



## Thomas Ritsche

December 9, 1939 - June 22, 2011

Thomas Adolph Ritsche, 71

Cape Coral, Florida

Formerly of St. Cloud

December 9, 1939-June 22, 2011

A celebration of Tom's life will be held at the Eastside Boys & Girls Club located at Raymond Park, 320 Raymond Ave. NE, St. Cloud, MN on Thursday July 28, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., with a program at 6:30. Tom passed away peacefully at home on June 22. Tom was the former CEO of Woodcraft Industries. He enjoyed boating, flying and racing. He actively supported the Boys & Girls Club, Tri-County Humane Society and the Central Minnesota Community Foundation.

He was born December 9, 1939 in St. Cloud, Minnesota, the son of Theodore and Agnes (Leyendecker) Ritsche. He married Janet Shaw May 2, 1959 and they were later divorced. He is survived by one daughter, Robin Ritsche; 6 brothers and sisters, Marita Ritsche, Emilie Trushenski, Richard Ritsche, Cheryl Ritsche, Estalee Ritsche, and Lanette (Mike) Phillips; and 2 grandchildren, Ryan and Scott Ritsche.

He was predeceased by 2 children, Kimberly (1989) and Robert (2004).

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Thomas's loving memory may be made to Central Minnesota Community Foundation, 101 S. 7th Ave, St. Cloud, MN 56301.

Online condolences to: [www.gendronfuneralhome.com](http://www.gendronfuneralhome.com)

Funeral arrangements under the direction of Gendron Funeral & Cremation Services Inc., 4224 Cleveland Ave., Suite 1, Fort Myers, Florida 33901, 239-274-0088.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Thomas Ritsche*

October 09, 2023 at 02:01 AM



“ *Thomas Ritsche*

January 28, 2023 at 12:09 PM



“ *Tom, I've only now heard of your passing. Memories flood my mind...you supporting Kim at racquetball tournaments, love and support from Minnesota Border to Border, a heart-wrenching trip to Colorado, car/boat/plane rides (all fast), Sherry's vigilant care...the love of family.*

*My final vision of you will be as we flew that one time, over Minnesota, and an incredible swirl of birds spun around higher and higher until they disappeared in the clouds.*

*Off you go now, with them, free of land and even gravity.*

*Good-bye my friend.*

*love barb*

Major General Barbara Faulkenberry - January 06, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ *I love you Opa!!!! I miss you so much. I wish u could see the family I have started.... You and dad would be so proud. I will make sure my little girl Lyla jean Ritsche knows all there is to know about your wonderful life and how you have greatly impacted mine and so many others lives in such a positive way. I miss and love you opa! Wish you could meet your great grandbaby Lyla. Love you always your grandson, Ryan Ritsche*

Ryan Ritsche - November 17, 2011 at 12:00 AM

CR

“ *The boys and I will miss you very much Uncle Tom. Thank you for opening your home and heart to my family. I remember my younger years when you opened your home for the holidays and how wonderful it always was. I also remember years later when I made a trip to St Cloud for a military function and I accidently stumbled across a building in St Cloud with your name on it and thought to myself "Wow...that's my Uncle!" These last dozen years I witnessed your determination and can do attitude and most importantly, your love. All of which I'm certain contributed to the successes you achieved in your life and the placement of your name on that building. Thank you Uncle Tom. We will miss you. Love, Cliff and the boys*

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**Cliff Rubink** - July 21, 2011 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ *My deepest condolences to the family and friends of Tom.I met Robin back in 1989,right before Kim passed away. I remember helping Tom and Jan move Robin into her first home,going for a ride up above Brainerd in Toms Piper,and many other fun times with Robin. You will not find a finer Family. My prayers are with you.*

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**Dano Montano** - July 20, 2011 at 12:00 AM

WB

“ *We are so sorry for your loss. All our love and prayers,*

*Will & Bernie Backes*

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**Will & Bernie Moehrle Backes** - July 16, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MZ

“ Dear Robin,

*I worked for your father in the corporate offices of Woodcraft when I was in my early twenties. He was a quiet, kind and considerate boss. Thoughtful and careful in correction and always aware of peoples dignity.*

*The environment he created freed me to develop and rise to the next challenge. I will always be indebted to him for the sense of support I found there. I think back to these times often with fondness.*

*I remember the tragedy of Kim's death and oncoming disease that attached Tom.*

*All my prayers are yours today. Your father was a kind and generous man, yet with passion and vision. He has been an inspiration to me in my own businesses, and in my relationships.*

*Margaret Zylla*

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**Marge Zylla** - July 15, 2011 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ Robin so sorry to hear about the loss of your father - The apostle Paul said in Galatians 6:9, "Don't grow weary in doing what's right for in due season you shall reap if you faint not." Two words are the key to this whole passage? faint not. In other words, if you don't give up, if you stay determined to shake off the weariness, if you put on a new attitude knowing that God is still in control and dig your heels in saying, "I've come too far to stop now," you will see the promise come to pass. Instead of complaining about how long the battle is taking, we should be saying, "This too shall pass. I know it's not permanent; it's only temporary. I'm not camping here. I'm moving forward."

*There is great value within you. Allow it to come out, naturally and without a fight.*

*HUGS to you.. Becky*

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**Becky Cedergren** - July 10, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ A sympathy card has been sent to the family of Thomas Adolph Ritsche.

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July 09, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LG

“ Tom, you were like a second father to me. I feel as though I have lost you twice now, but I'm glad you are finally free. I imagine you are soaring through the sky at mach 3, busting clouds and ignoring all those pesky regulations about speed and altitude assignments. I miss our long conversations. Thanks for all you taught me and the opportunities you provided for me. Until I see you again, keep the throttle to the stop, the shiny side up (most of the time), and save a seat for me. Stay out of trouble buddy. Larry

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**Larry Gregg** - July 07, 2011 at 12:00 AM

CP

“ Dear Lanette and family of Thomas,  
My deepest sympathy to your family. May God be your comfort and  
peace. I pray your memories of better days with your family helps to  
lighten your grief.

Cathy and Charles Perrett

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**Cathy Perrett** - July 06, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Tom was a fine man. We had good times in St.Cloud Mn. Tom once  
owned the Ace Hardware Store in the Centennial Plaza which I  
subleased from him for Jacks Bicycle Shop. My thoughts go out to  
the Family.

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**Jack Strommen** - June 29, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LB

“ Jan & Robin.  
I am so sorry for your loss. I have fond memories of times at the  
cabin and at the pool. My thoughts are with you.

Laura Tenvoorde-Behrend

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**Laura Tenvoorde- Behrend** - June 29, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LM

“ Tom,  
Thank you for your lasting legacy of loyalty to all present and former  
WCI people. God Bless you.

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**Lynn McClintock** - June 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

GW

“ Peace be with you.

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**George & Ruth Wchnick** - June 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

VI

“ Tom, I have thought of you often and will continue to. When I started working for the humane society, you soon became president. We would not be where we are today, 27 years later, had it not been for your leadership and gift to make things happen. Due to your early efforts, we've been able to enrich the lives of MANY animals and people. God blessed us with you.

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**Vicki** - June 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ Hi Thomas,  
Where do I begin? It was a great pleasure haveing you in mine and my family's lives!! Wether by land, sea or air you were always out front. You taught me much and will ABRemembered! DT

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**Derrick Taylor and Family** - June 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

GH

“ I am sorry to hear of Tom's passing, my condolences to his family. I had the honor of working on some of Tom's projects during my time @ Jerrys body shop,I especially enjoyed working on and painting his airplane. He was a good guy and will be missed.

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**Gene Hollenkamp** - June 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LR

“ Tom, we will miss seeing your bright eyes & develish smile! God Bless you & we will see you soon!  
Love Lanny & Annette

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**Lance & Annette Rubink** - June 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

PZ

“ Tom you have touched my family and I in so many ways the past 18 years. We had the privilege of driving your beloved sports cars, taking a couple of plane rides, & we cannot forget the Purple Fever:) I am so thankful to have been able to visit every year for your birthday; Sherry was so gracious as well. I enjoyed canning peaches knowing you would stop in for a jar and open it to eat some before you were even a block away. It was wonderful when God became an important part of your life and you enjoyed going to church. You impacted many lives with your generosity throughout the years. We all know your love for cats:) We also thought of Keisha when we thought of you. She was always there to be spoiled.  
You will be missed, but I know you are at peace and celebrating in heaven!  
There will always be a special place in my heart for you.  
Love,  
Patty

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**Patty Zimmerman** - June 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

DW

“ Tom,  
As you know you were my business mentor and I learned more from you than any one other person I know. I told you that I worked best in a positive environment and you provided me a rich environment of high expectations, support and mentoring. As the CEO you had a perfect mix of dreamer and doer and gave those around you an opportunity to excel. I think of you often and miss you dearly. I owe so much to you so thanks for being you! The world is a better place because of your time with us.

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**Dan Wright** - June 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ A sympathy card has been sent to the family of Thomas Adolph Ritsche c/o Gendron Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc. funeral home.

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June 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Tom, I will always miss you. The days we spent together at Woodcraft Industries are the very best days of my life. You always treated me better than I deserved, and you taught me so much just by being with you. You were kind, compassionate, wise and fun. The world is a better place because of you.

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**Don Swanstrom** - June 24, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Hey TR...I'm sure you are racing around in all the airplanes and fast cars in heaven! You were my mentor...taught me everything I needed to grow a successful business and I thank you for that! We had lots of good times and a handful of very sad ones. You know I love you and I've missed talking to you over the last few years...at least now I can talk to you whenever I want to! Thanks for being my friend! Love sb

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**SB** - June 24, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ Tom,

*I will always love and miss you very much. I will never forget all the special times I had with you and the impact you made on my life. I remember you kicking the back of my drivers seat only to hand me a french fry and the swinging of the cat. You always had a wonderful way to make me laugh. You are greatly missed. Please rest in peace.*

*Jeanice*

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**Jeanice Conquest** - June 23, 2011 at 12:00 AM