

Tom's brother Larry, USAFA '72, sent the following to Stalker Reed and gave me permission to pass it on.

"The whole family is stunned as Tom really seemed to be on the long slog road to mostly recovering. As you know Tom was a man of the people, but to me he was my best friend for 72 years. I miss him so much already. As kids we were inseparable. I was thrilled to have him follow me to USAFA although I would have preferred it would have been two years instead of one. When he came to Willy for UPT I was in T-37 Check Section and somehow talked the Sq Commander into letting me take him on his Student Cross Country. Had he known Tom better he probably wouldn't have allowed it. Since I was the Wing Flying Safety Officer, I guess it was OK. We went to Nellis, then to Hill AFB to meet up with our dad. Tom said he really had wanted to go into Pete Field but the 4 leg restriction made it so we couldn't. I always kept myself out of trouble but sometimes it didn't work that way when it was the two of us. Checking the range, Pete Field was right on the ragged edge of the T-37. In typical Tom fashion, he looked out the Ops window at the airplane and back at me, "We do have ejection seats right?" I filed the flight plan and off we went then to ABQ and back to Willy. And so it continued as we flew together in our Cessna 210 and I flew as his copilot in a Conquest he was flying and a Westwind Jet including a 10-day run to Alaska. A fun time was had by all. Couldn't be any other way with Tom.

"Your class is fortunate to have been all 4 years together at USAFA and stayed so close. I am heartsick losing my brother but also that you guys have lost the oldest and the youngest in your Sq/Class [7th Squadron] within a couple of months of each other."