

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN THOMAS, JR.



Known as Ben, passed away peacefully on October 11, 2023. Born on February 12, 1948, in Wilkinsburg, Ben was a man of intelligence, generosity, and spirit.

Ben was a proud 1966 graduate of Edgewood High School and attended Duquesne University. Ben began his professional journey at Westinghouse in East Pittsburgh, working in the Maintenance Department. His resilience

saw him through the plant shutdown in the mid-1980s, as he joined RIDC, continuing to do maintenance work in the same plant.

In a testament to his entrepreneurial spirit, Ben formed his own company, Thomas Rigging and Construction, widely known as TRC. From its humble beginnings in East Pittsburgh, TRC grew under Ben's leadership, eventually moving to his own facility in Wilmerding in 2000. His company became known for tackling unique projects, including work for the Academy Award-winning movie "Silence of the Lambs," which was filmed at the East Pittsburgh plant. One of Ben's favorite transfers was trucking a huge telescopic lens from Corning, NY to Seattle for the U.S. Air Force, stopping traffic on many of the interstates.

Ben was not just a hard-working businessman; he also had a love for sports and recreation. He enjoyed golf and became a partner in Tanglewood Golf Course in Pulaski, Lawrence County. A true Pittsburgher at heart, Ben was a devoted fan of the city's sports teams, frequently attending games whenever he could find the time.

Above all, Ben was a loving family man. He is survived by his beloved wife of 8 years, Barbara (Usova) Thomas. He was a caring father to Randy L. Thomas, Sr. of Monroeville, Bronwyn Adams of McKeesport, Thomas P. (Roseanne) Nebel of Turtle Creek, William R. Nebel of Trafford, Amy (Matt) Hertzog of North Huntingdon and the late Christina Klein, surviving spouse, David. Ben's legacy will live on through his 17 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Ben is also survived by his brothers, Don Thomas (Bunny) of Greensburg, Paul Thomas (Cheryl of Bethel Park and Suzanne (Mike) Eargle of TN, along with nieces and nephews and his canine companion, Isabella.

Friends are welcome on Sunday from 1-7 at **PATRICK T. LANIGAN FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATORY, INC.**, 700 Linden Avenue at Cable Avenue, East Pittsburgh (412-824-8800) where a funeral service will be held on Monday at 11:30 a.m.

Ben will be laid to rest privately.

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