



Pamela Pleas Waterman
2-13-08

Tom's Story

Being a man of many talents, Tom Clark did a lot of things in his life—he always had a gift of gab and a way with people (even his Mom said that of him!). His first few jobs were in the sales industry in a variety of fields, from shoes to insurance and land. Someone once said that Tom could indeed sell iceboxes to Eskimos! In the late 1980's, Tom worked for the state of California Department of Parks and Recreation as a high climber. One of the biggest trees he and his crew topped was a giant redwood in the Eureka area. The tree was 368 feet tall. Another time he a National Geographic photographer up the tallest known giant sequoia in the Lady Bird park in northern California.

Tom was introduced to his future wife Linda by his future mother-in-law in April 1972. They were married the following July. The next year Tom adopted her two sons Robert and Jake. After learning to scuba dive on a visit to the Hawaiian Islands in the mid 1970's, Tom decided that underwater photography would be really fun hobby to get into, never mind the equipment necessary. Tom pursued this hobby for several years and ventured far away to places such as the Cayman Islands and Bon Aire. Because Tom's occupation during these years (selling undeveloped land with his brother Bob), gave him a lot of flexibility as a far as time, he and the family came to enjoy the Hawaiian Islands on several occasions. In the early 80's he and Linda made a major move from their native California to the wonderful island of Hawaii and the still quiet village of Kailua-Kona. There for a few years Tom enjoyed working on several fishing boats as chief deck hand. He got paid for the all the fun and he caught some great fish as well. He became involved in the annual Kailua-Kona International Billfish Tournament—as a volunteer to help the fishing boat crews load and unload both crew and fish. Some really big fish were caught during those years.

In 1981, Tom's oldest son Robert saw the Ironman Triathlon on television and declared that he too would like to be in that race February of the following year. So, Robert took a semester off college and came to Hawaii to train for the Ironman. Tom and Robert talked a lot that fall and winter and Tom declared that he too would like to try the race. Robert told him he was too old and too fat and wouldn't make it. What a challenge for Tom! He proceeded to practice swimming, part of the time in a pool in California and the rest of the time in the ocean in Hawaii. He bought a competition bike and he began walking too. Well, Robert competed in the Feb. 1982 Ironman and completed it. Tom competed in the Oct. 1982 Ironman. He came in from the bike ride 5 minutes late and was disqualified, however, the experience and the fact that he competed made him a winner which Robert conceded.

When Tom wasn't fishing or scuba diving he was helping friends with various maintenance and repair projects. He also became involved with the Masons in the mid 80's, thanks to a neighbor. He joined the Kona Masonic Lodge and served as their Master in 3 different years. He also became a Shriner. He started a small maintenance and repair business and found a definite need for his services. After 20 some years in Kailua Kona, their quiet village was no more. Other folks had also discovered this wonderful perfect place, along with all the Big Box stores and many other commercial businesses. It was just getting too crowded. Additionally, Tom and Linda were by now grandparents of four growing boys. Soon they decided to return to their roots in California. Literally for Tom, he returned here to the Sonora area to the family cabin that he and his brothers and their dad had built 50 years before. It was the spring of 2004 when Tom and Linda returned to the other perfect place here in the Sierras. Tom joined the East Belt-Tuolumne Masonic Lodge #8, the local Elks and Shrine Clubs, and reconnected with the Matuca 1849 Chapter of the ECV (you know who you are). He continued to do small maintenance and repair jobs.

Last September 2007, Tom took a very adventurous bicycle ride from the top of Sonora Pass all the way down to Reno Nevada. Biking was always one of his favorite things to do. Tom enjoyed life to the utmost. He had a terrific sense of humor and thoroughly enjoyed people. His hearty laugh was a joy to hear and will be forever remembered.

In Loving Memory
Tom L. Clark

Our Father,
Which art in heaven;
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done, on earth
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,
For thine is the kingdom
And the power
And the glory forever.
Amen.

11:00 AM

Heuton Memorial Chapel
400 S. Stewart Street, Sonora
Masonic Service

Presented by Members of East Belt-Tuolumne Masonic Lodge #8
Followed by Episcopalian Service
Father Jerry Roberts, Vicar
St. Michaels & All Saints Anglican Church

There will be a reception following the services
Provided by Ladies of the Eastern Star
Sonora Masonic Temple
16 South Washington Street, Sonora

*Thank you for coming today and honoring the life of a fine man.
Linda Clark and Family*