

## Thomas F. Rafferty

March 11, 1943 - November 4, 2023

Thomas Francis Rafferty passed away peacefully and surrounded by family in his home in Conway, South Carolina, on Nov. 4, 2023. He was 80 years old.

Born in Washington, D.C. in 1943, Tom's life often brought him back to the nation's capital. He graduated from Gonzaga College High School in 1961, and returned frequently for the annual Alumni Smoker. His school spirit also provided his family with decades of Father's Day gift inspiration for the man stubbornly difficult to buy for.

Tom went on to graduate from the University of Maryland with a degree in Zoology. From there he joined the Army, where he was decorated with a National Defense Service Medal for expert marksmanship. Obtaining the designation of "expert" with a rifle during the height of the Vietnam War struck some in his family as short-sighted in 1969. But Tom always served to the best of his abilities, including his time as a volunteer firefighter.

After the Army, Tom began his 35-year career as a manager at New York Life. He earned designations as a Chartered Life Underwriter and Registered Health Underwriter. And it was during his post at the company's branch in Youngstown, Ohio, where he met the love of his life, Joan. The couple married in 1984 and had their only child, Andrew.

In 1994, Tom and his family moved to Western New York. It was there where the Raffertys made some of their best friends for life. Many came from Tom's involvement in the Knights of Columbus. He was a Past Grand Knight of Madonna Council #2535 in North Tonawanda, NY. And during those years he also acted as an unofficial ambassador for Niagara Falls, enticing friends and family to visit for the opportunity to see one of nature's great wonders.

After retiring, Tom and his wife moved south to Conway, South Carolina. Even in retirement he continued to serve the Knights of Columbus, and the local Catholic Church, and his neighbors.

No matter where life took Tom, people liked him. He was easy to be around. And people remembered his smile even after meeting him just once. He was slow to anger... except for that time he was mowing the lawn and ran over a large rock his son was using as second base for a backyard baseball game. But he got over it pretty quickly.

Tom was a guy you wanted at your party. He never was the loudest in the room. And he wasn't going to start the limbo. But he was going to bring beer. And he would deliver a witty one-liner that would have the whole room rolling.

Tom was predeceased by his brother, Will, and parents William Andrew Rafferty and Helen Morley Rafferty. He is survived by wife, Joan, son, Andrew, and sister Mary Ellen.

A memorial Mass will be held at 9:00 AM Friday, November 10, 2023 at St. James Catholic Church with Father Oscar Borda officiating. Inurnment with Military Honors will follow at the church columbarium.

The family will receive friends immediately following the service.

Memorial donations can be made to the Beatitude House at 238 Tod Lane, Youngstown, OH 44504 <<https://www.google.com/maps/search/238+Tod+Lane,+Youngstown,+OH+44504?entry=gmail&source=g>> <<https://www.beatitudehouse.com/>>

Please sign the online guest book at [www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com](http://www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com)

Goldfinch Funeral Home, Conway Chapel is assisting the family.

# Cemetery Details

**St James Catholic Church Columbarium**

Conway, SC

# Tribute Wall

BR

“ *Bill & Barbara Ridings lit a candle in memory of Thomas F. Rafferty*



Bill & Barbara Ridings - November 10, 2023 at 01:29 PM

BR

*Joan, Andrew and Mary, we are saddened by the loss of your loved one, a wonderful husband, father and brother. Tom was always friendly, happy and always ready to share great memories and stories. We only met him a few times but always enjoyed his company and conversations . We have our sympathy for a loss one so dear. Stay close and support each other. Our hearts are with you, as are our prayers.*

Bill & Barbara Ridings - November 10, 2023 at 01:34 PM

JB

“ *We will always treasure our memories of our California trip! May choirs of angels welcome Tom home! With love, Janet and Joseph*



Janet Bova - November 09, 2023 at 02:35 PM

JL

“ *Sadly Tom will be greatly missed but will live on in our fondest memories. RIP*

*JanMarie, Shannon, Joel and families*

Jan-Marie Logan - November 07, 2023 at 05:55 PM

SG

“ *Sorry to hear of Thomas passing ! My thoughts and prayers are with Joan and her Family ! May he R.I.P. 🙏🙏🙏*

Susan Giannetti - November 07, 2023 at 05:08 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas F. Rafferty.*



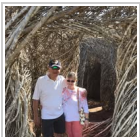
November 07, 2023 at 01:50 PM

TG

“ *The Poker Guys purchased the Simply Elegant S pathiphyllum for the family of Thomas F. Rafferty.*



The Poker Guys - November 07, 2023 at 12:36 PM



“ *So very sorry for the loss of our neighbor..RIP*

Kathy Halfpenny - November 07, 2023 at 08:15 AM

SG

*So sorry to hear this , my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family Joan . May he rest in peace . 🙏🙏🙏*

**Susan Giannetti** - November 07, 2023 at 04:55 PM

SG

*So sorry to hear this , my thoughts & prayers Joan and Family ! May he R.I.P. !*

**Susan Giannetti** - November 07, 2023 at 05:01 PM

GB

*May God comfort you, Joan, and your family. So sorry for your loss.*

**Gina Brehm** - November 07, 2023 at 07:45 PM