



# Walter James Thomas

MAR 24, 1928 - FEB 18, 2025



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# Walter James Thomas

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**W**alter James Thomas passed away on February 18, 2025, at his home in West Jordan, Utah. He was 96 years old and always said he was lucky, lucky, lucky.

Walter was born to Daniel and Mary Thomas on March 24, 1928, in their home at Medicine Lodge Creek, Small, Idaho, and named by the whole town two weeks later when the neighbors had had enough of “no-name Thomas” and the mayor passed around a hat for a vote. “Walter” and “James” were the names suggested the most times.

The Thomases ranched, and Walter loved nothing more than riding and breaking horses. He was tough as nails and could do anything.

When he was still young, Walter’s family bought a combination dance hall and hot springs resort, Lidy Hot Springs, and he became a great swimmer and dancer. His job at the dance hall was to notice the girls who didn't have a partner and ask them to dance. He was hot stuff in that little town, and after he stole the love of his life, Betsy Joy Willes, from a college man who’d nearly wooed her down in BYU, everyone she showed Walter’s picture to thought she was marrying a movie star.

Walter did a variety of jobs throughout his life, including traveling the United States laying telephone lines for AT&T, welding for the Atomic Energy Commission, farming, and quarrying stone in the mountains of southern Idaho.

Life took a drastic turn in 1982 when a train hit Walter while he was driving a dump truck. He suffered a brain injury and broken bones, including in his neck and hip, but he survived and continued to help wherever he could.

He also became a wonderful painter and artist and joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, holding a position as high priest secretary in his ward for many, many years.



## Obituary

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It has been said that just being in the same room as Walter made you a better person. He was a cheerful man who greatly loved his Heavenly Father, his family, and his friends and who was greatly loved in return.

Walter was preceded in death by his parents; his brothers Daniel, Gerald, Byron, and William; his wife, Betsy; his children Renee and Evan; and one great-grandson, Tanner.

He is survived by his brother John; his children Candy (Russell) Powell, Toni Martens, and Lon (Beverley) Thomas; daughter-in-law Nola (Bob) Philpot; 16 grandchildren; and many great- and great-great-grandchildren.

The family would like to express gratitude to the countless friends and neighbors who loved and helped Walter, especially the Gneitings and the Ormes. We also want to express our particular love and gratitude to Toni, who cared for Walter and Betsy as they aged. She has been the epitome of service, dedication, and love.

A funeral service and celebration of Walter's life will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 1, in the Latter-day Saint chapel at 7645 S. 3200 West in West Jordan. There will not be a viewing.

Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting

They may also join by going to [Zoom.com](https://zoom.com) and entering their name and Webinar ID.  
Webinar ID 977 7515 5590



# Tribute Wall

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**Willa & Rex Swim** shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Rex and I would like to send our deepest sympathies to the Thomas family. It is hard to say goodbye to one of the last of my Dad Bill's cousins. We always enjoyed the visits when he and his family came back to Clark County Idaho. Great family. Wishing you all the best Rex and Willa Swim. Photos are from get together in July of 2017.



February 27 at 2:34 PM



**Candy** posted:

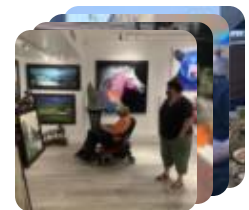
One memory I have is when Dad came to help me with a stone border I was laying around my yard. Dad was down on his knees and I brought a pile of rock and set at arms length he would lay a few and point to a spot that needed sand . I would shovel the sand in and we moved forward I would scramble to move the rocks in front of him. We did this over and over til I was worn out. I took him to lunch. We did this for two days. I was exhausted . He said to Toni when he got home." It sure is easy working for Candy, we work a few hours and I get a free lunch. Love you sweets.❤️

February 26 at 11:04 AM



**Crystal Powell** shared 7 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Too many memories to count. I am blessed to have had such a wonderful grandfather❤️. You will be in my heart and thoughts always. Kiss Grandma for me 😊



February 23 at 4:43 AM



**Premier Funeral Services** shared an album called **Memories Album**.



February 23 at 4:43 AM



**Willa & Rex Swim** shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

February 27 at 2:34 PM





Crystal Powell shared 7 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

February 23 at 6:04 AM







# Media

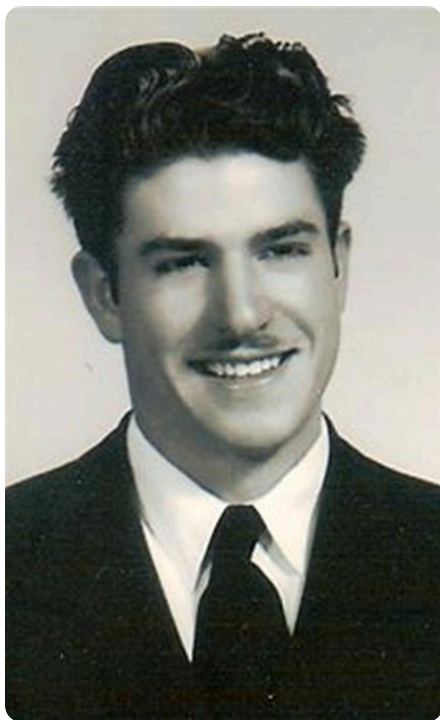
**Walter James Thomas**

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**Premier Funeral Services** shared a photo to the **Memories Album** album.

February 23 at 4:43 AM





## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Walter by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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