



James William Thomas

March 25, 1923 - April 16, 2020

James William Thomas, age 97, passed peacefully Thursday morning, April 16, at Provena Heritage Village in Kankakee. He was born in Kalamazoo Michigan March 25, 1923, to Earle and Kathryn Thomas. On August 4, 1946, he married Venita Volkmann. She passed away May 24, 1977. On June 15, 1985, Jim married Janet Springer, She passed away January 23, 2016.

Preceding Jim in death were one sister Joanne McGill, three children Carla, John, Jay, grandsons Zachary and Cooper, and one step-son Steven Springer. His surviving children are Michael (Gail) West Frankfort, Marc (Debra) Normal, Jeffrey (Teresa) Sullivan, Andrew (Kathy) Kankakee, James (Vicki) Toluca, Brian(Kristi, deceased) Bourbonnais, and Mary Thomas DuBois (Douglas) Parker, Co. Also surviving are a step-son Michael (Susan) Springer of Florida and a step-daughter Lisa Springer of Oak Forest. In addition there are 19 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

During WWII he served in the USN as a quartermaster aboard the light cruiser USS Detroit. The Detroit and the USS West Virginia were the only two ships from the attack on Pearl Harbor to serve during the entire war and consequently were recognized at Tokyo Bay with anchorages alongside the USS Missouri at the signing of Japan's surrender. He was indeed an eyewitness to history.

After the war he resumed his education and earned a BS of Pharmacy from Ferris State and worked briefly in retail pharmacy before joining Eli Lilly to serve as their pharmaceutical representative in the Kankakee area. He left

Lilly in the mid 70's to become co-owner of Westwood Pharmacy. He eventually sold Westwood and began work as head pharmacist at the VA hospital in Manteno before retiring shortly after his 80th birthday.

Jim was a lover of life. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, Elks, American Legion and Kankakee Valley Pharmacy Association. He was a good dancer and enjoyed playing sax and clarinet with various combos in the area. His other interests were bowling, shooting pool, playing cards (especially cribbage) and riding his BMW motorcycle as much as possible. He was heard to say that raising a big family as a husband-and-wife team was his proudest accomplishment. He was a blessing to all who knew him.

The family plans to make arrangements for a memorial service later this year. On-line condolences may be sent to Clancy-Gernon funeral home. The family is deeply grateful to the staff at Provena Heritage Village for the care they gave our father and for making video conferencing possible during this time of social distancing. Memorials may be made to Hospice of Kankakee Valley. A memorial visitation will be held from 9:30 a.m. until the time of the 11:00 a.m. memorial service on Friday, October 23, 2020 at Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home in Bourbonnais. Please wear a mask and follow social distancing guidelines.

Inurnment will follow at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

OCT **23**. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Bourbonnais - Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes, Inc.
295 Main St., NW
Bourbonnais, IL 60914
(815) 932-1214
cgfuneral@gmail.com

Memorial Service

OCT **23**. 11:00 AM (CT)

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295 Main St., NW
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Tribute Wall

BD

“ *Brian,
We would like to express our sympathy on the passing of your
father, James.
Please accept our condolences.
Brian & Betty Durell*

Betty & Brian Durell - October 26, 2020 at 10:01 AM

NW

“ *Jim was a Gem! It was a pleasure to know him and call him
"Friend". I hold dear the many fond memories from the pharmacy at
Riverside. Blessings to Marc, Mike and his wonderful family.*

Nora walker - October 17, 2020 at 02:18 PM

LY

“ *To all the Thomas family, my thoughts and prayers go out to all of
you, this is the first i've known of this, May he RIP. Larry Yoakum*

Larry Yoakum - October 17, 2020 at 11:33 AM

JB

“ *Jim was a great man with a kind heart. I admired him as a World
War 2 vet and as a pharmacist. The man lived life. He will be
missed,my thoughts and prayers go out to all the family.*

John Bourrell

John Bourrell - May 27, 2020 at 07:47 PM

MS

“ Jim was a wonderful man, a kind and loving husband to my mother Jan through their 29 years of marriage. He was also "Grandpa Jim" to my two sons. Susie and I will miss him terribly and remember him always. RIP, "Old Jim."



Michael Springer - May 08, 2020 at 01:08 PM

CK

“ Jim & Vicki, we are so sorry for your loss and send our sympathy. Keep your memories close. Love, Gary & Cindi

Cynthia Kroeschen - May 05, 2020 at 12:36 PM

KA

“ Mary,
I'm very sorry to hear of your loss. Please know that my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

kindest Regards,
Kaylyn (Barber) Anderson
[We worked together at Bradley Roper]

Kaylyn Anderson - May 04, 2020 at 07:23 PM

BR

“ We love you Grandpa forever and always!!

Bre - April 26, 2020 at 08:49 AM