



## Bernard Hopkins Thomas

December 26, 1934 - March 4, 2019

Bernard Hopkins Thomas of Easton, MD, and Davie, FL, passed away March 4, 2019, in Davie, FL.

Summering in Easton, and wintering in Florida, in his later years, he was always the first to say, "It's much easier to put on flip flops than winter boots!"

Born on December 26, 1934, to Leander "Hoppy" Hopkins Thomas and Margaret Virginia (nee Jones) in Washington, DC, he grew up known as "Tommy" in the Poolesville/Dickerson, MD, area and was known as "Bernie" to most others, especially from his college days on.

Spending summers with his grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. L.H. Thomas, in Hobbs, MD, while growing up, he found a love for the Eastern Shore. Bernie became a recipient of a full four-year scholarship to Washington College in Chestertown, MD, where he graduated in 1956 as a Kappa Alpha with a bachelor's degree in Physics. Self-taught in piano, he earned extra money during his college years playing in local hangouts. It was during this time that he met and fell in love with his bride-to-be Nancy J. (nee Dukes) and their story together began.

Joining the United States Marine Corps in 1956, Bernie flew F4 Phantoms over Vietnam with multiple tours and received numerous Medals, Citations,

Commendations and Ribbons. He flew and trained other pilots in more than 16 different planes over the duration of his career. After returning stateside in 1970, he later retired from the USMC a Lt. Colonel in 1978. Semper Fidelis!

Upon returning to Easton, MD, after his military career, Bernie earned his Master of Science Degree from Pepperdine University in Human Resources. He worked for a brief time with his father at Transit Concrete, then spent the following 20 years employed by The Chesapeake Center in Easton as the Director of Chesapeake Bay Industries before retiring a second time.

Bernie was an active member for years in Easton Kiwanis, Easton Elks Lodge #1622, the VFW Post #5118, and the American Legion Post #70. He was also an avid golfer playing many rounds at Martingham, Hog Neck, and Easton Club over the years (to name a few). Bernie was known well for his quick wit, silly jokes and kind nature. He will be greatly missed by all of his family and friends.

Bernie is survived by his wife Nancy J. Thomas; four children, Holly Gilmartin of Lakeland, FL; Michael Thomas of Baltimore, MD; Blair Thomas (Katherine) of Sunrise, FL, and Heidi Ireland (Dan) of Easton, MD. He leaves behind four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. He is survived by his sister, Peggy Kaplan (Doug) of Urbana, MD, and by his faithful dog and companion, Willie Nelson.

A visitation for family and friends will be held from 11am-1pm, on Friday, May 31, 2019, at Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home, P.A., 200 S. Harrison St., in Easton. A Full Military Funeral Honors Service will follow at 2pm at the Eastern Shore Veterans Cemetery in Hurlock, MD.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 66675.



# Cemetery Details

## Maryland Eastern Shore Veterans Cemetery

Hurlock, MD

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY **31**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Easton Location  
200 S Harrison St  
Easton, MD 21601  
(410) 822-3131  
[info@fhfuneralhome.com](mailto:info@fhfuneralhome.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Bernard Hopkins Thomas*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Bernard Hopkins Thomas*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Bernard Hopkins Thomas*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *Dear Nancy,*

*It is with heavy heart that I learned of Bernie's passing. He was a good friend and mentor to me—he knew so much about everything and I often kicked around ideas with him when he ran Chesapeake Center.*

*As it was written about him in his obit, he truly was a master of the quick wit—he was a really funny guy –so easy to be around. He didn't ever brag about his heroics as a fighter pilot—I had to drag it out of him one day over a beer at Martingham. And—he was crazy about you—Nancy—it was so easy to see that in the way he looked at you and talked about you.*

*A great man—an exciting an honorable life—*

*Semper Fi—Bernie Thomas—thank you for your service!*

*Respectfully,*

*Jim Mourlas*

James Mourlas - May 23, 2019 at 12:06 PM

GM

“ *Gina and Duff McConnell*



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**Gina McConnell** - May 19, 2019 at 04:46 PM

BT

“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



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**Blair Thomas** - May 15, 2019 at 05:19 PM

HI



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**Heidi Ireland** - May 15, 2019 at 06:24 PM