



Mr. James P. Thomas

February 24, 1929 - October 21, 2019

James Percy Thomas was born on February 24, 1929, in St. Louis, Missouri. He was adopted in Infancy by the late George and Myrtle Thomas. He was raised in a loving home filled with the love of the Lord and was baptized at an early age at First Baptist Church in St. Louis. He attended St. Louis Public Schools.

In the early 1950s, he met and fell in love with Marcia Washington. They were married on May 1, 1954. They enjoyed lots of travel by train until Marcy's death in 1994. In fact, James loved trains and had an enormous train set that he operated, complete with conductors, stops lights, and a city that lit up with houses, a church, a school, stores, and even a gas station that he was proud to show off to his guests.

He was employed by Maryville College and where he was dearly loved by the faculty and students. He retired after forty-two years of service. He received the "Jim Thomas Service Award Scholarship" for his dedication and outstanding service. Each year a "Jim Thomas Service Award" Scholarship is presented to a deserving student in his name.

Music was his inspiration. James was a member of Musicians Local #2-197 in St. Louis, Mo., and was known professionally as "Jim Thomas." He was a drummer with many local bands. One of his bands was "The Jim Thomas Trio," which consisted of Eddie Randle, Jr. on bass, Ed Nicholson on piano, and he was the drummer. During his musical career, he met some of the giants in jazz music, including trumpeter Miles Davis and drummer Buddy

Rich.

James was a fun-loving guy whose sense of humor was infectious. He always had a joke up his sleeve. Although he had no children of his own, he treated his nieces and nephews as though they were his. He was affectionately known to many as “Uncle Monkey” because he had many monkey jokes. He would grab a bunch of kids and induct them in his “Monkey on the Water” club and would swear them in as an official “Monkey on the Water.”

Early Monday morning, October 21, 2019, God called James home. He leaves to cherish his memories many nieces and nephews: William Boyd, Gerald Boyd, Colin Boyd, Glenda Boyd Collins, Phillip Boyd, Joseph Boyd, Dorthy Brown, Vickie Brown, Marsha Bryant, Monica Bryant, Emmanuel Bryant, Jr., Diane Ikeman, Gayle Ikeman Thomas, Robin Ikeman, Michael Layne, David Payne, Earvin “Glenn” Robinson, and Wayne Rodgers; brother, Bishop Shaw; and a host of other great-nieces and nephews, cousins, relatives and friends. Special recognition and thanks to long-time friends Valura Massey and Wardell Massey, Jr.

Preceding him in death were his parents; his wife Marcy; a brother Raymond Ikeman; three sisters, Delphine Boyd-Weir, LaRue Kiethly, and Cordelia Redd; sister-in-love Emily Ikeman; nieces, Loretta Bryant, Telitha Charles, and Linda Ikeman; nephew, Richard Boyd, Jr.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **29**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Eddie Randle & Sons Funeral Home
4600 Natural Bridge Ave,
St. Louis, MO 63115
(314) 381-2400
<https://www.randlefuneralhome.com>

Service

OCT **30**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Eddie Randle & Sons Funeral Home
4600 Natural Bridge Ave,
St. Louis, MO 63115
(314) 381-2400
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Tribute Wall

DT

“ *"JT" as we often called him at Maryville. He had the kindest spirit and full of laughter. I worked with him at Maryville in the 80's. It was always fun when he arrived on the scene.*

Dan Tierney

Dan Tierney - October 30, 2019 at 11:50 AM

ER

“ *I was introduced to Jim in the Maryville elevator on my way to a job interview. He wished me luck, I got the job and made my first Maryville friend that day. We worked together for many years and even after he retired Jim and his band would frequently play at alumni events.*

Jim was always welcoming and had a positive message for everyone. A scholarship was created in his honor and still benefits our students so his memory lives on.

My condolences to his family. He was a lovely man.

ErinVerry - October 29, 2019 at 02:06 PM

CP

“ *I met and worked with Jim at Maryville University. Jim was one of the most genuine and kindest people I've known. Rest In Peace.*

Cy Pritchard - October 28, 2019 at 11:40 PM

MN

“ Love,

Marsha

Marsha Bryant Mason (james Thomas niece - October 28, 2019 at 03:57 PM

MN

“ *To: My Uncle James, from: your great niece Marsha,
Your Sisters La ruth granddaughter.*

Your funny jokes along with your smiles will be truly missed! You and I shared alot of conversation about music, not just about the drums, which was one of our favorite, but about all instruments, we shared tons,, memories about Miles Davis, Woody Shaw, and Donald Byrd, I'm gonna miss that about you, however: when I think of music I will be thinking of, and I know up in heaven you will be playing music with Miles Davis, Woody Show and Donald Byrd.....

Marsha Bryant Mason (james Thomas niece - October 28, 2019 at 03:27 PM

TB

“ *To my sweet and funny Uncle Monkey, you were always the life of any social event,*

and you will be surly missed.

Because you are in a better place with no worries, no pain, no sickness or bills to worry about, I say to you, enjoy your new body.

God has called you home to be with him, where you can eat all you want and never gain a pound.

It doesn't make saying see you later any easier, because I won't say good bye. If I listen to our Heavily Father I too will have a worry free, pain free, sickness free and bill free life..

*Keep telling those monkey on the water jokes..... Love your niece
Tracy Boyd*

Tracy Boyd-Payne - October 24, 2019 at 07:01 PM

MA

Jim was the nicest man I ever met. He and his trio played at our wedding reception in 1981. That was one of the best days ever. Love and Peace to his family. Rest In Peace, beautiful soul. You made the difference in many lives through your time in earth. May God hold you in his Loving Arms.

Malin - October 29, 2019 at 12:21 PM