



# Thomas T. Rauk

JAN 31, 1942 - APR 13, 2011



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**T**homas (Tom) Tweeten Rauk died Wednesday, April 13, 2011, at his home in Amherst Junction, Wisconsin. He was born the eldest of four children in 1942, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Karl and Florence (Thomas) Rauk. His father's career as a United States Air Force pilot and commander carried Tom and his family to many places, including Alaska, Japan, Finland, and Germany. Tom was appointed to the United States Air Force Academy in 1960. Upon graduation in 1964, he went to pilot training in Big Spring, Texas. In 1969, he married Beverley (Browne) Rauk in Hawaii. He dedicated 27 years as a pilot and officer, which stationed him within the U.S., Germany, and Argentina, and availed him of travels all over the globe. He was the recipient of numerous medals and recognitions, including but not limited to: the Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, and Air Force Commendation Medal. He served in the Vietnam War and Operation Desert Storm. Colonel Rauk retired from military service in 1991. He and Bev then moved to Onalaska, Wisconsin, where he was engaged in local government and community service. Tom started his involvement by volunteering for Hands Across the Heartlands through the La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Association, served on the Chamber of Commerce, served as an alderman for the Onalaska City Council, as a trustee on the Board of the Winding Rivers Library System from 2004 to 2007, as a La Crosse County Board Supervisor from 2006 to 2009, and donated his time and commitment to friends and organizations to improve the lives of others. After developing a keen interest in sustainable living and attending multiple annual Midwest Renewable Energy Fairs in Stevens Point, WI, Tom began a special partnership with Gimme Shelter to design and build an energy-efficient retirement home for Bev and himself in Amherst Junction, WI. The partnership extended into a friendship and deep commitment to the Amherst community and his neighbors. Tom's interests included his immediate and extended family; sustainable, green



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living; political analysis; current affairs; religious and spiritual study; classical music; wine (especially German, Australian, and South American); community involvement; and maintaining friendships with his 7th Squadron classmates at the Academy, as well as friends from around the globe. He volunteered for many causes, including but not limited to: the Red Cross, Planned Parenthood, Fair Wisconsin; and several local, state, and national candidates of public office. He was a member of the Association of Graduates of the Air Force Academy and the Order of the Daedalians. He is survived by his wife, Bev; daughters, Erin and Lauren Rauk; mother, Florence Rauk; sisters, Karla Stacey (Lee Goodhart) and Louise Donohue; brother Robert (Reva) Rauk; three grandchildren, Shane, Garrett, and Trinity Carlson; sister-in-law, Elizabeth (David) Romenesko; nieces and nephews: Dan (Heather) Stacey, Chris (Kim) Goodhart, Deirdre (Alex) Campbell, Justin Donohue, Kirsten Rauk, Anders Rauk, Ane Rauk, Adrienne (Brandon) DeBall, Brent (Holly) Romenesko; and many friends and family members around the globe. Tom was preceded in death by his father Karl Rauk and his brother-in-law, James Donohue. The family thanks Mayo Clinic of Rochester, Franciscan Skemp Healthcare of La Crosse, Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital of Marshfield, Ministry Saint Michael's of Stevens Point, and the Ministry Home Care Hospice team for providing considerate, professional, and compassionate care for him during his years fighting cancer. An open house gathering will be held in Amherst Junction, WI, on Saturday, April 23, 2011. A memorial service will be held in La Crosse, WI, on Sunday, May 15, 2011, 9 AM – 11:30 AM at Myrick Hixon Eco Park. An interment service will be held at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO, on Tuesday, June 21, 2011. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to any of the following charities (please mark gifts In Memory of Thomas Rauk): Mississippi Valley Conservancy, New Hope Town Hall Historic Preservation, or Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin.



## **Memories only last if you share them**

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



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