

Thomas Kent Hollberg

October 9, 1943 ~ February 17, 2024

Thomas Kent Hollberg was born to Dorothy Morgan and Ronald Jack Hollberg on October 9, 1943, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Tom passed away peacefully surrounded by family at home on February 17, 2024. Tom was preceded in death by his parents, brothers, Ron and Bob, sister, Joyce, and stepson David Chatelain. Tom is survived by Barbara Thurgood, his partner of 36 years; sister, Judy Hollberg (Ali); daughter, Heidi Barker (Howard), grandchildren, Gretchen Lopez (Armando), Max, Sofia Kate; son, John Hollberg (Alissa), grandchildren, Abigail Hatfield (Mike), Jack Hollberg (Meg), Sarah, Nate; son, TK Hollberg (Echo), grandchildren, Gabriel, Porter, Ryan, Vivian; stepson, Clinton Thurgood (Brooke), grandchildren, Andrew Heugly (Laken), Alexa, Cailin, Beck; the Chatelain stepchildren, Mike (Lisa), grandchild Alex; Steve; Jeff, grandchildren Parker (Ashley), Chase, Jack; Jenny Gillespie (Robert), grandchild Rob; Jim Chatelain (Heather), grandchildren Nathan, Spencer.

Tom married Kristen Smith in 1965 and they resided on Gilmer Drive in Salt Lake City. In 1974, Tom married Sharon Jensen and they resided on Harvard Avenue.

In 1988 Tom met Barbara Thurgood and there began an amazing 36-year journey. As partners, they developed a relationship that built and supported the other. Barb lovingly referred to Tom as Tommy, which emulated a youthful love affair. Barb was the love and light of Tommy’s life.

Tom and Barb loved road trips to Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, their condo in St George, and even Mount Rushmore. One of their most memorable trips was to Hawaii where Tom was able to see Pearl Harbor and relax by the ocean watching sea turtles in Maui. Barb never stopped supporting Tom, even when his health made it really hard. She was the one who carried the heavy burden, but never complained. Barb was always there with a smile, great attitude, and willingness to do whatever would make Tommy happy. They were better together than they were apart. Barb was Tom’s angel and Tom was her man. It was the relationship of their lifetime!

Tom genuinely cared for so many people in many unique relationships. He loved his large family and was always interested in learning anything he could about his ancestors. He was always concerned about the one person that wasn’t included in the family until the end. Tom cherished his Morgan Cousins and their parties. He also loved his classmates of 1962 and never stopped proclaiming “East High Will Never Die!”

What made Tom most memorable was his commitment to serve others. He was the one that so many called when their water heater went out, the garage door was broken, or the leaky faucet wouldn’t stop leaking. He was the guy to whom people referred when they said, “I know a guy!” Tom was a skilled craftsman who built many beautiful pieces of furniture, remodeled homes, and left his recognizable style in many Utah neighborhoods. He developed a stained glass hobby later in life and created stunning pieces that he enjoyed giving to loved ones.

Tom was proud to be the church girls' softball and basketball coach, the baseball coach to dozens of neighborhood boys, but what put Tom on the map was his dedication to the rising generation as an employer. Tom was an entrepreneur who owned gas stations, including Tom's U-Serve, car washes, and eventually three Baskin-Robbins stores where he employed a generation of youth, many of whom are today's leaders in our communities. Tom taught them how to be responsible, work hard, and be on time. One employee wrote this note when he heard of Tom's passing:

"I will never forget my first job interview with Tom at age 13. When I was hired, he taught me how to work, how to count money, how to be responsible and the list goes on. There was one lesson he taught me that changed my life. Due to poor judgment on my part, Tom showed me grace that only Jesus could extend."

Tom wanted his employees to be better when they left Baskin-Robbins than when they started. He taught that a job worth doing is worth doing well. He invested in their lives with life skills that ultimately shaped a generation of Highland High and East High kids. These kids are now attorneys, small business owners, large business owners, physicians, civic leaders, moms, dads, coaches and the list goes on.

Tom became an extraordinary person following a humble start. Despite life's challenges, he made a better life for so many with simple, genuine service. He loved people and they in turn became better versions of themselves due to interactions with Tom.

Tom was known for his 24th of July Fireworks show - featuring fireworks from Evanston – EPIC! Then he took it to another level with free Baskin-Robbins ice cream for those in attendance. He was a patriot who loved the flag, police, nurses, and America. He flew the flag at each of his homes and was proud that he knew all the words to the Star-Spangled Banner.

Tom built his dream cabin in Wanship, Utah where it later became the spot for family gatherings and reunions. It was the place where people came to renew old relationships and catch up with loved ones when life started moving too fast. The cabin had a way of slowing it all down and had the fragrance of peace and beauty.

Anyone who knew Tom would agree that he was the essence of generosity. He was the guy who would give you the shirt off his back. Always too much for birthdays and Christmas. He was not a rich man by worldly standards, but his life created a richness that cannot be purchased for those he trained at the stores or taught his craftsman skills. Those who knew Tom are better for it and they have in turn made an immeasurable impact on humanity.

Tom will be missed by many, but his story and influence is alive in those who knew him, worked for him, and loved him.

A funeral service will be held on Friday, February 23rd, 2024 at 12 noon at Larkin Mortuary, 260 E South Temple, SLC UT. Friends and family may gather at Larkin Mortuary on Thursday, February 22nd, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm and on Friday from 10:30 - 11:30 am prior to the service. Interment at Salt Lake City Cemetery. A recording of the service will be available to watch online through Zoom using the "Watch Service" button above.