



## Thomas John Puzniak

December 9, 1934 - July 4, 2022

Thomas John Puzniak passed away at his home in Sarasota, Florida on July 4, 2022. Tom was a devoted son and brother, beloved husband and father and an adored grandfather and uncle. He lived an extraordinary life based upon his commitment to family, friends and faith.

Tom was born on December 9, 1934 to John and Verna Puzniak (Paskorz) in Harwick, PA. His father passed away when Tom was 12 years old, and while a tragic event, it served to form his foundational values of responsibility and devotion to family. In high school, he played lead trumpet in the marching band and began a long career with Gulf Oil by first working as a gasoline attendant. Tom also met the love of his life Marie, his junior prom date, whom he married 4 years later.

After graduating Valedictorian from Springdale High School, Tom began working at Gulf Oil Corporation's Research & Development Center as a Laboratory Technician. He attended night school at Carnegie Tech (Carnegie Mellon University) earning a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. After a 37 Year career at Gulf Oil, he retired as The General Manager of Research Support Services. He received three Industrial Research (IR-100) Awards, ISA Fellow Recognition, held nine patents and published over 20 papers. His notable professional achievements earned him induction into the Springdale High School Hall of Fame in 2011. He thoroughly enjoyed his work

and thrived on the challenges and opportunities it provided. He never thought of it as a necessary obligation.

Tom and Marie have been married for over 66 happy years. Their caring partnership produced a loving family and had a profound impact on the communities in which they lived. They raised three children together and have enjoyed their six grandchildren and growing number of great grandchildren. The family has many fond memories of trips to the Outer Banks of North Carolina and family pool parties at Tom and Marie's home in Dorseyville, PA. Family and faith were most important to him. He was very active in St. Victor's Roman Catholic Church, his hometown parish, where he developed lifelong friendships and was known for his kindness and generosity.

Tom was an avid golfer having learned the game playing with his cousins and uncles as a boy. He began as a caddy and became skilled enough to have had 5 hole-in-ones. He played in several golf leagues and enjoyed the time bonding with coworkers, friends and family. He took up skiing later in life and fondly remembered trips with the Pittsburgh Ski Club, trips to Vermont with his grandchildren and a special trip to Utah with his son Tom.

Tom and Marie loved traveling and visited many places in the United States, Caribbean, Mexico and Europe. On their first trip to Sarasota in 2001, they fell in love with the area and made it their winter home. They moved there permanently in 2015. He cherished the many wonderful friends he made in Sarasota and considered them to be a second family. When he considered the strength of his family and friends, and considered the beauty of his surroundings, he often said "I am the luckiest man alive".

Tom is survived by his wife Marie (Kovalchick), his sister Judy Cobler (John) Harwick PA, his two daughters Nancy Lawrence (Bill) Wayne, PA, and Karen Douma (Oscar) Sarasota, FL, his six grandchildren, Megan Swanson (Mark),

Lauren Dorsey (Jay), James Lawrence (Shelly), Ryan Brady (Jillian), Rebecca McGinnis (Kyle) and John Douma (Jenna), and six great grandchildren, Ellie, Emilia, Cameron, Kenji, Isla and Juniper. He was preceded in death by his parents John and Verna Puzniak and his son Tom Puzniak Jr.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held for Tom on October 22, 2022. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to [mygooddays.org](https://mygooddays.org) or [secure.feedingamerica.com](https://secure.feedingamerica.com)

# Tribute Wall

DJ

“ A Great kind man with a Incredible smile 😊  
I got to know Tom at Gulf Research and from St. Victors church. I was so saddened to learn the news of Tom's passing. I will remember Tom and his family in my daily prayers 🙏.  
RIP Tom

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**Denny Jaros** - July 08, 2022 at 06:58 PM

BJ

“ Marie, Nancy and Karen, please accept our sincere condolences. Tom and I worked at Gulf Research, were neighbors and were members of Saint Victors Church. In all my 60 plus years of knowing Tom, I never heard him say a cross word about anyone. He was an example of a true Catholic gentleman, husband, father and friend to all. He will be missed. May his sole rest in the peace of Christ. Bob & Elizabeth Jaros

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**Bob Jaros** - July 08, 2022 at 03:58 PM

KJ

“ To Marie and the entire Puzniak family please accept my deepest condolences. Having Tom & Marie as part of my life in West Deer & Sarasota has been my privilege. A big part of my recreational life was golfing with Tom. I was so happy when the Puzniaks moved to Sarasota. Only a few short miles from me. Thanks for the memories. God bless. Love, KEN JAROS

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**Ken Jaros** - July 08, 2022 at 03:18 PM

VS

*Dave and I were blessed to have Tom and Marie as next-door neighbors. Our children grew up together. Tom's life was well lived and well loved. He was a kind, generous and honest man and never had an unkind word to say about anyone. Those of us who knew him respected and admired him and his loving family. They will forever remain close to my heart in thought and prayer. My deepest sympathy to Tom's loving wife, Marie and to Nancy and Karen and their families.*

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**Virginia Speer** - July 11, 2022 at 03:55 PM

JW

*Our thoughts and prayers go to the Puzniak family .. Sim and I have met Tom on a few occasions when visiting Sarasota. He made us feel so welcome and was so very friendly. Marie, our condolences go to you as well as to Karen and Nancy and their families.*

*Blessings to the Puzniak family during this difficult time.*

*Sim and Joanna Wierdsma  
Peterborough, ON*

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**Joanna Wierdsma** - July 11, 2022 at 04:57 PM