



Thomas S. Onderko

August 26, 1960 - January 23, 2025

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Thomas S. Onderko, 64, on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at RWJ Medical Center in Somerville, NJ.

Born on August 26, 1960, in Somerville, NJ, Thomas was the cherished son of the late Thomas J. and Rosemary Onderko. He grew up in Manville, NJ, before settling in Hillsborough, NJ, in 1992, where he built a life defined by love, faith, and unwavering service to his community.

Thomas dedicated 44 years of his career as a respected Stationary Engineer at Johnson & Johnson, Raritan, NJ, where his work ethic and commitment to excellence earned admiration from colleagues and friends alike. A man of deep faith, Thomas was a devoted parishioner of Mary Mother of God Catholic Church in Hillsborough, NJ, where his faith was a cornerstone of his life.

In 1980, Thomas began his lifelong service to others by joining the Manville Fire Department Company #1. Over his remarkable 45 years with the department, he served with distinction in leadership roles, including Captain, Lieutenant, and President. At the time of his passing, he was Vice President of Fire Company #1 and 1st Vice President of the Manville Exempts Firemen's Association. As a Life Member Delegate of the NJ State Relief Firemen's Association, Thomas represented his department with honor and pride, embodying the values of dedication, courage, and community service. Above all, Thomas was a family man whose love and devotion were the heart

of his life. He was the beloved husband of Christine (Zelesnick) Onderko, with whom he shared 32 beautiful years of marriage. Together, they built a home filled with love and laughter, raising two wonderful children: Michael J. Onderko of Hillsborough, NJ, and Natalie A. Onderko of Philadelphia, PA. Thomas is also survived by his brother, James M. Onderko, and his wife, Jean, of Flemington, NJ, as well as his nephew, Joshua Duffy, of Somerset, NJ. He was preceded in death by his beloved sister, Janice Onderko, in 2018. In his spare time, Thomas enjoyed traveling and exploring his Hungarian heritage. Those who knew Thomas can attest that he had an extraordinary ability to bring people together. Whether offering a helping hand, sharing one of his many stories, or simply checking in to brighten someone's day, he made everyone around him feel valued and loved. His family was his greatest pride, and his legacy of love will live on in their hearts forever. May he rest in eternal peace, knowing he was deeply loved and will never be forgotten.

A wake will be held on Thursday, January 30, 2025 from 4 pm to 8 pm at Ketusky Funeral Home, 1310 Brooks Blvd., Manville, NJ 08835. Funeral services will begin at 8:30 am on Friday, January 31, 2025 at Ketusky Funeral Home, followed by a celebration of the funeral liturgy at 10 am at Mary Mother of God Church in Hillsborough, NJ. Interment will follow at St. Magdalen Cemetery, Flemington.

Cemetery Details

St. Magdalen Cemetery

94 North Main Street
Flemington, NJ 08822

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 30. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Ketusky Funeral Home
1310 Brooks Blvd - PO Box 747
Manville, NJ 08835
(908) 575-8512
info@ketusky.com
<https://www.ketusky.com>

Mass

JAN 31. 10:00 AM (ET)

Mary Mother of God Roman Catholic Church
157 South Triangle Road
Hillsborough, NJ 08844

Tribute Wall

YF

“ Your PGC Family purchased the Dreams From the Heart Bouquet for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.



Your PGC Family - January 30, 2025 at 12:22 PM

GO

“ Our sincerest condolences for you and your family. You are in our prayers.

Go2Power - January 30, 2025 at 12:15 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.



January 30, 2025 at 12:13 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Thomas S. Onderko.

January 30, 2025 at 12:13 PM

MH

“ *In an age where they say men have few friends, Tom had many. In fact, you would be hard pressed to find a better friend than Tom. Open yourself to him and you had a loyal lifelong friend who was always there for you, willing to lend a hand, an ear, or provide helpful advice.*

My brother and I have known Tom since childhood and have memories ranging from camping trips, high school cross-country, office cleaning at National Starch, years of service to Manville Fire Co. No. 1 and endless tales of adolescent hijinks. Tom worked hard to maintain friendships despite the things that often separate us in life. As a result, we remained close through the years, sharing breakfast with him just a couple of weeks ago.

To many, Tom was the keeper of our collective memories, our stories. He always enjoyed retelling a memory or story to mark an occasion. In doing so, he reminded us why it's important to reach out, to be involved in community, to care about others.

This is a devastating loss. We will never know why great people are taken so early. God must have bigger plans for Tom.

Mark Horberg - January 30, 2025 at 11:39 AM

J(

“ *J&J Raritan utility Plant (J.A) purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.*



J&J Raritan utility Plant (J.A) - January 30, 2025 at 10:49 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Thomas S. Onderko.

January 30, 2025 at 10:23 AM



“ CBRE-Raritan, NJ purchased the *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.



CBRE-Raritan, NJ - January 29, 2025 at 01:26 PM

ZB

“ When Thomas and Christina visited Hungary, I had the pleasure of catching up with them on a warm summer afternoon in Budapest. We spent the day on Margaret Island, a green oasis in the heart of the city, nestled in the middle of the Danube River, offering breathtaking views of both Buda and Pest. Under the shade of ancient trees, we strolled leisurely, enjoying the island’s peaceful charm.

We stopped at one of its open-air restaurants, where we cooled off with a refreshing Hungarian fröccs—a crisp mix of wine and sparkling water, perfect for the summer heat. As we sat and talked, they shared stories of their adventures at Lake Balaton and its renowned wine region. Later, drinks in hand, we wandered over to the grand musical fountain, watching in quiet delight as the water danced in harmony with the music.

Thomas often spoke about that day. The last time we met, he was eagerly looking forward to retirement, dreaming of returning to Budapest when he finally had more time. Heartbreakingly, that time never came.

I miss you, Thomas. And Budapest misses you too.

Zsolt Balla - January 29, 2025 at 11:27 AM

TF

“ The Horberg Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.



The Horberg Family - January 29, 2025 at 09:15 AM

JJ

“ *Jord, Sarah, Paige, and Jess purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.*



Jord, Sarah, Paige, and Jess - January 28, 2025 at 09:44 PM

LB

“ *Lynn and Bob Buchala purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.*



Lynn and Bob Buchala - January 28, 2025 at 07:21 PM

BH

“ *Bob Hess purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.*



Bob Hess - January 28, 2025 at 12:35 PM

DL

“ I have known Tom since 1965 when he and my brother Robert were in kindergarten together. He spent a lot of time at the Impellizeri house and became friends with the whole family. Tom was a true friend who was always there for us when we needed him the most. My favorite memory of him was when we would share pictures of our kids and swap stories about their latest adventures. It was easy to see that he felt blessed to be surrounded by family and friends. Although his life seemed cut short, I am thankful that it was a life well-lived. Sending my deepest sympathy. Donna Loveland

Donna Loveland - January 28, 2025 at 12:30 PM

RI

Tommy has been my best friend in my life since I was 5 years old. we went all through school together. And through our lives together. we both served together as firemen for years too. tommy was my best man at my wedding. Tommy has always been a good and caring man. he would always try to give me good advice through out my life. I always looked forward to getting together these last few years. Tommy has always been my best friend through out my whole life. i am sorry that we lost him. tommy god bless you in heaven until we meet again there.

Robert Impellizeri - January 28, 2025 at 11:16 PM

RI

I never expected this to happen to him. tommy I will miss you so much my good friend.

Robert Impellizeri - January 28, 2025 at 11:21 PM

RI

Christene my sister is donna Loveland. My sister Clara bikar and my brother Donald Impellizeri and my mom loved tommy.

Robert Impellizeri - January 28, 2025 at 11:59 PM

RI

He has always been a loving and caring guy.

Robert Impellizeri - January 29, 2025 at 12:00 AM

LO

“ Love, Russ and Judy Onderko purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.



Love, Russ and Judy Onderko - January 28, 2025 at 12:14 PM

LO

“ Love, Russ and Judy Onderko planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Thomas S. Onderko.

Love, Russ and Judy Onderko - January 28, 2025 at 12:14 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.



January 28, 2025 at 11:39 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Thomas S. Onderko.

January 28, 2025 at 11:39 AM

MA

“ *My heartfelt condolences to families.
My cousin, I will miss your calls and our talks about our family history. I learned so much from you. You are a caring and loving soul, who I will cherish many memories.
Love you and May you Rest in Peace.
Cousin Margee*

Margaret Archer - January 27, 2025 at 05:50 PM

RO

“ *Rest in peace, dear cousin. You will be missed.*

Russ Onderko - January 27, 2025 at 05:37 PM



“ *Tender Tribute was purchased for the family of
Thomas S. Onderko.*



January 27, 2025 at 02:41 PM

MB

“ *Our deepest condolences to all of you. We love you. There's so many memories made with our family. Love, Missy.....*

Missy B - January 27, 2025 at 01:16 PM

TF

“ *The Stainer Family purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Thomas S. Onderko.*



The Stainer Family - January 27, 2025 at 09:52 AM

TF

“ *The Stainer Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Thomas S. Onderko.*

The Stainer Family - January 27, 2025 at 09:52 AM