



Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford

FEB 24, 1936 - SEP 10, 2020



Scan to Visit

Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Events	Page 7
Tribute Wall	Page 8



Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford

FEB 24, 1936 - SEP 10, 2020

Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford passed away peacefully with his family on September 10, 2020 in Covington, Louisiana at the age of 84 after enduring a hard, yet admirable last few years with dementia.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 54 years, Judy Ford and their two children, Christine Ford Mediamolle (Lee) and Thomas Christopher "T.C." Ford (Mikaela). He is dearly loved and known by his eight grandchildren as G.T. (Grandpa Tom).

Tom is the son of the late Natalie Howard and Harvey Azel Ford. He was born in Columbus on February 24, 1936 and raised in Troy, Ohio by his mother, Natalie and his stepfather, Thomas Bemis Wheeler, who was consistently a positive influence. His mother, Natalie's extraordinary strength, kindness, and grace guided Tom throughout his life. She also gifted him with his golf and tennis genes – not to mention his wonderfully charming wit! The family is comforted with all their hearts knowing that his mother received the most special gift with the passing of Tom to Eternal life the day before what would have been Natalie's 107th birthday.

In 1958 Tom graduated from The College of Wooster in Ohio as a Geology major with a Bachelor of Science degree. Later that year he enlisted in the U.S. Army. Following basic training, his athletic prowess and baseball experience on teams in high school and college prepared him for the opportunity to play baseball for the Army, traveling and entertaining the troops.

Led by his loyalty of the Chicago Cubs – win or lose - baseball was his favorite sport! Whether he was playing the game, attending games at Wrigley Field, coaching T.C.'s teams, cheering for his grandchildren as they rounded-the-bases or listening to the games on his iPhone, he could never get enough. He often sent handwritten letters of support and encouragement to up-and-coming minor league players – many of whom wrote back. How he found their addresses will forever be a mystery to all of us.

After service in the Army, his corporate career started with Hobart Corporation in their Commercial Food Equipment Division headquartered in his hometown of Troy, Ohio. A series of



Obituary

Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford

FEB 24, 1936 - SEP 10, 2020

promotions led him to Indianapolis and then to Chicago. His congenial and witty personality fueled his corporate success and helped forge lifelong friends with his customers and co-workers. He truly had an amazing gift of easily connecting with people in a light-hearted manner by making them laugh and always bringing out the positives in every person or situation.

The courtship of Tom and Judy began in 1961 over a game of bridge when Tom's grandmother, and two grandmother's of Judy's sorority sisters decided to play Cupid. They introduced Tom to a group of Northwestern University Kappas who became his lifelong friends...especially Judy. Their friendship blossomed over mutual love of tennis, snow skiing, golf, and jogging daily, long before it became popular. With respect, they also balanced Tom's love of hockey and Country music with Judy's interest in the Arts and Classical music. After four years of dating, he proposed to her in the Cape Cod Room at Chicago's famous Drake Hotel. They were married March 12th, 1966 in Toledo, Ohio and returned to live in Evanston, IL on the shore of Lake Michigan – a forever favorite place.

Tom was transferred to New Orleans, Louisiana in 1970. He eagerly anticipated the business challenge of developing a new southern sales territory for Hobart. He and Judy embraced the historic culture, traditions, and all the Big Easy had to offer. They experienced a year in the heart of the French Quarter before discovering the family friendly Northshore of Lake Ponchartrain. The beautiful tall pines there continue to be a constant reminder of the family cottage on Higgins Lake in Michigan.

Later in his career, Tom seized an opportunity to begin his own sales and distribution business, Efficiency Analysts, Inc. This allowed him to achieve his family and professional goals. On his 40th birthday in 1976, he received the best gift ever – flying lessons. With enthusiasm and passion he soon became the proud owner of a single engine Cessna 172 airplane which provided years of adventures.

Devotion to his family was an endless gift. He was fun and supportive with a perfect combination of discipline, positivity, encouragement and empowerment. He loved every minute of quietly, yet confidently, watching his children and grandchildren excel in sports and life. Daily pitch and catch after work during baseball season, hours on the golf practice range, full days at swim meets and dance team competitions – he thoroughly enjoyed being with them. They kept him young at heart.



Obituary

Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford

FEB 24, 1936 - SEP 10, 2020

Tom was a true sports enthusiast. Decades of competitive and social tennis created many friends and memories. His left handed top-spin was dreaded by his opponents for years! His love of sports, exercising and making healthy choices continued and even grew as he aged (or didn't!). Surprisingly, at age 70 he began swim lessons and weight training to continue his healthy lifestyle. His workout regimen was impressive and inspiring, earning him the nickname "Two-A-Day" from his supportive gym friends of all ages at Franco's Athletic Club. Five days a week he would lift weights in the morning, fuel up for lunch, then return for his afternoon mile swim followed by a rewarding well-earned nap in the sun.

For over 75 years, Tom spent summers at the peaceful cottage on Higgins Lake where family and friends of Lakeside Camp Association provided a lifetime of happy stories. Whether sipping Gin and Tonics (his favorite!) on the front porch, catching sensational sunsets on the dock, playing golf, tennis before breakfast, or enjoying boat rides – these summer memories transcend generations and will be cherished forever.

Tom's family will continue to have fond memories of him as they remember his favorite things: classic Chris-Craft wooden boats, crispy bacon, "Southern snow storms" of powdered sugar sprinkled on cereal and strawberries, keeping up with his loyal Troy friends, patch madras shorts, lively Lilly Pulitzer slacks topped with a navy blazer, walking Henry Ford (the dog) on the Mandeville Lakefront, unlimited kisses from grandchildren, yard work followed by long nap in the sun, cream cheese on tacos, chocolate chip cookies, and of course, extra limes in his Gin and Tonics.

In addition to his beloved wife and children, Tom is survived by his adoring eight grandchildren - Tripp, Elise, Luke and Lauren Mediamolle as well as Thomas, Christopher, Oscar and Elizabeth Ford.

Tom was predeceased by his sister Dean Wheeler, his brother Harvey Ford, III, his sister-in-law, Meredith "Susie" Potts and brother-in-law, Terrance Schnell. He is survived by Harvey's wife Pat Ford and their children Harvey Ford, IV (Laura), Amy White (Jeff), and Emily Zibinskas (Daniel). Also surviving Tom is his brother Thomas T. Wheeler and predeceased by his beloved wife, Deborah Wheeler. Tom is survived by his sister-in-law, Dianne Baumhower and her children Leslie Sparks, Lisa and Jeff Baumhower.



Obituary

Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford

FEB 24, 1936 - SEP 10, 2020

The family wishes to extend their sincere thanks to Avanti Senior Living and the Passages Hospice Nurses who gave Tom the very best care, were understanding of the disease and loved him.

Following a private memorial service at Christ Episcopal Church in Covington, friends are invited to join the family for a joyous Celebration of Life at Beau Chene Country Club on Tuesday, November 24th from 12pm – 3pm. A special Celebration of Life will also be held in July, 2021 at Lakeside Camp Association on Higgins Lake.

Judy, Christine and T.C. would love to collect your stories, photos and memories to share with his grandchildren. Please send yours to judysford13@gmail.com.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in memory of Tom to one of the following: The Tom Ford Memorial Fund held at the Northshore Community Foundation (www.northshorefoundation.org/ford-memorial) which will be used to keep the Mandeville Lakefront beautiful, The Lakeside Memorial Fund (c/o Cindy Torrence, 5805 Summerset, Midland, MI 48640), or the Troy, OH Historical Society. (P.O. Box 401, Troy, OH 45373). Please sign the E.J. Fielding Funeral Home online Guest Book at www.ejfieldingfh.com .



Events


Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford

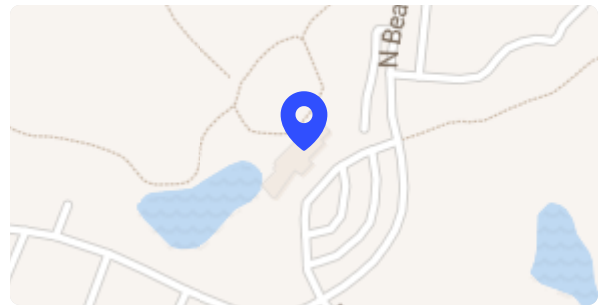
FEB 24, 1936 - SEP 10, 2020

Celebration of Life

 **Tuesday**, November 24, 2020

 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM CT

 **Beau Chene Country Club**
602 N Beau Chene Dr, Mandeville LA 70471





Tribute Wall

Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford

FEB 24, 1936 - SEP 10, 2020

GS

Gerry/Joan Shaw posted:

Joan and I have many fond memories of this great guy- good friend, and we will greatly miss him. Our sympathies go to his family and particularly his wife and great friend, Judy. Joan and Gerry Shaw November 14, 2020.

November 14 at 9:28 AM

HL

Hubert Lipscomb posted:

Tom Ford and I have been friends for years. We played tennis together for many of those years, and I will miss him and all of the great times we had.

October 25 at 11:40 AM

DF

Daniel French posted:

Judy, Christine and family, I'm sorry, but also a bit relieved, to read that "Tommy's" struggle and decline have ended, and he can rest in peace. As can all the rest of you. I remember fondly glimpses of him in Troy, sometimes at Columbus Beach Club, and even once years ago at Higgins Lake -- he always seemed to have a bright smile. Now, he and Glenn Jeffers can hatch all manner of fun plots and plans. Sincere condolences to you all. Dan & Margaret French

October 18 at 8:51 AM

DC

Debi Cox posted:

I remember summer after summer watching Tom walk in the dining hall with those Lilly Pulitzer pants and patch madras shorts! I remember thinking "only someone who knows what he's doing would wear those." I was right. Tom did know what he was doing. Tom's smile and kindness will be a special memory for me. Love and prayers to all of you. Debi Cox

October 13 at 11:40 AM

PS

Patricia Sampson posted:

Our 'neighbor' at the Dining Hall for as long as I can remember... always a loving expression, and surrounded by a beautiful family. Thank you for sharing him with us all these years. Love, Patsy Sampson

October 13 at 11:35 AM



Tribute Wall

Thompson Howard "Tom" Ford

FEB 24, 1936 - SEP 10, 2020



Liza Gentry posted:

Dear Judy, My deepest condolences to you and your family. Much love, Liza Gentry

October 11 at 6:53 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Thompson by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



Scan to Visit