

As most of you know we lost another great Maverick recently. Dick Thomas passed away during his sleep from natural causes. He and Barbara were traveling to the East Coast and stopped for the night in Cheyenne, WY. There was a wonderful service held Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> of June in Lodi, CA. Eulogies were given by Lyle Cooper and Doug Barr. Attached are the obituary and my eulogy.

I will miss my good friend more than I can say.

Doug Barr  
Mavericks  
Webmaster/Editor



Richard Clayton Thomas  
Valley Springs, CA

Richard Clayton Thomas

August 16, 1940 - June 7, 2009

Richard Clayton Thomas, 68, died Sunday, June 7, 2009. Though Richard was taken unexpectedly and too soon, we find comfort in that he passed away peacefully in Cheyenne, Wyoming doing something he enjoyed, traveling with his beloved wife of 48 years, Barbara, and his two faithful Springer Spaniels.

Richard (Rick, Dick) was born August 16, 1940 to Chester and Marybelle Thomas. He attended Stagg High School and graduated on the Dean's list from Delta College. He enlisted in the United States Navy and served four years. While in the Navy, Richard fell in love with and married Barbara on December 30, 1960.

At the age of 23, he began his career as a Deputy at the San Joaquin County Sheriff's office. He advanced to Assistant Sheriff and retired after 32 years of service. For the past

twelve years he and Barbara resided in Valley Springs.

Richard was a true do-it-yourselfer and could fix anything. He enjoyed playing golf, wood-working and he loved to go camping with his family and friends.

Richard is survived by his wife Barbara; daughters Carol Derksen, Lynn Johnson; son William (Kelly) Thomas; seven grandchildren: Erik, David, Tanner, Kara, Ryan, Shayna, and Miranda; brother William E. (Martha) Thomas, and sister Doris Clark. Richard, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and friend will be greatly missed and his memories truly cherished.

Funeral services will be held at Cherokee Memorial Park in the Atrium Garden Chapel at 2:00 p.m. Friday, June 19, 2009. Sutter Street Memorial Chapel Inc. is in charge of arrangements.

Dick Thomas – Eulogy by Doug Barr

Dick and I became acquainted when I joined the Sheriff's Department 1969 but we became close friends with Dick and Barbara when we were neighbors to Lyle and Joan. We started traveling together both in RV's as well as cruises. We spent many holidays and celebrations with the 3 families, including most New Year's Eve celebrations.

I never worked in the same car with Dick but he was on an overlap shift and responded to one of my calls. It was a nothing thing but he told me how to handle it and what should be done, then left. I asked my trainer, Keith Sawyer, "Who was that? I didn't see any Sgt stripes or Lt bars." He said that was just Dick Thomas who thinks he is shift sergeant already.

Dick was promoted a few months later. Dick later was promoted to Lt and later became the Assistant Sheriff in charge of Operations. He served with dignity and was respected for his thoughts and dedicated service.

Later when I was working Metro Narcotics, we were doing a caper in the Old Corner Bar in Clements. Of course we were covert and cool with our long hair and fit right in. Well in comes Dick with 3 other deputies to celebrate their golf game at La Contenta. Well before they left everyone in Clements new we were cops and that pretty much ended that case.

Dick always played the part of the grumpy old guy – even when he was too young to be the grumpy old guy. He was pretty good at it too. Prior to his retirement we all did a Caribbean Cruise and he must have fired me 4 or 5 times a day. All for not doing things the way he wanted it done. Thankfully I had a good Skelly Officer who always got my job back for me. Yea, according to Dick I was wrong on each incident.

Many of you know that I enjoyed playing Hearts and a group of us played almost daily. I spent a lot of time and did my best to teach Dick to play Hearts but it's tough to teach an Assistant Sheriff anything.

Several years after retiring Dick bought a new ALFA RV. ALFA is an acronym for "A Loving Family Affair". It was a perfect fit for Dick and Barbara. They joined the user group "The Alfa Mavericks". Of course very shortly he became active in the group and held several offices and was President for 5 years and they were wagonmaster on many trips and outings. Dick and Barbara will always have a special place in the Mavericks' hearts.

Well it was only logical that when Lyle and I got ready for retirement we had to buy an Alfa too. Like Lyle said Dick had whole hardware store in his RV and lots of extra Alfa parts. We didn't have to worry about anything – parts – supplies – labor. In fact, he still had some new Alfa parts he gave to me the last time we traveled together in January at Quartzsite.

Dick was a unique kind of guy. If you were his friend, and he was easy to be a friend to, he would give you and help you with anything. If you crossed him intentionally it was all over. He might forgive you but he would never forget. That's not to say you couldn't disagree with him. He and I had some hard arguments but it was like buddies or brothers and when it was over it was over.

Dick was a good mechanic and a pretty good electrician. But best of all he had every tool offered at **Home Depot**. Dick was especially good working on Lyles Model T. He was the only one of us old enough to have had a personal relationship with a Model T. All you had to do was put up with his act. And it was an act. He liked that he was thought of as Grumppa, he even had a hat with Grumppa on it. But he in truth Dick was a loving husband, a loving and forgiving father and grandfather. He talked about his grandchildren frequently and was always so proud of you. Always remember that Grandpa loved you much. It is so sad that his new grandchildren won't get to experience his love first hand.

When we RVed Dick always liked to be in the lead. He always drove faster than I wanted to. I would just get on the CB and tell him to go on and I'd catch up with him later.

Dick we'll, catch up with you later.