



Robert Nelson Thomas

January 26, 1942 - March 27, 2021

Robert Nelson Thomas, a lifelong educator, went to be with the Lord on March 27, 2021. He was 79 years old.

He was the son of Joseph and Leda Thomas, born in Warrenton, Virginia on January 26, 1942, and lived his entire life in Manassas, Virginia.

After graduating from Osbourne High School, he attended Ferrum Junior College, in Ferrum, Virginia, and received his Associates Degree. He then attended Concord University in Athens, West Virginia, where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education, and met the love of his life, Sandra Butler Thomas. He then received his Masters of Education from the University of Virginia, and enjoyed a full career teaching in Prince William County and Manassas City Public Schools.

In his community, Robert, known to his friends as Bob, was simply one of the nicest people in the world: he always had a kind word for anyone, he constantly availed himself to others, and he had a special talent for remembering who might need an extra pat on the back. He was a lifelong learner as well, always full of wonder and questions he truly wanted information on countless topics. Robert maintained a positive attitude even when he was challenged; he saw the good in people even if they faulted him; and maintained the innocence of a child, when many would become cynical.

Robert Thomas is survived by his son Jeffrey Nelson Thomas and his wife Eleni Evanthia Sarris Peyser; brother David “Dee Dee” Thomas and his wife Stephanie “Stevie” (née Comorat) Thomas. He was predeceased by his beloved Sandra in 2018. He took great pleasure in his 2 nephews, David and Gregory Thomas, and their families; as well as his many cousins and even more friends.

The viewing will take place on Friday, April 2, 2021 at Pierce Funeral Home, 9609 Center Street, Manassas, Virginia. Viewing times will be 3-4 p.m., 5-6 p.m., and 7-8 p.m. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the visitation is limited to 50 people per time grouping.

A graveside service will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 3, 2021 at Stonewall Memory Gardens, 12004 Lee Highway, Manassas, Virginia. All are welcome.

Cemetery Details

Stonewall Memory Gardens

12004 Lee Highway
Manassas, VA 20109
<http://www.stonewallmemorygardens.com>

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 2. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Pierce Funeral Home
9609 Center St.
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 257-6028
pfh@piercefh.com
<https://www.piercefh.com>

Visitation

APR 2. 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Pierce Funeral Home
9609 Center St.
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 257-6028
pfh@piercefh.com
<https://www.piercefh.com>

Visitation

APR 2. 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Pierce Funeral Home
9609 Center St.
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 257-6028
pfh@piercefh.com
<https://www.piercefh.com>

Graveside Services

APR 3. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Stonewall Memory Gardens
12004 Lee Highway
Manassas, VA 20109
<http://www.stonewallmemorygardens.com>

Tribute Wall

RW

“ *Mr. Thomas was my 2nd grade teacher at Baldwin Elementary. I will never forget that he asked me to the Father Daughter dance that year because my father had just passed. I remember being very shy and scared, but he was a PERFECT gentleman. Was wondering about him when I recently came across our class picture. RIP Mr. Thomas and thank you for being such a nice person (especially to that poor little messed up girl in 2nd grade).*

Robin Stover (Warter)

Robin Warter - July 15, 2021 at 03:18 PM

LH

“ *I have a lovely memory of Mr. Thomas, who was at the time principal of Haydon Elementary School. He surprised all of the students one day by holding office on the roof of the building; he moved a table up there, worked from there all day, and waved to us down below. The "special occasion" was a reward for something we collectively accomplished as a school; I was in kindergarten or 1st grade at the time and my classmates and I were besides ourselves with glee. He was a special educator to create a memory for a 5-7 year old that cost nothing, incentivized good behavior, raised morale and lasted a lifetime. Thank you, Mr. Thomas.*

Liz Hart - July 10, 2021 at 11:10 AM

FM

“ We were high school class mates of Bob we were so sadden to here of his passing, I worked with him on all our class of 1960 reunions he was always so willing to help in any way he could. We also worked to getting in years pass on the annual Osbourne High School yearly alumni banquet . We will miss him. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his son ,brother and family. Frank and Mary Moore

Frank and Mary Moore - April 02, 2021 at 06:34 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Robert Nelson Thomas.



April 02, 2021 at 06:19 PM

PG

“ Bob, I know your heart was broken when Sandra passed; and, I know that in being with her again, you have found peace and joy. Thank you for all of your service to Manassas and the many forms it took. You were a teacher, a principal, an active member of your church, and, for many years after your retirement, a volunteer in many organizations. I enjoyed the hours upon hours of conversations we had together; and, I especially liked learning the history of Manassas from you. Rest In Peace, Bob. I will miss you. Paul Gluchowski

Paul Gluchowski - April 02, 2021 at 05:59 PM

BW

“ I met Mr. Thomas when both of us had relatives at Caton Merchant House. He was always a gentlemen and very helpful in finding an aid to help for my brother. Saw him a few times at the Fitness Center and always very friendly and smiling. So sorry for your lost.

Bettie Williams - April 02, 2021 at 05:47 PM

WB

“ Wegley, Higginbotham & Associates & BRICOM purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Robert Nelson Thomas.



Wegley, Higginbotham & Associates & BRICOM - April 02, 2021 at 12:45 PM

JB

“ Bob was and excellent guy that never met a stranger. He was only 3 years older than me and we knew each other from school and worked in the Manassas area for many years. I will miss him as will a great number of family and friends. RIP Bob
Jim Bettis

JAMES BETTIS - April 02, 2021 at 11:28 AM

VB

“ Vanessa Blaydes purchased the Guiding Light Bouquet for the family of Robert Nelson Thomas.



Vanessa Blaydes - April 02, 2021 at 10:43 AM

VB

“ July 4th dinners were always so much fun. Loved those West Virginia hot dogs! The garden was a wonderful respite! Bob and Sandra were so welcoming, thoughtful and caring. They were so supportive when I lost my mom. I feel honored to have been accepted and welcomed by them. So much love and prayers go out to Jeff and the rest of the family. The loss of Bob will be felt by a lot of people for a long time.



Vanessa Blaydes - April 02, 2021 at 10:37 AM

SY

“ I got to know Bob working as a volunteer at the hospital. He worked after my shift. Having lived in Manassas so long we knew a lot of the same people. He always had a story to tell you . He was the nicest and most thoughtful person I have ever known. He loved to talk to people and share stories. He will be deeply missed by all of us. My condolences to family for your loss . God Bless!

Sophia Young - April 02, 2021 at 09:51 AM

MG

“ Jeff and family: We extend our deepest sympathy on your loss. We remember fondly Bob being the first principal of Weems Elementary School for our daughters, and for his significant contribution to the establishment and growth of the Manassas school system.

Maury and Vera Gerson - April 02, 2021 at 08:42 AM

JB

“ *Jo Bauserman lit a candle in memory of Robert Nelson Thomas*



Jo Bauserman - April 01, 2021 at 09:21 PM

LC

“ *Lisa Russell Colgan lit a candle in memory of Robert Nelson Thomas*



Lisa Russell Colgan - April 01, 2021 at 07:42 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Robert Nelson Thomas.*



April 01, 2021 at 05:36 PM

LS

“ Bob, in m mind, was a fair, gentle and honorable man who was a true pillar in the Manassas community. Even though I was not in the education field, my wife Sue was a educator for many years and we both thought highly of Bob. I know that Grace UMC lost a long time member of the church who've as much of his life to the church as he did to the students and teachers that he worked with for such a long period of time.

May God Bless him as he reunites in Heaven with his beautiful wife Sandra.

Sue & Larry Soergel

Larry Soergel - April 01, 2021 at 05:10 PM

MK

“ Bob weaved in and out of my life in Manassas for 45 years. He was always the same - positive, friendly, kind. I will remember him fondly always.

Margaret Kaminsky - April 01, 2021 at 03:17 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Robert Nelson Thomas.



April 01, 2021 at 11:24 AM

BG

“ I went to OHS with Bob, sorry to here he passed. Prayers for his family.

Bud Gibson

Bud Gibson - April 01, 2021 at 11:23 AM

PG

“ I was fortunate enough to have Bob as my first principal when I started teaching Special Education many years ago at Weems Elementary. I have always remembered him as a wonderful leader who truly cared about his students and his staff. Throughout my career I've worked under many principals. Bob has always, without a doubt, been one of the very best. His kindness and compassion shown through in everything he did. While walking the halls of Weems checking on his students, his staff and his building, he was always approachable and available. Bob has left his mark as a great man, educator and leader. He will be missed by the many lives he touched.

Pat LeClere Garber - April 01, 2021 at 11:03 AM

SY

I got to know Bob working as a volunteer at the hospital. He was the shift right after mine. Having lived in Manassas for so long we knew a lot of the same people. He always had a story to tell you. He was the nicest and kindest person I have ever known. He will definitely be missed by all of us. My condolences to the family for your loss. God Bless!

Sophia Young - April 02, 2021 at 09:43 AM

 Beth Johnson

“ Bob will always be remembered in my heart as the kindest and most gentle man I have ever known. He was a mentor to me in my teaching career and I credit him for all the opportunities he gave me to grow professionally. More importantly, he always saw the best in people. He loved the children and staff at Haydon Elementary and generously gave of himself. Bob, you are a true southern “gentle” man and you will be missed by all who knew you. I'm sure you are again with Sandra and resting in heaven.
Beth Johnson

Beth Johnson - April 01, 2021 at 09:16 AM

DB

“ *Jeff and family,
Bob was one of the great ones. In all of the years I had the pleasure of knowing him, I neither heard him utter an unkind word nor an unkind word heard about him. Knowing him as a parent, a fellow educator, my children's principal, and hospital volunteer, he was the soul of kindness and dedication to all that he touched. Every Wednesday night from 7 to 9, he and Sandra could be counted on to be at the information desk at the hospital.
His loss is a great loss to the community. He will be missed greatly by all of us who knew him. Additionally, what he did at Haydon as principal will have resonating effects for many years to come as a result of the students who were there during his tenure.
Were I allowed to pick members of my family, Bob would be one of those at the top of the list.
Dave Button*

Dave Button - April 01, 2021 at 09:04 AM

TO

“ *My condolences to the family of one of the pioneers in Manassas City education. He will be missed*

*Tom Osina
City Council
Manassas, VA*

Tom Osina - March 31, 2021 at 10:18 PM

AC

“ *RIP Friend of many years. Al & Janice Cooke*

Alvin W Cooke - March 31, 2021 at 09:45 PM

PG

“ Pamela M Gwinn lit a candle in memory of Robert Nelson Thomas



Pamela M Gwinn - March 31, 2021 at 08:04 PM

GH

“ Bob was a nice person. He and Sandy were great friends of ours over the years. He was a member of the Progressive Class at Grace UMC and we would have coffee after every church service. And we also visited many of the historical areas around Virginia--and that always included lunch--and he could really enjoyed those meals. He gave my daughter her fist teaching job in Manassas--and he was happy to do that. Bob and Sandy have been missed and will continue to be missed but we should always remember that the two of them were always happy to be around. I will miss Bob!
Sue and Al Newman

George Hewman - March 31, 2021 at 07:14 PM

FH

“ I am so sadden in the loss of Bob. He was a fantastic Principal and friend. I was honored to work with him at Bennett Elementary School when he was Assistant Principal. Then I continued to work with him at Weems Elementary School when he became Principal. He was always supportive to me as an Art teacher and for all the special musical programs presented. Bob was encouraging to the staff and always demonstrated a personal and professional manner. He was a natural leader. I will always remember his great sense of humor, his smile and kindness. He truly will be missed not only by family but for the multitude of teachers, students and friends that knew this gentle loving soul. My thoughts are with his family.

Flavius Hall - March 31, 2021 at 06:12 PM

AD

“ So sorry to hear of Bob's passing. I worked with him for a number of years with the Osbourn Alumni Association team. Always found him to be a gentleman and ready for a good laugh. He will be missed.

Anne Dancy - March 31, 2021 at 06:11 PM

DM

“ Bob Thomas was a true Renaissance man curious about the world of learning and dedication to the education of our community's youth. He was a kind gentle man, generous to all and unkind to none. Bob's greatest strength was seeing the good in a person and recognizing that everyone is important in the world. He loved his family and friends. He was a good neighbor and helped people throughout the neighborhood.

I was lucky to have Bob as a principal and a mentor in my early teaching career. I once read that a mark of a person is how they are remembered when their time on Earth has passed. If this is true, then Bob will be on the Mt. Rushmore of Manassas for the impact he has made on this community.

Dennis Miller

Dennis R Miller - March 31, 2021 at 06:10 PM

DJ

“ I am beyond sad to hear of Bob's passing. He was one of the kindest and most genuine people I have ever known. I feel so blessed to have worked for him at R.C. Haydon, and to have been able to call him my friend. My thoughts and prayers are with Jeff and the rest of Bob's family during this very sad and difficult time.

Dale (Potts) Jepson - March 31, 2021 at 03:24 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Robert Nelson Thomas.



March 31, 2021 at 01:10 PM