



James Lee Thompson

September 16, 1953 - January 21, 2026

James Lee Thompson, 72, passed away on January 21, 2026. He was born in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, to Hubert and Gertrude Thompson, who preceded him in death. He was also preceded by his brothers, Billy Thompson and Johnny Thompson (Linda), and his sister, Charlene.

James is survived by his devoted wife, Debra Lynn Thompson; his sons, James Lee Thompson Jr. (Shawna) and Benjamin Legan Thompson (Gina); and his beloved grandchildren, River, William, Cason, Caden, Brianna (Kevin), Brenden (Deelea), and Grayson (Adrianna), and his great grandchildren Theo and Ila. He is also survived by his brother, Larry Thompson (Karen) and his sister, Jackie Harris.

James served his country with honor in the United States Navy from September 27, 1972, to June 28, 1976. After his service, he dedicated 30 years to the Tennessee Valley Authority in operations, later retiring from Employee Concerns at the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant in 2005. He graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga with a degree in physics — an achievement that reflected both his intellect and his relentless work ethic.

A man of deep kindness and steady wisdom, James was the person everyone turned to for advice. He always knew what to say, and he gave of himself

freely, without hesitation. He was the kind of man who would do anything for anyone, and he lived his life with quiet generosity and unwavering loyalty.

He cherished time spent working on old cars with his grandson, William, and he especially loved watching his granddaughter, River's volleyball games. Some of his happiest moments were spent watching movies with River and William, sharing stories, laughter, and time together. He was always available to help them with their schoolwork, offering patience, guidance, and the kind of support only a grandfather like him could give.

In his younger years, James was an accomplished baseball pitcher, a talent he carried with pride and fond memories. Above all, he was the best husband, father, and grandfather anyone could ask for — devoted, steady, and endlessly supportive.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on Saturday January 31st from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Athens Masonic Lodge, located at 18071 Lucas Ferry Road, Athens, Alabama 35611.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, the family asks that donations be made to a charity of your choice, as James would have wanted your kindness to help others.

James leaves behind a legacy of integrity, service, and love. His presence will be deeply missed and forever remembered by all who knew him.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JAN 31. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Athen Masonic Lodge
18071 Lucas Ferry Road
Athens, AL 35611

Tribute Wall

PG

“ Patrick, Kristen, and Carter Godsey purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of James Lee Thompson.



Patrick, Kristen, and Carter Godsey - January 28 at 03:22 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Lee Thompson.



January 28 at 11:43 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Lee Thompson.



January 26 at 03:11 PM

PT

“ PSS Teammates planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James Lee Thompson.

PSS Teammates - January 26 at 03:11 PM

DR

“ Prayers of comfort for James’s family as they grieve his earthly death. James was a great man that I truly enjoyed working with at Browns Ferry.

Danny Rose - January 25 at 06:13 AM

LT

“ Larry and Karen Thompson purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of James Lee Thompson.



Larry and Karen Thompson - January 24 at 07:35 PM