

Spotlight on Tom Roberts and Carol Justice Roberts

Life after Azusa High School

Tom Roberts and Carol Justice attended elementary school together and graduated from Azusa High School in 1961. They started going steady when they were 16 and in June of 2008 they will celebrate their 44th wedding anniversary. They have two children, a boy and a girl, plus two granddaughters and a grandson.



Tom and Carol are both survivors. Their strength and faith have helped them overcome many obstacles in life. When they were 29 years old they were in a horrible dune buggy accident in San Felipe, Mexico. The dune buggy caught fire and Carol suffered third degree burns on 55% of her body and second degree burns everywhere else. She was treated in the burn unit of the hospital for over three months and had to undergo several skin grafts and months of painful physical therapy. Tom was also hospitalized for burns, although his were not as severe as Carol's.

Several years later Tom was thrown off his motorcycle and landed at the bottom of a rocky canyon in San Clemente after he hit a tree branch that extended over the roadway. It took nine months for his bones to heal. He showed up at a job interview wearing a cast and bandages on his head, arms and legs. He got the job.

For the past several years Carol has suffered from rheumatoid arthritis, and a few years ago had knee replacement surgery because her joint was damaged beyond repair. Even though it's painful when she does the activities she enjoys so much she's truly an inspiration to everyone. In a recent email she said, "To do any of the things I do anymore is very hard on the RA (rheumatoid arthritis) as it is always very painful, but the joy and happiness I get out of doing these things outweighs the pain. It's kind of a mindset thing."

Work

After graduating high school Tom worked for Carol's father for seven years as an apprentice bricklayer. From there he went to work for a beer distributing company for the next 22 years. He was Executive Vice President when the company was sold, but he continued working at the distributing company, under the new ownership, for two more years. After a short sabbatical Tom landed a job as a sales rep for one of the nation's largest distributor of packing materials and moving and storage equipment. His territory is Phoenix, Las Vegas and Southern California. He loves his job and probably won't retire for at least a couple more years.

Carol recently retired after working for Pacific Care Dental & Vision for 16 years.

Play

Tom and Carol are both adventurous and enjoy living life to its fullest. Carol celebrated her 64th birthday by jumping out of a plane in San Diego. This skydiving adventure came after she had knee replacement surgery. On her 65th she and Tom swam with the dolphins in Cozumel. On her 63rd birthday Carol and Tom went whitewater rafting on the Arkansas River in Colorado. They rode quads over the sand dunes in St. George Utah for Carol's 62nd, and went hot air ballooning to celebrate another. For her 66th birthday she wants to try windsurfing.



Tom started playing golf over 45 years ago at Azusa Greens and has played racquetball for 30 years. In a championship racquetball tournament 12 years ago at Belmont Shores, he and his partner (another old guy) rallied the pants off of a couple of cocky 21-year-olds who thought the old men would be a cinch to beat. The defeated and deflated youngsters went home with their unopened bottle of champagne and group of disappointed fans.



After she recovered from her dune buggy accident – after she was told that she would never be able to lift her right arm again - Carol went on to become a Class B tennis player at her club in Vista, where she played in tournaments for eight years.

Tom and Carol enjoy touring the country in their motor home and have visited many interesting places. They are avid fishers and while vacationing at Clear Lake in Oregon Carol caught a seven-pound bass after a 15-minute fight to bring it in. They enjoyed water skiing for 25 years, mostly at the Colorado River and Lake Havasu, and liked snow skiing at Mammoth and Big Bear

Nowadays they enjoy watching their grandchildren play soccer and T-ball in San Diego.