



## REMEMBERING

# Robert (Tom) Thomas Fortune (Tom)

July 23, 1963 - December 8, 2024



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Robert (Tom) Fortune after a long and courageous battle with scleroderma and cancer; surviving a double lung transplant in 2016 and throat cancer in 2021.

Tom was born in Ladner, BC, on July 23rd, 1963, he moved to Oliver with his family when he was 4 years old. Tom was predeceased by his parents Gertrude (Wegner) and John Fortune and is lovingly survived by his wife Teresa and 3 boys, Jamie, Jack and Trey, brothers Doug (Laurel) and Rod (Agnes) as well as the entire Johnson family Maureen (Bill) Doerr, Wanda (Dave) Casorso, Mike (Deborah), Pat (Erica), Paul (Gail), Amy (Charlotte) and many nieces and nephews.

As a young boy, Tom was always involved in sports, he became a member of Fairview Mountain Golf Course when he was 12 years old and fondly remembers spending time golfing with his Dad as well as spending many summers working at the "old" pro shop. Tom was also involved in Oliver Minor Hockey playing hockey from a very young age and continued to play until he was 60 years old. Tom continued to be involved with the South Okanagan Minor Hockey Association when all three of his boys played in Oliver/Osoyoos and later Penticton, he enjoyed coaching the boys in their earlier years. Nothing made Tom happier than watching the boys excel at sports whether that was watching them play hockey, Jamie play football or getting out on the golf course and playing a round with his natural foursome.

Tom attended school in Oliver from Kindergarten until his graduation in 1981 from SOSS. After graduation, Tom moved to Texas for 6 years where he worked for Chief Auto Parts as a Regional Training manager, but his most memorable job in Texas was working for Willie Nelson at his private golf course and getting to meet many of Willie's colourful patrons as well as Willie himself. Tom and Teresa were able to visit the golf course (Pedernales Cut and Putt) recently on a road trip to

Texas in October of this year. Moving back to the Okanagan in 1990 after his mother passed Tom worked in Kelowna for a short time and then he and Teresa moved to Whitehorse where he worked with his brother Doug at Fortune Foods and Tom played hockey.... A lot of hockey. He had been known to be driven from one arena in Whitehorse to another in the back of a van fully dressed in his goalie gear so he wouldn't miss a game. Tom completed with the Yukon Senior Men's hockey team at the Arctic Winter Games in 1994. He was on two hockey teams that travelled to Europe the Oliver Bighorns in 1984 and the Casa Loma Bandits (Whitehorse) in 1994 where they played against teams from Sweden, Finland and Russia. One highlight of the 1994 trip was being invited for dinner with the Russian Ice Hockey Federation. In 1995 Tom and Teresa moved back to Oliver where they were married and started their family. Tom worked at Echlin Insurance, he then moved back to the auto parts business in 1999 working at Napa Auto Parts in Oliver and Osoyoos for Dave Mattes until he purchased the Oliver Napa Auto Parts Store 2009-2013. From 2013 - 2023 he had many different jobs Munckhof Manufacturing, Kobau Plumbing and MJE construction. Tom's last job was working as the Shop Manager at North American Electric Vehicles in Oliver, if asked he says this is the job he enjoyed the most and wished he would have found it many years earlier.

Tom could always be found in the shop tinkering on cars and MANY cars were always be seen in his driveway....at his brothers-in-law's shop and I am sure there are a few that we haven't found. It gave him great joy to work on his cars with his three sons' whether it was helping them fix their own cars or working on one of his Mustangs or the 53' Chevy truck. Tom was always around for anyone who needed a helping hand, known for his generosity and witty one-liners he will be missed by many.

The family would like to thank all those who have helped Tom in the last many years, especially Dr. Sarah Broder, Dr. Steve Evans, Dr. Travis Thompson, the team at the VGH transplant unit and the staff in ICU at PRH that took exceptional care of Tom in his last days.

In lieu of flowers please make a donation to Highway to Healing or Desert Sun Counselling and Resource Center. The family is planning a celebration of Life at the end of March - more information to follow.

