As we gather, let us share our stories, our laughter, and our tears, and come together in remembrance of a truly remarkable man who touched all our hearts. Through these cherished moments, we honor Tom and the profound impact he made on each of our lives. On behalf of the Tower family, we extend our deepest and heartfelt gratitude to all who have gathered here today. Your presence and support mean more to us than words can express, as we celebrate Tom's extraordinary life and the beautiful memories he left behind. John, Jim, and I want to express our deepest thanks to the Dallas VA Hospital and the wonderful doctors, nurses, and orderlies who cared for Tom with such compassion during his last several weeks. Their loving care for Tom was extraordinary and will forever be appreciated. We also need to thank Distinctive Life Cremation and Funeral Services as Logan and Chrissy were most kind in helping us make the arrangements for Tom's cremation. Special thanks to Cotton Davis, Lee Hunter, and the entire staff here at Watters Creek for your help and generous support. Tom so much enjoyed the Pro Shop staff and all his colleagues in the cart and maintenance shop. We also want to thank all his regular golfing buddies as I am sure they were the brunt of some of his famous practical jokes. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being a part of th

“ I remember a time when Tom, fresh out of his Army Officer Candidate Program and proudly sporting his shiny new 2nd LT bars, was eager to flaunt his new status to the world. I, on the other hand, had enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Class and was knee-deep in training at Quantico, first as a PFC at Boot Camp and then later to the Platoon Leaders Course.

One afternoon, 2nd Lt. Thomas Tower strutted into the Drill Sergeants Office like a peacock in all his dress blues glory, adorned with every bell and whistle imaginable. My Drill Sergeant, with a sly grin, called me out of the barracks to report to his Quarters. There I stood, in my BDU's, at attention, knocking on the Drill Sergeants door. The moment I saw my brother's beaming face, I knew I was in for it and was sure Tom had spoken with the drill sergeant prior to my arrival.

I snapped a salute, and Tom's smile grew even wider, if that was possible. I was granted a one-hour visit with Tom before returning to my duties, which I enjoyed immensely despite knowing a PT session awaited me. True to form, the Drill Sergeant had some "extra" PT lined up for me – I was to watch television in the elbows and toes position between two folding chairs. But hey, it was all worth it because 2nd Lt. Thomas B. Tower had come to see his brother, and nothing could dampen my spirits. I am still sure that Tom had something to do with PT session!

As everyone here knows, Tom was an avid golfer. Tom would always brag to me about golfing here at Watters Creek; he would always say that he was winning lots of money in the senior tournaments that he played in. Not sure if that's true—only the people here could confirm it. As always, he was such a competitor. I can remember as we grew up, especially when we visited our mother and father in Hilton Head, we would have putting and pitching contests. Of course, Tom would always say his chip was closest to the hole, or he had fewer putts than everybody else, but the truth be told, Dad beat him most of the time. (Sorry, Tom, your secret is out!)

Tom and I got to play a lot of golf together not only in Hilton Head but also in Vermont, where I used to live. One summer, he got to

play for a few months at my home course as a substitute in my Men's League getting to know my friends and bragging about golf. When I got back from the cruise, Tom and I went to the championship course at Jay Peak Resorts. It's a pretty tough course—narrow with lots of junk on the left and right, big sand traps, and other hazards. Once we finished the round, Tom looked at me and said, "Bob, this has got to be one of the toughest courses I've ever played." By that, I mean he did beat me by a few strokes (but let's not tell anyone he played the course from the forward tees!).

Cristela Edwards - March 20, 2025 at 12:41 PM

“ CPT Thomas B Tower 1946-2025

Welcome, dear friends and family, as we gather to celebrate the remarkable life of a cherished brother, father, and friend, and as Tom's oldest brother would always tell him, "Tom, you are living large!" Let us bow our heads in sincere prayer...

Dear Lord,

Today we honor Tom and all our veterans who served their country. Bless them, Lord, for their unselfish service in preserving our freedoms and safety. We respect and honor them for their sacrifices and contributions. Watch over Tom and his fellow brothers and sisters in arms and bless them with peace and happiness. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

My mom and dad raised six children, instilling in us the profound importance of family and love. I know that my late brother Richard and sister Margaret, and my siblings John, Jim, and I would all agree that Tom touched our lives in ways words can scarcely convey. As we reflect on the beautiful moments spent with him, let us now open our hearts to a heartfelt poem that speaks to the enduring bond we share with our beloved brother:

My Brother – Unknown Author

*As kids, we lived together
We fought, we laughed, we cried.
We did not always show the love,
that we both had inside.
We shared our dreams and plans,
and some secrets too.
All the memories we share,
is what bonds me now to you.
We grew to find we have a love
that is very strong today.
It's a love shared by our family,
that will never fade away.
You are my brother not by choice,
but by the nature of our birth*

*I could not have chosen a better one,
you were the best on earth.*

There are so many cherished memories I have of my brother Tom. As you look at the photos displayed around the room, please take a moment to reflect on the beautiful memories each picture holds. Remember the warmth of Tom's smile, the joy in his eyes, and the laughter he brought to everyone around him. These images not only capture the milestones of his life but also the essence of his spirit and the boundless love he shared with his family and friends.

Tom's youth growing up in Chatham, NJ, was filled with excitement and joy as he moved through his elementary and high school years. After graduation, his life became more complex as he ventured into the real world of college and work. I had many heartfelt conversations with Tom over these years at various family reunions and visits, either at my place or his. During these times, Tom shared with me the bumps and difficult times he experienced as he journeyed through adulthood. We all experience these, don't we? Tom was no different; he felt the frustrations and pains of work and military life. Yet, despite these challenges, he never lost his zest for life.

Tom truly embraced every moment, finding joy and laughter even in difficult times. His ability to enjoy life to the fullest was remarkable, and his infectious spirit never waned. He brought light and happiness to those around him, making him a cherished friend to many. Tom's laughter and fun-loving nature continued to shine brightly right up until the end, leaving us with memories that will forever warm our hearts.

One of my earliest and fondest memories of Tom was when he started to develop his, Army skills from a young age while growing up in Chatham. Tom, along with his brothers, cousin, and friends, became experts at building forts, lean-tos, and treehouses in the woods of Chatham. They learned soldiering skills while playing war in the woods. Tom later transformed these playful tactics into advanced strategic skills as an Army Officer serving in Vietnam.

Cristela Edwards - March 20, 2025 at 12:40 PM

KE

“ *Kenny lit a candle in memory of Thomas Bailey Tower*



kenny - March 19, 2025 at 08:00 AM

JT

“ *<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=838074489667432&set=t.100003946664317>*

James Tower - March 13, 2025 at 09:10 AM

JT

“ *<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1BRgLchn6g/>*

James Tower - March 13, 2025 at 08:56 AM

JT

A link to Tom's Facebook page

James Tower - March 13, 2025 at 08:57 AM

JT

“ *♪♪ When I die and they lay me to rest
Gonna go to the place that's the best
When I lay me down to die
Goin' up to the spirit in the sky
Goin' up to the spirit in the sky
That's where I'm gonna go when I die
When I die and they lay me to rest
Gonna go to the place that's the best
Prepare yourself you know it's a must
Gotta have a friend in Jesus
So you know that when you die
He's gonna recommend you
To the spirit in the sky*

*Gonna recommend you
To the spirit in the sky
That's where you're gonna go when you die
When you die and they lay you to rest
You're gonna go to the place that's the best
Never been a sinner I never sinned
I got a friend in Jesus
So you know that when I die
He's gonna set me up with
The spirit in the sky
Oh set me up with the spirit in the sky
That's where I'm gonna go when I die
When I die and they lay me to rest
I'm gonna go to the place that's the best
Go to the place that's the best 💜*

From the song Spirit in the Sky, thinking of you brother...

James Tower - March 12, 2025 at 05:46 PM

JT

“ *The Class of CHS 1964 sends their deepest and most sincere condolences. Tom was so loved by everyone that knew him. One never knew if his mischievous smile was if he was up to tricks or something fun. Tom will truly be missed at reunions and class functions. Rest in Peace Tom. The CHS class of 1964 (Sympathy Card sent by Kathleen Ryan of Rochester NY)*

James L Tower - March 10, 2025 at 04:24 PM

JT

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



James L Tower - March 10, 2025 at 02:15 PM

BT

“ Tom’s daughter Stephanie shared a memory of her dad that touched my heart and really captured the essence of the man! “My dad, Thomas Bailey Tower, after three Purple Hearts, two hip replacements, 3 heart attacks, swam 10 laps alongside me just 6 months ago, before learning he had lung and bone cancer. He played a round of golf just last month. After he stepped on a land mine in Vietnam, he was told he’d never walk again.... And he went on to coach soccer and ran 6 miles a day. When I was 6 I’d hold onto his shoulders while he flew through the water doing the butterfly at the deep end...Dolphin dad...Otter dad...Bionic dad. My hero! We will swim together again. I love you so much. Thank you, Dad! RIP”

Bob Tower - March 02, 2025 at 09:06 AM

BT

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Bob Tower - February 28, 2025 at 06:13 PM

RB

“ Didn’t really know Thomas, But from a wounded Vietnam brother may he rest in peace, R J Boulanger

R J Boulanger - February 24, 2025 at 10:01 AM

FF

Bigger than life. Friend always there when I needed him. I will miss you bud

Fred Ferraro - February 25, 2025 at 10:30 AM

TW

For Tom Tower:

When ever he came to VT to visit , he came to relax . We would walk in the woods and he would talk of the war . He pointed out places where the enemy could hide . He was very brave and matter of fact as if it was a bunch of kids with water guns about to jump out of the brush. Later we would drink scotch and joke about his adventures. Trip

Trip Westcott - March 04, 2025 at 01:27 PM

TW

Back in our younger days we often went to the Jersey shore . One day , Tom set up a surf lesson for me with him as an instructor . We got to the beach where he gave me a super quick lesson on how to ride the wave. OK ,very easy ,nutin to worry about. I waxed the board per instructions ,like in the Beach Boy songs , Some how I got out through the surf , now dead tired, Tom said keep going, I did , Every once in a while I looked back and he waved me out and yelled " keep going the big waves are way out" When I got half way to Europe I looked back and he was laughing so hard he dropped down and rolled in the sand. It took ages to get back to shore . I was beat and felt so stupid . Well done Tom !

Trip Westcott - March 04, 2025 at 01:41 PM

JT

*"Green... the color of hope
Traveling on the road of time
Looking for a way of making a dime*

*I need many to spend...
On what that depends
As whom I meet this time*

*It is the best I can do
In this crazy world that turns
For a friend that understands my concerns*

*The color of green is my hope
To be... is my goal
Not to be... is a lump of coal"*

*A Poem by Tom Tower, date written is unknown
Found as the only entry in a notebook*

James Tower - March 14, 2025 at 10:33 AM

JT

Quotation for the Day

"I was never one to patiently pick up broken fragments and glue them together again and tell myself that the mended whole was as good as new. What is broken is broken -- and I'd rather remember it as it was at its best than mend it and see the broken places as long as I lived." ~ Margaret Mitchell

James Tower - March 14, 2025 at 07:11 PM