



In Memory of
Thomas Atkinson

Class of 1983
8 June 1965 - 6 November 1982

Tom was born in Waukesha, Wisconsin, and at age 2 ½ he moved to Eau Claire with his parents and newborn sister Susan. Brother Mike joined the family in 1970.

Tom was a sweet and thoughtful child.

The 1982-83 MHS Hockey Season was dedicated to Tom with his picture and the following tribute printed in every program:

*Tom Atkinson
1965– 1982*

We, the Memorial Hockey Team of 1982-83, are dedicating this hockey season to our teammate and friend, Tom Atkinson.

Tom was proud to be a member of the National Honor Society. He was also active in band, waterskiing, and many other activities.

We miss him.

The 1982-83 hockey team also developed an award based on Tom's character and steadiness which continues to be awarded each year. The larger plaque hangs in the O'Brien Trophy at Hobbs Arena; the individual recipient also receives a plaque with this inscription:

Recipient of this award best exemplifies the traits of a team player dedicated to mind, body, and spirit at Memorial High School.

The following comments are taken from the Tom Atkinson Hockey Award presentation:

As a junior, he was stricken with a brain tumor that would not allow him to see his senior season.

Tom was more than a hockey player. He was an honor student and proud of it. He played in the Memorial High School band and was a nationally ranked water skier. He cared about people, his teammates, his friends and even little children. Most importantly, he believed in God.

It was hockey that taught him how to win, how to accept defeat and come back and win again. It was the mindset of competition, of team play and dedication to a cause that was with him through his fight with cancer.

The will to win never faded even through he faced insurmountable odds and setback after setback.

It was as though he stepped on the ice as a junior with the score 99 to 1 against him and as a senior, lost the game 98 to 99.

As Tom was dying, it was his wish that a scholarship be established in his name. The \$1,000 scholarship given annually also recognizes excellence in character development and is awarded to a student who demonstrates "...academic and personal excellence."

As one of his friends wrote: *"He was steady, and he meant what he did...he was always there...he was our moral arm."*