



Thomas Neil Dougherty

February 8, 1947 - October 21, 2025

Tom passed away peacefully on October 21, 2025 surrounded by family.

Tom's legacy

is survived by his adoring wife, sister, children, grandchildren, horses, dogs, cats, and a

recently departed favorite donkey, Mr. Milton Burro. Tom left an enormous impact on

every person he had in his life and he will live on through the memories and stories they

hold dearly and with great humor.

Tom was born in Boston, Massachusetts, spent his schooling years in Topeka, Kansas,

partied his way through K-state while "barely receiving his degree" and finally moved on

to living out the rest of his "unbelievable" life in Fort Collins, Colorado. Tom had a

wonderful life filled with many "excellent adventures" that brought him much pride, joy,

and laughter. From working on constant projects, building and nurturing a wonderful life

with Carole, horse rides all over the world, and ice cream runs with his grandchildren.

Tom loved to create new gadgets that he could share with family and friends.

The

spudgun was the most memorable as it launched potatoes, sometimes, into the air. New

gadgets always meant spontaneous runs to the Home Depot, only to “make a stop at

the bratwurst cart or the Dairy Queen”.

For those who knew Tom, know that he was a kind, honest, witty, brilliant, supportive,

hard-working, and very outgoing man. Tom was everyone’s biggest cheerleader,

regardless of the outcome or event, with repeated calls, messages, and an occasional

failed fax. Tom is everyone’s father, friend, confidante, brother, and hero.

A gathering will be held to celebrate Tom’s life on November 1st at the Dougherty

Residence beginning at 1 in the afternoon. In lieu of flowers or other, we ask that you

strongly consider making a donation to the Fort Collins Pathways Hospice, in Tom’s

name

Previous Events

Gathering

NOV 1.

Dougherty

Tribute Wall



“ Dear Carole, We are so very sorry to hear that you lost your most wonderful husband and friend, Tom We all loved him and his amazing sense of humor. Happy trails in heaven Tom. We will miss you so much! Bonnie and Greg May

Bonnie May - November 23, 2025 at 08:26 AM



“ Dear Carole and Family. I have had the great pleasure to get to know Carole and Tom as they looked for a place in Tucson. We hit it off over the phone, and I felt like I had been a long time friend. I loved his enthusiasm for life and his generosity of spirit. God Bless you all and may he comfort you during this time.
Warmest Regards, Always
Deborah Wierson

Deborah Wierson - November 07, 2025 at 01:58 PM



“ This is the very best non-cousin a person could have. As a new resident in Fort Collins I was introduced to Tom and Carole by my brother back in 1984. Through the years my wife and I enjoyed their company and shared memories of boating together and Rotary. A truly wonderful human being was Tom. Terry and Cheryl Dougherty.

Terry Dougherty - November 06, 2025 at 05:55 PM

TB

“ Well Tom, you missed one heck of a party yesterday. You would have loved it! All the friends and family, from across the country, gathered together to share great memories and great food (all your favorites). We introduced a whole new generation of kids to the joys of launching potatoes from a spud gun and eating whipped cream straight from the can, just like you. So many old memories kept flooding up, as we watched new ones being made. You'd be surprised by how many lives you've touched over the years... a beautiful tribute to a life well lived. It really was a perfect day. The only thing missing was you.

Trula Berg - November 02, 2025 at 10:21 AM

JB

“ Many memories have popped into my head over the last week and a half of my grandpa Tom. Many of them involve excellent adventures, A.K.A simple trips to Jax for ice cream or Home Depot for a hot dog, but many were truly excellent adventures stretching from the Green River, to Kansas football games, to Louisiana for hunting and fishing, or the mountains for multiple ski trips. He loved anything he got to do with his family. Whether immediate family or extended, he treated everyone the same and with the kind of excitement only he could bring to the occasion. I'm not sure any of the kind of experiences we shared will ever be the same without him.

Grandpa was always coming up with the craziest ideas for fun. Shooting potato guns with much more than just potatoes, dressing up his own grandson in a ghillie suit to scare people during the Halloween parties, or deciding to let a 10 year old drive Seely the boat from the top deck because he got tired of driving. We spent many nights together looking at the stars or working on random projects in the garage of their Horsetooth house during the many sleep overs I got to have during my younger years. Multiple trips to the Bar and Grill across the road from the fire station to try and teach me how to play pool or darts, but then driving to the liquor store near the south inlet to grab pizza from a trailer behind the store. Simply because they had a better cheese percentage on their pizza than the bar and grill. I'll never regret the many hours spent with him doing average, everyday tasks that he turned into fun every time.

He encouraged me possibly more than anyone else to follow my mechanical intuition and turn it into an exploding career. He loved hearing about my job. Big engines, large compressors, high pressure gas, and all the things he loved to tinker with, yet I get to do it for a paycheck. He messed with all those things just for fun, but loved to imagine the type of work I get to do every day for a job, and reminisced about his time working for Conoco in Kansas with ginormous natural gas stations and machines larger than anything

I'll ever see. He pushed me to look further and think bigger than what was needed from me. If you're gonna do anything at all, go the whole way.

I know I will get to see you again one day Grandpa. Sorry if it sounded like rambling, machines and tools make sense to people like you and me, not English.

Love Johnny

Johnny Berg - October 31, 2025 at 09:22 PM

TT

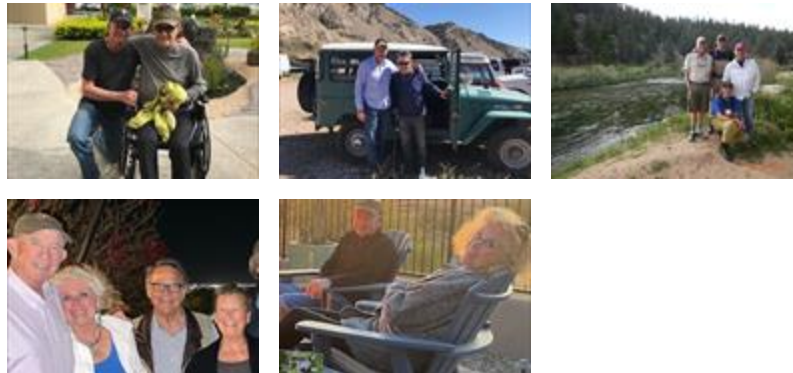
“ Tom has been a close friend and truly a brother since we met as freshmen pledges at Kansas State University. He has been a big presence in my life as well as my wife, Pam's, for all of these 60 years.

One thing that sticks out in my mind is when Tom D came to Hawaii in 2017 where i was in the hospital recovering from a brain hemorrhage which left me seriously impaired. He assisted Pam in getting me on the plane to fly back to Colorado.

We have shared every life event that has happened over our long relationship--Kansas State, SAE Fraternity, Lake Powell, Skiing, Jeeping, Fishing, Cape Cod, Traveling--St John, Hawaii. I can say no more-----a big hole now exists in my heart that will be hard to fill. We send all of our love and condolences to the entire Dougherty/Berg family.

We love you Tom and will think of you often and of all the good times we shared together.

The Tweed's

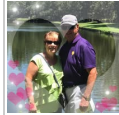


Tom and Pam Tweed - October 31, 2025 at 12:09 PM

JS

*We meet Tom thru the Tweeds decades ago in Colorado Learned to root for K-State, even went to some games and how to seriously party from the Tom's. After leaving Colorado we kept up with Tom and his adventures from Pam and Tom. Also have fond memories of seeing Tom and Carole in Arizona with their horses. You will be missed.
Jane and Nick Squires*

jane squires - October 31, 2025 at 09:41 PM



This AGE affliction is clearly against us, but another thing we're glad Tom did was introduce us to you guys!

Terry Dougherty - November 06, 2025 at 06:00 PM

RB

“ Some earlier photos



Ryan Berg - October 30, 2025 at 01:13 AM

“ For a guy that always has something to say, it has been hard to know what to say this time around. The first time I met Tom in person it was at the Horsetooth house. It was the day before Thanksgiving.

Now, I had of course tried to sabotage all of my moms relationships as the dutiful son that I was. My winning personality coupled with my mom and I's tight knit relationship, I didn't understand why she needed to date anyone. However, I could tell this time that this was someone special to her, so I played nice. I greeted him at the door, no smart alec comments, I made some small talk and went to my room to sulk in private. Roughly 20 minutes later Tom poked his head into my room and said, "Your mom says you're really handy around here, could you give me a hand with something?" Bursting with pride, of course I can help you mister. I followed him to mom's room and he asked how hard I thought it would be to take out one of the old single pain windows since they leaked cold air like a tire with a hole in it. I looked at it closely and admitted I had never thought about it. He asked me to hand him the hammer lying there and after giving it to him, he punched the window with the handle and sent glass out into the side yard. He got this childish grin, the twinkle in his eye for full effect and said, "Whoops!" I was aghast, was this an adult that liked to destroy things, had I met a kindred spirit? The end result was that we spent Thanksgiving day putting in three brand new windows into my mom's room while she cooked dinner. We laughed, we cussed and we used lots of expanding foam. In one day we had bonded over destruction and resurrection. This would be theme in many of our endeavors.

We would have other memorable adventures. There was the homemade silencers, the gas fireplace we secretly installed for Mom's birthday and shooting all the new guns I bought off the front porch, because we could. We destroyed many a flower pot with gunfire, tore out cabinets, replaced push rods in my truck using a technique he read in popular science or something. Up until his shoulder and back started bothering him we made a point to

pheasant hunt around Thanksgiving, often with the Elders. He beamed the first time my son, Johnny, shot his first pheasant on one of these trips. I have so many stories of our hunts and travels, Lake Powell, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Louisiana where I was finally able to take him hunting and fishing for a change. The Quail hunt in Texas where I forgot to check the choke on the shotgun he borrowed and he couldn't hit a thing. I checked it when we got home and found it had a Turkey extra full in it. Those that don't hunt, that would be like trying to hit a Mosquito out of the air with a BB gun, just ain't gonna happen.

I took in Sparky when he was living in a town home where he couldn't keep her any longer. That was one crazy dog, but I loved her greatly. Just that dog created adventures. The birdseed incident which cannot be told in polite society, the frog skin, the Christmas stocking and so many more. I swear he knew she would be a gift and a punishment all at the same time. I am rambling through the tears in my eyes, but you just can't describe a man like Tom in words. He was the perfect grandfather, he adored my mom and she him, he was the father I needed, the mentor I wanted and a best friend. I miss you! I am so very thankful that you are a part of my life.



Ryan Berg - October 29, 2025 at 08:09 PM

SU

“ *I worked at First National Bank in Fort Collins in commercial lending beginning in 1997 for 24 years. Tom was truly one of my favorite customers - he always had that certain twinkle in his eye that made you wonder...*

Susie - October 29, 2025 at 02:45 PM

TE

“ One of the best things about growing up in Topeka was having my cousins, Tom and Sharon, close by. We would get together occasionally and just hang out while the grown ups were having cocktails. Tom was always eager to show me his latest idea or project, which usually involved a rocket, a canon or explosives of some kind. We sometimes went to Westboro Park just down the street from his house to shoot his homemade canon. It shot big steel ball bearings. I remember on more than one occasion hiding out from the cops after shooting the canon or setting off some explosive device. Thanksgiving was always a special time when all of the family gathered at Aunt Ida's house. There was always a football game with cousins or a Ping Pong tournament in the basementwhich Aunt Ida usually won.

When Lisa and I honeymooned in Colorado, we stopped in Fort Collins to visit Tom and Joan. It was the end of May. Tom talked me into going white water rafting on the Poudre River, which can be insane white water that time of year. Lisa thought for sure she would end up a widow after just 10 days of marriage.

Tom and I have had some great adventures together, from fishing the Green River below Flaming Gorge to Pheasant Hunting in South Dakota. Yes, even the average trip became an "adventure" when you were with Tom.

I never tired of his zest for life and contagious enthusiasm. You and Carole have done more in your 28 years together than than any couple I know.

Tom, you are one of the most accepting and loving people I have ever known and you lived life to the fullest.

God bless you Tom Dougherty. You are missed already but I plan to see you again.

Tom Elder

Tom Elder - October 29, 2025 at 01:10 PM

LH

“ More from Fort Robinson and Museum of the Fur Traders outside Chadron, NE. Sadly, this exhausts my photos of Tom.



Larry Hybl - October 29, 2025 at 09:53 AM

LH

“ More memories of riding at Fort Robinson State Park. Tom and Carole love it, as do we. Many people don't "get" the prairie. We knew T&C were our kind of people when they told us it was one of their go-to places to ride.



Larry Hybl - October 28, 2025 at 07:04 PM

BB

“ Hey Tom,

I hope you're doing well. I'll tell you that I am almost done working on the little green Nissan truck. I think you'd be proud of me. I got the leaf springs replaced, and the break fluid. The last thing I want to do before winter is replace my EGR valve. It kind of sucks knowing that I won't ever see you again. I went over to your house to help Carol out today. It was windy and a bit cold, but nothing I can't handle.

I think you'll remember when I first started getting to know you and Carol, when I first started watching your house and all the animals. I kept on breaking the dishes, by accident of course. After about the third time I remember you telling me that next time I house sit you're going to leave out, on the counter, the dish I broke the time before just to remind me. I know you said it in a kindhearted but also serious manner. I know that because, you were smiling with a touch of aloofness to your tone. As you are aware, I have gotten better, I haven't broken any dishes for a few years running now.

I hope to see you again in about 50 or 60 years. I will come find you and we will have to take a drive in my little green truck.

*Farewell
Branden Bryce*

Branden Bryce - October 28, 2025 at 06:13 PM

“ Linda and I met Tom and Carole at IdleNook horse camp in the Arkansas Ozarks. We instantly became great friends.

For Linda, it started while we were parking in some tight quarters, with trees scratching our trailer.

Linda was already stressed when Tom approached, and she was expecting an annoying dose of "let me show you how to do that little lady ...", which she was not in the mood to hear.

She was ready to unload on him for the unsolicited chauvinistic attitude when he disarmed her with his beautiful smile and his obvious intent to offer nothing more than empathy and encouragement. She has loved him ever since.

For me, within an hour we learned that besides our current love of horses and trail riding, we also shared growing up with guns, dogs, and countless hours of roaming the Great Plains; me in Nebraska's Sandhills, and Tom in the Flint Hills of Kansas. Quail, Prairie Chicken, Grouse and Pheasant provided us with the best coming of age for a boy that I can imagine. How we both missed and lamented the passing of those times and opportunities. Tom was one of the few guys I've met who understood and appreciated my reverential tones when explaining why a Winchester Model 12 Pump was one of the best guns ever made, whether for hunting or trap shooting. He became my virtual big brother during that first hour of getting to know each other.

In the short time we knew each other we created great memories. Some profound, like sharing the discovery that a beloved horse was coming down with a neuromuscular disease that would too soon take them from us; some as silly as making a ritual of ending each days ride by sharing Root Beer Floats at the Fort Robinson historic barn soda fountain. I want one even now, remembering the good laughs and discussion we had. All credit to Tom, who instinctively knew these moments were too special to pass up, calories be damned. We will always treasure these times and places we shared with Tom and Carole, including the long calls, often initiated by

them, to help grow our new friendship when distance kept us apart.

I could go on, and maybe I will later, but I'll end here for now.

We love you Tom. "Go Rest High On That Mountain. Son Your Work On Earth is Done."

And what a well lived life it was.

Larry Hybl - October 28, 2025 at 05:47 PM

MS

“ When I volunteered in 1980 to serve on the City’s Cost of Development committee, I never dreamed I would meet my future business partner and one of the finest friends I could have hoped for, Tom Dougherty. We subsequently served on the State Homebuilders board together, and continued social activities throughout the ‘80s and 90’s.

We each had grown up in Kansas, we both had boats at Horsetooth Reservoir, and we realized our backgrounds, talents, knowledge and desire to develop neighborhoods in Fort Collins just might be best if combined. We did our first development project in Fort Collins in the late 1990’s.

And during it all, we had a fun friendship and I have some hilarious memories and stories of hosting Rotary dinners on our boats on Horsetooth, as well as many boat dinners with our wives, Carole and Corkie. (Ask them about skinny dipping). Our good friend, Roland Dozois introduced us to the Newport, CA to Ensenada, MX sailing race which was an overnight sailing journey. After that adventure, Tom, Roland and I invited our wives to come along, and we chartered a boat to sail to Catalina Island from Long Beach, CA. Carole reminded me that in dense fog while making our way across the channel, we nearly ran into a U.S. Navy warship. On that trip, Tom kept us all laughing with his stories and tales of his adventures.

I treasure the memories of the hundreds of lunches we had together over the years at Canino’s and the thousands of hours of phone conversations, covering travel, astronomy, dogs and horses, philosophy, families, boating and once-in-awhile, business.

Tom was the best business partner I could ever have imagined. Our different skills but shared values complemented each other. His natural charisma would light up meetings with our professionals and City/County staff. Everyone was instantly his friend, and our projects reflected this cooperation. His integrity always won the trust of everyone with whom we did business. We continued creating new

neighborhoods, until retiring in 2020. I could not have dreamed of a better friend. He was truly one in a billion. I will miss him tremendously.

Mike Sollenberger

Mike Sollenberger - October 28, 2025 at 05:43 PM

AL

“ *Tom, Carole and Alice heading to Gene Watson.*



Alice - October 28, 2025 at 12:54 AM

AL

“ Tom, a man that legends are made of!

How can you possibly sum up a life such as Tom's? Impossible! The best we can do is share a few special memories with the world.

I can't see poppies without thinking of Tom and anyone that's seen Tom's huge painting of a field of poppies, knows why.

What? Two extra tickets to Gene Watson performing at the Stagecoach Ballroom in Fort Wort, Texas? Yes! We'd love to come...and come he and Carole did! They drove from Fort Collins to Springtown, Texas just to join me in a night of Gene Watson. What a memory!

Hey Joyce & Alice, we're in Tennessee camping with the horses for a month. Why don't you come join us for a few days? Really folks, why not? So I hop on a plane to Orlando. Joyce picks me up and we're on our way to join Tom and Carole in the beautiful mountains of Tennessee. What a memory!

A large book could be written about the adventures of Tom & Carole and it would only scratch the surface of their gusto for life, friends, family and adventures!

For me, Tom's greatest quality was his love, admiration and respect for my sister, Carole. They loved each other well!

Now most folks would say "rest in peace Tom" but I imagine Tom atop Milton Burrow, with Rosie in tow, awaiting the day Carole joins him, in order to continue their awe inspiring adventures together, yet again.

Alice - October 28, 2025 at 12:53 AM

PE

“Uncle” Tom had a way of making life feel like an adventure. Time with him was something you never wanted to end — always good for a laugh, an unbelievable story, or simply being there when you needed someone most. He taught me to love life fully and to love the people around me even more. His contagious spirit lives on. Love you, Tom D.



Patrick Elder - October 27, 2025 at 10:43 PM

RM

“ Tom and I were very best friends from early 70s through most of the 80s. Our sons were very close in age and grew up as best friends. Tom lived just three doors down from us. He built our house. We had an unwritten open-door policy. We would each just drop in each other's house at any time of day or night, grab something from the frig and sit down anywhere comfortably until it was noticed we were there. We had so many fun adventures, mountains climbed, camp trips in all kinds of weather, and fun times in the shop.

One of the first times either of us ever skied was at Winter Park in the early 70s, a cold cloudy, windy day. The blue jeans and cotton long-underwear we wore quickly became wet and froze solid rendering us stiff clumsy robots. We laughed in later years at our naivety, one of the most fun days ever.

We always edged each other to the outer limits. I ultimately moved away and as the years unfolded, we slowly visited and communicated less. However, Tom still holds a safe and comforting place in my heart. I love Tom and will always cherish the wonderful slice of life we shared.

Richard McCormick



Richard McCormick - October 27, 2025 at 06:28 PM

LH

“ Remembering one of our favorite trips to Fort Robinson with Tom and Carole. He was like a long lost brother. More ASAP.



Larry Hybl - October 27, 2025 at 06:03 PM

LH

Nebraska National Forest at Crawford. Perfect light. A great evening for Tom, Carole, Linda and Larry

Larry Hybl - October 28, 2025 at 09:29 AM

NL

“ I am so thankful for the fateful Christmas Eve, when frantic Carole called to ask their horses could move - temporarily - to my folks pasture. Of course we welcomed them and that was when we got to know Tom. He was a man with a big heart and cared so much not just for his horses but for all the animals and my folks. He especially connected with our old grey gelding Guy-guy, who had a strong distrust of men (probably something from a time before we got him). Tom developed an amazing trust in Guy-guy - a testament to his patience and love. We really missed their horses and company when they moved.

So glad we got to reconnect this summer! Condolences to the whole family (although I think that Tom would rather that we laugh and play pranks in his memory...)



Nancy Levinger - October 27, 2025 at 03:59 PM

JA

“ I loved Tom. He was my roommate in college and a fellow guitar player. Neither of us were very good at the time, but that didn't stop us from strumming away and having a grand time doing it. As I continued my musical ascent, in which is a very difficult career path, Tom was always encouraging and kept telling me to stay after it and not give up. Every time we'd meet up or talk on the phone he'd always brighten my day. He had a joyous spirit and a way of just making people feel better, and at the same time he had a great and timely sense of humor that could ease anyone's burden. He got sober, just like my brother and was very helpful to him in maintaining that sobriety. Over the years distance kept us apart, but that distance never came between us. Every time we'd get together it was as we'd never been apart. He had such a unique warmth that transcended time and distance. My condolences to Carole and Neil. I loved him and already miss him terribly.

Jim Attebery
Pismo Beach, CA

Jim Attebery - October 27, 2025 at 01:51 PM

BG

“ i am reminded of the party that we attended at the Tweeds house when the KSU people all turned 50. I took my 3 sons along they were all in college or the end of high school, it was a great party and fun to see all of my old friends.
Several of us had walked out the end of the property by the river and Tom pulled out the firecracker/bombs he had assembled and proceeded to light them and throw them in the water, splash probably went 20 feet in the air.
From that point forward my sons always thought Tom was the coolest guy ever!

bob gregoy - October 27, 2025 at 01:35 PM

VG

“ Tom never ceased to make me laugh! What fun we had while riding our horses on poker rides and poking fun at each other! Both Tom and Carole became members of my family instantly. I will always be thankful for Tom’s humor, knowledge and kindness. I love you and miss you terribly Tom. I have your back and will be here always for your beautiful wife Carole. Val

Val Gaffield - October 27, 2025 at 01:08 PM

JB

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Joseph Barani - October 27, 2025 at 12:05 PM

JB

I call this watercolor the "HOPE IRIS" and believe this will bring comfort to those who knew what Tom had to contribute to our world. My deepest condolences to all. Joseph Barani

Joseph Barani - October 27, 2025 at 12:09 PM

FD

“ I am so grateful to have known and loved Tom Dougherty. He was an inspiration to "just do it". I remember bike riding in Hawaii when the road ended and the only way forward was over a guardrail and then across the highway. Faced with turning back or taking the risk, I asked myself, "What would Tom do?" Needless to say, I threw the bike over the guardrail, crossed the highway, and kept going.

I am grateful that my children had the chance to experience the same fearless spirit with their grandpa: hours of fishing without catching anything, building a treehouse, riding horses, driving cars up and down the long driveway long before they could see over the steering wheel, and squirting whipped cream directly into their mouths—no need for anything else. They also saw firsthand that anything can be fixed, usually with a little ingenuity and duct tape. Through it all, they were fully supported in every choice they made.

I will miss our phone calls and texts. I am grateful your last message to me was the first time you figured out how to leave a voice note. I will continue your legacy of using the lizard and frogs emojis with zest and frequency.

As I tell Neil, seeing his dad was like looking thirty years into the future of who he would become, and I liked what I saw. Tom, I am so glad you were my father-in-law. I am a better person for having known you and having you in my life.

Felice Dougherty - October 27, 2025 at 11:55 AM

RL

“ As I sit quietly and reflect upon the myriad of memories and experiences, the most treasured are those witnessing his intense and unwavering love for all his grandchildren. Papa was at his most authentic and gracious self when in the presence of his grand babies, both collectively and individually. The outward world seemingly disappeared when he was with his brood, his eyes twinkling ever more brilliantly filled with pure love, admiration, extreme joy, and a heightened tinge of mischief. All of us boys can attest that we knew our children would return from any time spent with Papa covered in lake mud, hay in pockets, one shoe lost, remnants of ice cream on chin, and more than likely...a random tool or implement from Harbor Freight. While these physical cues demonstrated evidence of time spent, the more endearing were the after-stories shared of their excellent adventures, “Daddy! We carved a watermelon for lunch...with a sawzall and a blow torch...it was so cool!”, never came as a surprise to any of us parents.

He taught me many things, shared an inordinate amount of memories and experiences, and always supported us children. To myself though, his greatest attribute is his unwavering devotion to his grandchildren. For this, I will always have the highest amount of deep gratitude and love for him. You will continue living on through them. Thank you Dad. I love you.

Ross

Ross LaGenese - October 26, 2025 at 02:16 PM

CH

You said it all, and reading your tribute brought back many memories. When you and Mike were in High School we had many stories to share with one another, not without a little eye-rolling. But it was always obvious that your Dad was your north star and patiently guided you along your many journeys. His support and encouragement of you was always right there and it showed. The man that you have become is testament to that. We are so sorry for your loss and hope that you will continue to treasure the happy memories.

Carol and George Hirata - October 27, 2025 at 07:49 AM

MS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Mike Sollenberger - October 26, 2025 at 12:18 PM

SD

“ My brother and I were raised in Topeka, Kansas by my fierce and intelligent mother Ida Mae Dougherty. As children we squabbled but as we grew into our teenage years we became friends and co-conspirators in our efforts to hide misdeeds from our mother such as where to hide an illegal six pack of beer or how to sneak out of the house without her knowing.

Our father was an alcoholic who left when we were both very young. I believe Tom was only 4 1/2 and I was about three years old. Tom missed having a father very deeply and when Neil was born, he vowed that he would give his son all the love and care and attention that he never received from his own father. Tom loved Neil with all of his heart.

Our father was an alcoholic and sadly Tom inherited this disease. He showed great courage in fighting alcoholism and remained sober for over 40 years.

Our mother was a very intelligent woman who sold real estate in the 1950s and 60s which was a rare profession for a single parent of that era. We lived from sales commission to commission and I believe that the courage that mom showed helped plant the entrepreneurial spirit in Tom. He was never one to work at 9 to 5 job and was always willing to take risks.

Our mom was also a very curious woman who passed that curiosity onto us. We had many interesting dinner conversations, some of which were settled by a deep dive into the encyclopedia in the living room. Tom kept that same curiosity his whole life.

Tom was the best big brother I could ever have had. He made me feel safe and cared for and came to my rescue more than once. I will miss him terribly.

Sharon Dougherty - October 26, 2025 at 11:59 AM

RC

“ *My papa was the strongest man I know. From me being a baby to his last breath he always had the best interest of his family in mind. I have so many amazing memories with my papa from training the dogs on a warm afternoon, to swimming in the freezing lake to get the bouy. My papa loved to relieve his grandchildren’s accomplishments and share them with his friends and family. I’ll forever love my papa and until we meet again I will keep his legacy alive.*

Rory Clough - October 25, 2025 at 07:58 PM

ND

Thank you, Rory. This is so kind and thoughtful of you. He really did have his family's best interest in mind and I know you will keep his legacy alive. Thanks again.

Neil Dougherty - October 25, 2025 at 10:27 PM

JB

“ *3 files added to the tribute wall*



Johnny Berg - October 25, 2025 at 06:55 PM

ND

Johnny, these are the best photos ever! Thank you!!!

Neil Dougherty - October 26, 2025 at 10:57 AM

“ FROM NEIL, PART 1:

My dad's passing is one of those rare events that is actually more difficult than I imagined. As a boy and later as a man, my father seemed invincible—a larger-than-life force of nature who would still be advising, supporting, and loving me at 80, just as he did at 8. Through my sadness this week, I have been reflecting, both silently and with family and friends, on the 47-year gift I had of having Tom Dougherty as my father. Among all the wisdom, intelligence, and values he imparted upon me during childhood and adulthood, four ideas stand out: self-sufficiency, adventure, creativity, and humanity. To me, these four ideas were at the core of Tom Dougherty's brilliance as a father, and he was the most extraordinary of fathers.

To that end, I want to share a few brief stories of my dad through the lenses of self-sufficiency, adventure, creativity, and humanity. As many of you know, the Dougherty Clan is prone to extensive and occasionally fictional storytelling. Without further ado, I will focus on brevity, but I can't make any promises about the veracity. :)

– My dad was a hell of a pilot, a passion and skill he passed onto me. From a young boy who could barely see over the instrument panel to soloing on my 16th birthday and beyond, my dad nurtured and supported my aviation journey. We enjoyed countless hours of flying over the Rockies and across the country together, including a trip to the original Cabela's in Sidney, Nebraska, where instead of a control tower, you radioed the store to pick you up from the airport. And, we may have made bathroom stops on more than one active taxiway! More seriously, he always emphasized emergency procedures and making sure he could pilot his way out of danger... self-sufficiency, creativity, and adventure at their most vital.

– My dad was an accomplished outdoorsman, another passion and skill he passed onto me. With the outdoors, I didn't quite see it his way at first. As a youngster, he had to drag me up a few hikes and overnight backpacking trips. But wow, I am sure glad he did. By the

time I was 10, thanks to his patience, kindness, and support, I was consuming a never-ending string of books on mountaineering and living for our next 14er or 13er hike on the weekends. He nurtured my love for navigation in the wilderness and never missed an opportunity to put in a full day on a remote Colorado peak. Our last 14er together was Mount of the Holy Cross. Over two beautiful autumn days about 15 years ago, we walked slowly, smiled big, ate well, and enjoyed what we both knew was our last high peak together. Since then, I have kept his mountainman spirit alive by passing his outdoor wisdom and passion on to my own kids.

– My dad was a road-tripper! Good lord did we go on some epic drives together. The word “no” was not in his vocabulary when it came to driving anywhere for any reason. When I was 15, we decided to drive to Salt Lake City for a spring break ski trip. It was a busy day and we didn’t leave until 10:00 at night. We thought we’d drive a few hours and get a motel room in Wyoming. Well, that’s what a less adventurous family might do! As each hour went by, dad and I looked at each other and just smiled, knowing without talking that we would not be stopping. Salt Lake by morning, to borrow from George Strait. We took a quick nap at our Motel 6, had one of the nastiest, iciest ski days you can imagine, went to a surprise NCAA tournament game that evening, and then immediately spent another six hours driving to Ridgway, Colorado, to find better ski conditions in Telluride. By the time we got home to Fort Collins a few days later, we had spent far more time in the car than we had skiing! This type of creative adventure became a hallmark of my own life and I am grateful that my dad showed me the way.

Neil Dougherty - October 25, 2025 at 11:54 AM

D1

Your story and memories of your dad is a tribute to the man he was. Thank you.

Dara Adams class of 1965 - October 25, 2025 at 04:56 PM

BS

*Thank you for sharing your life with us, The TWHS Class of 65.
Prayers and love to your family. 😊*

Bobbi Showalter - October 25, 2025 at 06:05 PM

“ FROM NEIL, PART 2:

– My dad was a horseman and cowboy. Now, unlike the others above, I had ZERO aptitude for riding horses, but it was a passion he shared with his wife Carole and I loved being around it. One day, they took me riding north of Fort Collins. Toward the end of the ride, the horse saw the barn and decided we would be galloping the rest of the way. Clueless as to how I could possibly stop this insanity, I just screamed (and I mean SCREAMED) for the next 30 seconds (which felt like an HOUR) until the horse stopped peacefully at the barn and mercifully let me off. They laughed just as hard over the years as they did at that moment, and it was damn funny! But, it's always been a moment for which I was grateful too, because I got to experience that world of adventure first-hand. Over the following years, I adored watching and hearing about my dad's passion for horses, which was full of adventure, creativity, and self-sufficiency.

– And that brings us to humanity. Regardless of whether we were at home, eating out, walking around a city, or wildly adventuring in the wilderness, my dad always brought a constant and beautiful level of humanity. He loved, respected, and encouraged everyone. No matter who you were or what you were all about, if he was talking to you, you felt like the most important person in the world. He asked questions, made connections, and engaged genuinely with everyone, and I do mean everyone. Whether on the summit of a Colorado peak, the FBO at a local airport, sitting in a Fort Collins restaurant, riding on the horse trails of the desert southwest, or on a remote Thai mountainside, Tom Dougherty always had friends. And these were genuine friends—they remembered him and he remembered them. The most beautiful and impactful part for me was that he did this without judgment. I am so grateful he taught me and showed me how not to judge, but to accept warmly.

Through self-sufficiency, adventure, creativity, and humanity, my father gave me the gift of manhood. He always made me feel loved, valued, and seen. He always encouraged me to be fearless, to go

further, to not compromise my dreams and values (even if they weren't his), to fight hard for my family, to embrace life's riches and challenges, and to love every moment with grace. Our relationship was not without challenges and complications, like any father-son relationship, but he also taught me how to face those moments with honesty, respect, and love. They always made us stronger. Could you ask for a better father? No. Being devastated at his loss simply goes to show how deeply I loved his presence.

Thank you dad, I love you, and I will live up to you. Happy journey...

Neil Dougherty - October 25, 2025 at 11:53 AM

TW

“ My condolences to the wonderful Dougherty family. Tom was my BFF and I have so many memories of our youthful adventures and misadventures. Red Door Avalon Lane was the center of many of them. It's amazing what Ida Mae put up with.

Before Tom got his drivers license, Ida Mae bought Tom a green 1957 Chevy. Tom would roar up and down the driveway. And then he hit the house causing quite a bit of damage. Ida Mae was rather upset.

We did a substantial amount of pyrotechnic experiments in his backyard. We built this massive flare like device that we set off in the nearby pocket park. The flare sent up 100' white hot flame with M80 firecrackers going off. The police were notified and a commercial pilot flying over Topeka reported it. The incident got mentioned on the channel 13 news.

We experimented with homemade rockets. My 9th grade science teacher took us out to the country to launch one. I then machined a nozzle and we built a 5' tall rocket. We took it south of Forbes field and launched it to about 1,500' high. The return parachute did not deploy and the rocket darn came back on us.

One summer, Tom's bedroom needed painting. Tom was too lazy to do it so I got hired. When I arrived, Tom would not get out of bed so Ida Mae just had me throw the drop cloth over him and paint away.

I was so proud to take Eileen and then Eileen and the kids over to meet Ida Mae. It meant a lot to her.

I lusted over Sharron's classy girlfriends but they were way out of my league.

Oh who can forget the rather rotund beagle Willie.

Then pure evil struck the Dougherty family. Why someone would do

what they did to the kindest woman in the world and the nicest next door neighbors. Tom called me before they caught the murderer and we talked through most of the night figuring out how we would torture him. The crime made the national news. It was gut wrenching to see the Red Door on CBS news.

Tom I will miss talking to you the three or four times a year that we did but you will be in my heart and memories forever.



Tom Washburn - October 25, 2025 at 10:59 AM

ND

Hi Tom, thank you so much for sharing such thoughtful and delightful memories of Tom. You two had an amazing friendship. I always loved hearing about your (mis)adventures together. Thanks again, and I hope you are well.

Neil

Neil Dougherty - October 26, 2025 at 10:56 AM

CE

“*Uncle Tom’s curiosity was contagious. As a kid, no idea I had was ever too crazy, he always met it with excitement and a big smile. His gift for storytelling and humor was truly captivating, turning ordinary moments into unforgettable adventures. He valued family and friends deeply and was fiercely protective of those he loved. I will always be grateful for the joy and wonder he brought into my life.*
Love Always, Chris

Chris Elder - October 25, 2025 at 10:49 AM

ND

Hey Chris, thank you for sharing your memories of Tom! Wasn't he the best storyteller? I could listen to him for hours, and often did. And yes, I 'm grateful for how protective he was of us. Thanks again!

Neil

Neil Dougherty - October 26, 2025 at 10:59 AM