

## Mr. Thomas Joseph Vokac

December 5, 1943 - August 10, 2019

Thomas Joseph Vokac, a resident of Cabool, MO and formerly of Naperville, IL passed away early Saturday morning, August 10, 2019 while at his residence. He was born December 5, 1943 to Joseph Frank and Anne (Kalwas) Vokac in Chicago, IL; he was 75 years old.

Tom attended Grant Community High School in Fox Lake, IL and graduated with the class of 1962. He also attended the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana where he received his B.S. in Industrial Engineering and went on to receive his Master's Degree in Systems Analysis. Tom met Lucy Vasile at the University of Illinois where they were students. They were married in 1970 in Stony Point, New York. Tom worked for the Corps of Engineers at the University of Illinois; he later was employed at the U.S. Naval Shipyard in Groton, CT and he also worked for Liquid Air in Countryside, IL. He then went into retail business for himself before retiring. In his spare time, Tom loved to fish, golf, and play poker. However, his favorite pastime was inventing things, and was granted patents on his inventions. He will be dearly missed by his family, his friends, and all who knew him.

Tom is preceded in death by his parents.

He is survived by his wife, Lucy; his daughter, Elizabeth Anne Vokac-Main and her husband, Justin Main and their son, Julian Main of Austin, TX; his brother,

James Vokac and his wife, Judy of Willow Springs; his sister, Barbara Nyden, also of Willow Springs. He is further survived by nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate memorial donations in Tom's name be made to the Nature Conservancy at [www.support.nature.org](http://www.support.nature.org)

A visitation for Thomas Vokac will be held on Thursday, August 15, 2019 at 1:00 P.M. with a funeral service immediately following at 2:00 P.M. at Willow Funeral Home, LLC with Lois Reborne officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Willow Funeral Home, LLC. Online condolences may be left at [www.willowspringsfuneralhome.com](http://www.willowspringsfuneralhome.com)

# Tribute Wall

GR

“*Lucy - I was saddened to learn of Tom's recent passing. We shared some work and some fun together in the summer of 2012. At Tom's insistence, we skipped work one day so that he could teach me how to fish. Then he taught me how to lose at poker. And I introduced him to Corvettes and swimming pools. He was certainly one of a kind, and he enriched my life. My condolences on your loss.*  
*Greg Caulton*

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**Greg** - August 26, 2019 at 01:47 AM

JR

“*Our thoughts and prayers are with you Liz and Lucy during this most difficult time. Tom will forever be at the center of all those great memories we had growing up in the best neighborhood in Naperville. He was a genius inventor and a kid at heart. Creating endless fun activities for kids and adults such as croquet golf, monster sledding hills, and I will never forget those massive January bonfires lit from a distance by bow and arrow. Tom enjoyed being in his yard and everyone else's yard too. He was always there to help figure out the best way to solve a problem or cut up a fallen tree with his chain saw. I especially feel fortunate for the friendship he had with our Dad Jim Ronk after our Mom Marilyn died. I always knew what Tom was "up to" all the way down in Texas. Tom, I never said it but I am sorry for kicking that soccer ball over the fence and through your laundry room window. You never said a word about it, yet another example of your tremendous character. God bless you Tom Vokac, you will be greatly missed.*

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**Jonathan Ronk** - August 15, 2019 at 09:20 PM

JD

“ A true original. He built this ice toboggan run from the roof of his “boat port” that had two turns and two exits. It was one of my fondest childhood memories. A few years ago I build one for my son but not from a roof top! Haha. He was always one of those great welcoming neighborhood dads. I caught my first big fish 10#r (bullhead) with him and the Ronks at Heidecke Lake. Thank you for those experiences and memories. RIP

Jason Daskas - August 15, 2019 at 01:48 PM



“ White Standing Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Thomas Joseph Vokac.



August 14, 2019 at 04:59 PM



“ I met Tom 53 years ago at the University of Illinois. He has been my best friend ever since. I will truly miss him. Len Sis

Leonard Sis - August 14, 2019 at 01:08 PM



Forgot to add our weekly discussions

Leonard Sis - August 14, 2019 at 07:50 PM

SR

“ I was very lucky to know Tom.

*I was his neighbor back in Naperville Illinois. I did not know anyone in the neighborhood after my husband died and Tom came over and introduced himself.*

*Tom, Mary Firestone (another neighbor) and I would spend some weekend afternoons on Mary's deck generally tossing insults back and forth and listening to Tom's stories which ranged from science to fishing to one of his favorites, aliens. Tom was a great storyteller and his stories usually had a twist at the end.*

*Later after I retired and was going stir crazy, I would go and visit Tom usually on a Saturday. We were sometimes joined by Jim Ronk (another neighbor) and called ourselves the Old Fart's Club. For a few hours, we imbibed and shared the news of the day, physics, and various other sundry issues. It was always interesting and of course humorous.*

*One other area where Tom used his ability to invent things was cooking. I would be subject to some of his edible inventions-they weren't always a success but they sure were creative!*

*We had a running joke about Tom's fish pictures. I claimed it was the same fish in every picture.*

*I always knew when spring had arrived because Tom and Jim Ronk would be sitting out in Ronk's driveway on lawn chairs chewing the fat.*

*And Tom could fix just about anything with anything!*

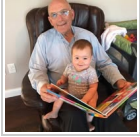
*I will miss Tom. He was a kind and caring man. I will miss his sense of humor and his bottomless knowledge about many things.  
Goodbye Tommy Salami!*

*Sandy Radwanski*



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**Sandra Radwanski** - August 13, 2019 at 04:58 PM



“ *Cousin Tom’s ability to find and land fish always amazed me...*

*On a visit to Mansfield, Tom asked if there were any fish in the Interstate pond just North of our house? I said, “no idea....”*

*Is there a stream entering it, if so there’s fish....!*

*Tom asked my wife, Ruth Ann, for a safety pin and some string and off we went to go fishing....*

*What about bait?*

*Tom replied, “we’ll find some on the way...”*

*On our way, Tom scooped up a couple of grasshoppers and crickets for bait....*

*Reaching the pond shore, Tom baited the safety pin bent into a hook shape and tossed it several feet from shore, slowly pulling the string back in.....*

*After a few tosses, Tom hooked and landed a small catfish, about a foot long.....!*

*Tom said, with pride, “See, I told you there’d be fish here....!” Tom had the widest smile.....which I still can recall anytime....*

*Thanks, Tom, for that experience and many others.....*

*Bill*

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**Bill Vokac** - August 12, 2019 at 10:38 AM