

Robert Floyd Thomas, age 77, died at his home in San Tan Valley, Arizona, on Wednesday, May 18, 2022. A Memorial Funeral Mass will be celebrated by Father Droska on Saturday, June 11 at 11 AM at Saint Mary's Church on 406 East Savadge St., Spring Lake, Michigan 49456. Visitation will be at the church one hour prior to mass. Robert's burial will be in Manistee at Mount Carmel Cemetery on Merkey Rd on June 24, at 1 PM. There was a Memorial Luncheon prepared by his daughter Jill Norton in Robert's honor in their Mobile Home Community Center in San Tan Valley, Arizona on Saturday, May 21st.

Robert (Bob) was born in Oakland, California on April 16, 1945 to Floyd George Thomas and Jane LaVerne (Thomas). After his dad's naval service during WWII their family moved to Manistee, Michigan when Robert was three years old. As a teen Robert worked for his dad at the Economy Food Market. He also enjoyed being a Boy Scout and was able to achieve Life Scout shortly before entering the Navy. Robert attended Guardian Angels School, Manistee High School (Class of '64), and West Shore Community College. Robert was a proud Navy Vietnam Veteran, who served from 1963–1967 on the USS Lake Champlain and the USS Intrepid. He'd often comment that he "drove an airport"!! He was a NAVIGATOR!! Robert was honorably discharged but also served several more years in the Naval Reserve and he really felt proud to be a lifetime member of the Manistee VFW Walsh Post 4499. Through the years, Robert really enjoyed keeping in touch with his shipmates. Also his ship, the Intrepid, is officially a Museum in New York Harbor and he talked about wanting to visit it!!

Robert met his sweetheart, Donna Bauman, through good friends while they were teenagers. They have a very special photo from Robert's MHS Junior Prom. They were married at Saint Joseph Catholic Church on September 30, 1967.

Robert and Donna were preparing to celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary this Fall. They have been extremely proud of their families and all of their accomplishments. Also Robert's favorite pet was his beautiful black lab Dutchess who loved to go fishing with her partner in crime!! Dutchess was fondly missed.

For several years Robert and Donna enjoyed camping trips with their family and later traveled in their motorhome to Arizona for the winter months. After their retirement they continued their winters in San Tan Valley, Arizona, while Michiganders enjoyed their snowy Winter Wonderland!! Manistee however, remained their favorite homeport on Lake Michigan.

Robert is best known for being the Owner and President of Thomas Interiors, Inc. on Water St. in Manistee for many years. He was a self-made business man, building Thomas Interiors from a few carpet samples, then linoleum, and continuously worked day and night to make the business profitable for his growing family. Robert always enjoyed telling his naval stories, which his two oldest grandchildren, Natalia and Eric, secretly recorded at their campsite a few years ago!! How special!!!

Robert is survived by his son Robb F Thomas, and his children Natalia and Sebastian (South Carolina); also by his daughter Jill, and Chad Norton and their children Eric and Megan (Spring Lake, Michigan); and by his son James R Thomas, and Melanie and their children Luke and Emilie (Virginia). Robert is survived by his sister Nance Church (Oregon) and her son Jonathan, and Stacy Church and sons (Ohio); also surviving is his sister Linda, and Roger Kriegbaum (Ohio).

Preceding Robert in death was infant son Brian and Robert's parents Floyd and Jane LaVerne Thomas.

In lieu of flowers, those wishing to honor Robert's military service can donate to the VFW veterans' programs in Robert's name through: heroes.vfw.org Also, for Masses or other remembrances please mail to Donna J. Thomas. Arrangements by, The Spring Lake Chapel of Sytsema Funeral and Cremation Services, 213 E. Savidge St., Spring Lake, MI 49456.