

***Tim Andrews lost his fight with cancer on Thursday, October, 20, 2022.
Below is the eulogy I gave at Tim's Memorial Service on November 1, 2022.***

***Tim was buried with full military honors at Jefferson Barracks Military Post
in Lemay, Missouri. He is survived by his parents Chris and Vicki Andrews,
his wife Kaitlin, and his daughter Grace.***

Eulogy for Tim Andrews

When Tim asked me to speak at this service celebrating his life, I was honored. But I was unsure my speaking was appropriate. I told Tim that others could do better. But, Tim persisted (he could be a bit stubborn), telling me that he wanted me to speak and share some stories that family, friends and particularly Grace might not know.

So here are some of my stories and memories of my time with Tim Andrews.

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1. Long ago, in a galaxy far, far away, Tim worked for me at a grocery store I managed. To see what he was made of — he was dating my daughter — I gave him every lousy job there was, from scrubbing deli floors and bathrooms on his hands and knees to changing ceiling tiles on an overhead lift on the overnight shift. He did every job well and without complaint; he passed my test. However, unbeknownst to me, Tim had nick-named me *Bo-Jack* (short for Boss-Jack... well not a nice word) and shared my new nickname with the entire staff. The name stuck. That's how I got the nickname *Bo-Jack*. Tim was so proud.

You see, Tim could not be intimidated.

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2. When Tim left for Iraq, I advised him, as I did every baseball and softball player I ever coached, to keep his eyes open and his butt down. Consequently, in every e-mail he sent to me from Iraq, the subject line said "Eyes closed, butt up."

You see, Tim could be a smart ass.

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3. A few months ago, I visited Tim in the hospital. Tim was weak, had lost a lot of weight. He was in bed, connected to tubes. But he was still the Tim I knew. Here's our conversation when I walked into the room.

Me: *"Well... you'll never beat me at golf now."*

Tim: *"Don't be so sure of that."*

Me: *"What do you need?"*

Tim: *"I'd like a cigarette."*

Me: *"Those things will kill you."*

Tim: *"It's a chance I'm willing to take."*

With the nurse's approval, we hooked up the wires and tubes to a cart, and headed outside, where we joined a group of smokers hanging out on the corner.

Me: *I looked at Tim, and asked, "Aren't you still connected to oxygen?"*

Tim: *"I'm not afraid. Just give me a light!" (the other smokers backed away).*

Me: *"Well, you know, I'm afraid. And not quite ready to join you on the stairway to heaven."*

Tim: *"Well...no worries, I'm pretty sure we're not going to the same place."*

You see, Tim was a funny guy.

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4. Back when the war with Iraq began, Tim felt it was his duty to enlist in the Army despite my objections. But after a long talk one night, Tim quashed my objections with the question “so if people like me don’t go to fight and win this war, who will you send in my place five years from now? Your sons?”

You see, Tim loved his country.

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5. Most folks know that Tim was part of Charlie Company, assigned to the front lines in Iraq; Tim was a brave man. But another story, that most folks do not know about, shows Tim’s courage as well. There was a time I called Tim, in the middle of the night, to go with me to the worst part of inner-city St. Louis to help a relative in trouble. I called, he came; no hesitancy, no questions asked. I needed his help, so he came. We navigated the streets of inner-city St. Louis, entered a run-down building, past armed hoodlums, and did our job. I will never forget Tim’s courage that night. And, of course, in his last days, Tim stared down cancer, never felt sorry for himself and fought to the end.

You see, Tim was tougher than the rest.

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6. Tim loved my sons Eric and Tommy, and they loved him. Burned into my memory is a Thanksgiving morning. The four of us, on our way to the traditional Hollenbach Family Football game, all joined in and sang, in harmony, “*Damn it feels good to be a Gangsta*” by the *Getto Boys*. That was a good day.

You see, Tim loved my sons.

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7. There has never been a happier man than Tim just after Grace was born. His eyes just beamed. Almost 16 years later, makes me smile thinking about it. Tim told everyone that Grace was *“the best thing I ever did, the reason I was put on this earth.”* Grace was the center of his life, the reason he got up in the morning, the reason he fought the cancer.

You see, Tim loved Grace.

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All of this is not to say that Tim was without flaws. Tim, by his own admission, was not a perfect man. During that visit in the hospital a few month's ago, Tim admitted he had regrets. Whom amongst us does not? However today is not about imperfections or regrets. Today is about celebrating Tim's life, the things he did well, the people whom he loved and who loved him.

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Finally, to all who mourn Tim Andrews today...

I don't know why Tim Andrews was stricken with cancer at 43 years old.

I don't know why a parent outlives their child.

I don't know why a young wife loses her husband, or a sister loses her big brother.

I certainly do not understand why a 15 year-old daughter would lose her Dad.

However, I do know this:

We convince ourselves that life will get better and we will be happy after we finish school, buy a house, get married, have a baby. That happiness will come when the kids are grown, when we lose 10 lbs., when we get a better job, when the debts are paid off, when we retire, when the rain stops, when summer comes.

The truth is, there is no better time to be happy than now. Yes, right now. This is what Tim would want us to do.

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You see, happiness is a journey, not a destination. Treasure every moment. Treasure it more because you shared some time with Tim Andrews.

Then work like you don't need the money. Love like you've never been hurt. Dance like no one's watching. Life is not the way it's supposed to be. It's the way it is. The way you cope with it is what makes all the difference.

You see, In the end, it's not about the dying, it's about the living.

Safe Travels Tim. Eyes open-butt down.

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