



Thomas A Barros

March 5, 1941 - May 28, 2019

Thomas A. Barros was born on March 5, 1941, in Lima, Peru, to Julia and Leocadio Barros. The family lived across the street from a park where Tom played outside everyday with his older brother, Victor, and his friends in the neighborhood. Groups of 20 or more friends rode bicycles throughout Lima with Tom's mother following behind them in her car, making sure they stayed safe. Tom took violin lessons for 14 years and also played the accordion throughout his young life. In his youth, he was known for his soccer playing abilities.

Tom finished high school in 1957, at age 16, when his family sent him and Victor to the United States, where they attended college. Tom earned his bachelor's degree in business at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ. He later attended Fordham University in New York, NY, earning a master's degree in business.

Tom and Victor were employed at a kitchen during college. They worked hard and stayed on a tight budget, but every payday, they always made sure they had enough money to enjoy a nice steak dinner together.

Tom and Maria Cristina "Kitty" Herz, who also lived in his neighborhood in Lima, stayed in touch by writing letters to each other even after he moved to the United States. When Tom finished college, he returned to Lima to ask

Kitty's father, Cesar, for her hand in marriage. Kitty's father said no because Tom wanted to take her back to the United States with him, and he didn't think Tom could provide for his daughter, so Tom remained in Lima and worked for his own father.

Leocadio, Tom's father, owned a successful neon and billboard sign business. These types of signs were new in Peru, and his company placed the first Coca Cola sign in Lima. Tom grew up in a business environment.

After a year in Lima, Tom presented Cesar with a contract from a car dealership in Hollywood, CA, stating that he had secured employment and would receive a salary, in addition to commission for car sales. Cesar gave his blessing for Tom and Kitty to marry and move to California. Cesar never found out that Tom had faked the contract. Ironically, Tom ended up working as a car salesman at Holmes-Tuttle Ford, the same company he had named in the fictitious contract.

Tom and Kitty married in 1963. The couple then left Peru and moved to Los Angeles, CA, in 1964. They had two children: Tom (July 1964) and Christine (July 1965). He worked for Holmes-Tuttle until 1971, selling cars to people like Frank Sinatra and James Dean. He later moved the family to Tucson, AZ, where he worked as general manager for Bob Tuttle's cousin, Jim Click, at Jim Click Ford. Bob had recommended Tom make the move, so he could work his way up in the car dealership business and buy his own dealership one day.

In 1974, Tom and his family moved to Spokane, WA, where he became a minority partner with Bob Tuttle and Jim Click at Tom Barros Lincoln Mercury. Together, they purchased Mazda and added it to their dealership. Tom became a United States citizen and won Businessman of the Year in Spokane. He also got his pilot license, but gave up flying when he realized he

couldn't join the party and fly a plane at the same time. Tom and Kitty divorced while living in Spokane. Tom then decided to slow down, sold his interests in the Spokane dealership, and moved to Wenatchee, WA, where he worked as general manager for Reichert Datsun, which later became Reichert Nissan. He eventually became minority owner of Nissan. In 1986, Don and Tom purchased the Toyota dealership, and Tom was majority owner. In 2001, Tom bought out Don's interest in Toyota and sold his interest in Nissan back to Don.

In 2002, Tom took a big leap and built a brand-new store in East Wenatchee, WA, across from Costco, where there was nothing but orchards. Some people in town questioned the move, but he was confident it would work out and it did.

In 2005, Tom's daughter, Christine Barros, became controller of Town Toyota, working alongside her dad. Three years later, Tom, Jr. also joined the company.

Between 2005 and 2008, Tom had purchased Carey Motors Lincoln Mercury, Lithia Chrysler Dodge, Wenatchee Ford and Reichert Nissan, adding them to the Town Auto Group. Eventually, the renamed Town Nissan and Town Ford Lincoln moved next to Town Toyota on the south end of East Wenatchee.

Also in 2008, the City of Wenatchee sought out a naming sponsor for what was then called the Greater Wenatchee Regional Events Center. Some people saw the event center as a burden on the local economy and the taxpayers. Tom thought it would become the next big thing for Wenatchee and wanted to help, so Town Toyota became the naming sponsor of what is now called the Town Toyota Center. They have renewed the naming rights contract twice since the original agreement was signed.

Throughout Tom's career, he gave generously to the community and was noted as a man who took good care of people, including his employees, friends, and family. Tom remained in touch with long-time friends from as far back as kindergarten, seeing them whenever visiting Lima throughout the years, and attended his 60-year high school class reunion in 2017.

Last year, Tom was united with his daughter, Andrea Sloan, who had discovered him through an ancestry genetic test when searching for her birth father. Tom, Christine, and Tom, Jr. have lovingly welcomed Andrea, her husband, Jim, and their two sons, Hudson and Harrison, into the Barros family, visiting each other often, including holidays and other celebrations.

Christine and Tom remember their dad as a man who worked hard and played hard. They hold fond memories of holiday weekends on Hayden Lake in Idaho and their dad pulling the family boat with his grey convertible Lincoln Continental. When living in Tucson, they rode dune buggies, vacationed in Mexico, and drove their station wagon to San Carlos, CA.

Tom followed soccer, especially Barcelona. He traveled the world and was an avid reader of everything from Tom Clancy novels to books about government and politics, including stories of former presidents. He enjoyed music of old crooners like the Rat Pack, and also liked Yanni, Julio Iglesias, Neil Diamond, Neil Sedaka, and Peruvian artists. He loved his country of Peru, visiting almost annually, eating the local cuisine and relaxing on its beaches.

Town Toyota, Town Nissan, and Town Chrysler will remain in the Barros family, and Town Ford Lincoln was recently sold to business partner, Pat Armstrong. The Tom Barros Automotive Scholarship is currently being established at Wenatchee Valley College for its automotive program. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the scholarship the fund at WVC Foundation,

1300 5th St., Wenatchee, WA, 98801. Donations can also be made at www.wvc.edu/give. Checks are payable to Tom Barros Automotive Scholarship.

Tom is survived by daughters: Christine Barros and Andrea Sloan (Jim); son, Tom Barros (Janya); partner, Patricia Milos; granddaughter, Jordanne Barros; grandsons: Hudson and Harrison; brother-in-law, Jose Garcia Castaños; sister-in-law, Ester Herz; nieces: Sandra Barros and Jessica Jimenez-Barros; nephew, Tony Lisson; and numerous cousins; and great-nieces and nephews. Tom was preceded in death by his mother and father, Julia and Leocadio Barros; brother, Victor Barros; and sister-in-law, Irma Garcia.

Tom passed away on Tuesday, May 28, 2019, at 78 years old, surrounded by his loving family, including Christine and Tom, Jr. and his longtime partner, Patricia Milos.

A public Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, June 9, 2019, at 2:00 p.m., at the Town Toyota Center, 1300 Walla Walla St., Wenatchee, WA. Arrangements are by Chapel of the Valley, Wenatchee, WA.

Tribute Wall

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“*Mary and I enjoyed our time in Tom's presence and he had a heart of Gold!! Rest In Peace, Tom. Special thoughts to his family and Patty during these trying days.*”

Tom Fitz - June 09, 2019 at 04:31 PM