



Mr. Edward Thomas

September 17, 1947 - August 11, 2023

Life Reflections for Edward Thomas

Edward Thomas, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend, peacefully passed away on August 11, 2023, leaving behind a legacy of love and cherished memories. Born on September 17, 1947, he was the only son of the late Eddie and Katie Mae Redd Thomas, who played a significant role in shaping his life.

Edward had a close bond with both of his parents, but he held a special place in his heart for his mother. He was undeniably a "Mama's boy" and their connection was one filled with affection and warmth. Edward's journey began at Carver High School in Phenix City, Alabama, where he excelled both on the basketball court and in his sense of style, earning him the well-deserved title of "Best Dressed" during his senior year.

He began his spiritual journey at a young age, at Franchise Missionary Baptist Church in Phenix City, Alabama, and culminated as a member of Union Baptist Church, in Columbia, South Carolina. He served many years on the Trustee Board and wherever his gifts and talents were needed, until retirement.

After graduation from Carver High School, Edward served his country with honor and distinction, spending three years in active duty and an additional twenty (20) years as a Reservist in the United States Army. His dedication to serving others extended beyond his military career as he pursued higher

education at Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina earning a B.A. Degree in History. Edward's thirst for knowledge led him to obtain a Master's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of South Carolina. During this time, he also served many years as a Constable for the State of South Carolina. Edward spent over thirty (30) years of service in youth education. He was Vice Principal of Dreher High School in Columbia, SC, and also Assistant Basketball Coach for over twenty (20) years. Additionally, he was honored to serve as Principal of Birchwood High School at the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice where he developed a curriculum titled "Character Education".

During his academic journey, Edward's life took a beautiful turn when he met his loving and devoted wife, Vivian, whom he affectionately nicknamed "Red". Their love story spanned an incredible forty-two (42) years, filled with unwavering support, friendship and deep affection. Together, they enjoyed various activities, such as fishing trips with Vivian's mother, Helen Porterfield and memorable cruises. Edward's father instilled in him a passion for baseball, which he and his wife shared through countless games attended together, even traveling from South Carolina to many other states and even into Canada, to witness the sport they loved.

Edward's greatest joy in life came from being a father. He had three children, a daughter Yaphet and two sons Ken and Akeem. His love for his children was immeasurable and he took pride in their accomplishments and growth.

In addition to his parents, Edward was preceded in death by one sister Mary Francis Cox. Their spirits now rest peacefully together.

Edward is survived by his beautiful wife, Vivian Porterfield Thomas, who will forever cherish their memories together. He also leaves behind his children: Yaphet Thomas of Augusta, Georgia, Edward Kenyatta, USA Retired, (Capt., Retired Dawnika) Thomas, of Baltimore, Maryland and Renarldo Akeem (Alyssa) Thomas of Orlando, Florida; his adored grandchildren: Talia, Shayla, Jayvon, Axl and Santana Thomas; Edward's loving sisters: Ronella "Shag" (Lt. Col. James, Retired) Mitchner, Carolyn (Harry) Hughes and Pamela Thomas;

mother-in-law and fishing partner Helen Porterfield; in-laws: Doris (Hubert) Williams, Helen (Curtis) Belton, Barbara (Ronnie) Walters, Linda (Carmen) Evans, Cynthia Mayers and Johnie (Jennifer) Porterfield who will forever cherish his memory and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins who were touched by his kindness and wisdom.

Edward Thomas will always be remembered as a helpful, creative and intelligent individual, with a heart full of warmth and kindness. His friendly nature touched the lives of many, leaving an indelible mark on all who had the privilege of knowing him. May his soul find eternal peace and may his memory continue to inspire and bring comfort to those he loved.

In Lieu of Flowers, Memorial Contributions may be made to:

Union Baptist Church
c/o Building Fund
1800 Germany Street
Columbia SC, 29204

Previous Events

Public Viewing

AUG 17. 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223

Lie in State

AUG 18. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Union Baptist Church
1800 Germany St.
Columbia, SC 29204

A Celebration of Life

AUG 18. 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Union Baptist Church
1800 Germany St.
Columbia, SC 29204

Live Streaming

AUG 18. 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Union Baptist Church
1800 Germany St.
Columbia, SC 29204

Please go to Palmer Memorial Chapel's Facebook page to find the link for the Live Stream. Thank You.

Interment

AUG **18**. 1:00 PM - 1:15 PM (ET)

Fort Jackson National Cemetery

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Edward Thomas*

October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM



“ *Deepest condolences to the Family of Mr. Edward Thompson from Arthurine Rice, The Brown and Serveance Family.*

For many years I worked at the Department of Juvenile Justice with Mr. Thompson, he as Principal, and I, Social Worker. He cared very much about the children he worked with at DJJ and the children loved their Principal, Mr. Edward Thompson.

May he now Rest In Peace! And, to Vivian and family, you are Kept in my daily prayers. 🙏

Arthurine Rice, SW:MA

Arthurine Rice - September 07, 2023 at 10:01 PM



“ *Thank you Mr. Thomas for teaching me good morals and ethics!*

Steven S. Reese - August 20, 2023 at 09:10 AM



“ *Coach Thomas left many fond memories with so many of his former students at Dreher. My sincerest condolences to his family and friends.*

Mara Woods - Dreher c/o 1988 - August 18, 2023 at 09:36 AM

GP

“ Vivian, may you and your family be comforted in cherished memories, perfect peace and gentle understanding.
Cecil and Georgia Priester & Family



Georgia Priester - August 18, 2023 at 08:04 AM

DH

“ My heartfelt condolences 🙏 goes out to Mr. T's family. My Boss and my Friend at the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice. For reasons known only to God our paths were allowed to cross and I am so very thankful. Now rest in peace, in His loving arms.

Dr. Robert Hill - August 18, 2023 at 12:31 AM

GF

“ Condolences to The Thomas family.
Mr. Thomas was my principal at Birchwood High School for more than a decade. I will be eternally grateful to him for bringing me on board as a teacher. We were both from Alabama . I from Montgomery and he from Phoenix City.
I recall many delightful conversations with him.
I admired his strong but reserved leadership.
Thank you Mr. Ed Thomas and May you have a blissful and well deserved rest. 🙏🌹🙏

Gloria Burch Fluker - August 17, 2023 at 09:43 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Edward Thomas.*



August 16, 2023 at 11:00 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Edward Thomas.*



August 16, 2023 at 09:29 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Edward Thomas.*



August 16, 2023 at 09:08 PM

DA

“ *May the fond memories of him get his family through this difficult time. Mr. Thomas was my principal while working at the SC Department of Juvenile Justice. He heard about my discipline style while working for Lexington School District II and thought it would be a perfect fit for SCDJJ. I enjoyed working under his leadership and direction.*

*Dr. Michael Alston, Ed.D
Educator & Former Army Officer
National Board Certification (History)*

Dr. Michael Alston - August 16, 2023 at 11:48 AM