



Jason Christopher Thomas

June 10, 1971 - August 5, 2019

I swear I first fell in love with Jason Thomas the moment he walked into our sixth grade classroom. He was the slightly chubby farm boy with an out-of-date haircut and razor-sharp wit, gregarious laugh, remarkable academic and athletic prowess, and a Pied Piper ability to make people want to join him in anything. And he was kind. So kind. That he liked me back still makes something inside my stomach flutter. Our life together, which we built very intentionally, was an ongoing series of falling in love over and over again. It happened every time we hiked together (many, many miles), belted out words to our favorite songs (especially on long car rides), cooked meals together, brought three gorgeous babies into the world together, traveled together, and cared for each other and our children day after day.

Truth is, I never knew where I left off and Jason began and vice versa. People say we were made for each other and I believe it. I recently mentioned that I feel sorry for everyone who is not married to Jason Thomas. I know with 100% certainty that he loved our life, adored Hank, Sam, Eleanor, and me like nothing else and like no one else ever could. I know he desperately did not want to leave us and that was clear by his expression as he was placed in the ambulance yesterday morning unable to speak then from the pain.

Early yesterday morning, as we would begin the wind-down from our camping trip with the Gensler and Mitchell-Chablani families, Jason collapsed from

what we now know was a bilateral pulmonary embolism. He lost responsiveness in transport to the hospital and, despite the efforts of many, never regained his breath.

We – our children and I – are shattered.

We had so many more memories we wanted to make together. And that was, in fact, the impetus for our first big trip of the summer – our epic trip out west. Inspired by the notion (and perhaps a bit of a panicked one) that one of our babies would soon be leaving our nest, on a beautiful snowy day in January we started a fire, popped open a bottle of wine and our laptops and began planning our summer trip. Our itinerary was ambitious and the trip a success in nearly every way (the late-night detour around Yosemite due to snowy roads was a little dicey!). I will forever be grateful that we made the trip and every other trip before that one. We started that drive in a rented RV with a stack of CDs we'd acquired in our three decades of dating (not counting the years before we graduated from high school). And I told the kiddos, "look, we know you tease us for some of our music taste – especially our love of "old" folk music - songs that tell stories and bring attention to righting social injustices. But these are the songs we fell in love to on our long drives back and forth from OU to Cincinnati and from Cincinnati to Toledo and then Pittsburgh to Toledo. We learned to harmonize by listening to these songs and we built our dreams for our life together in the meantime. And this vacation is among our dreams for our family so you'll just have to listen to these songs (and hopefully sing along) with that spirit in mind." I looked over to see Jason wiping streaming tears from his face. Then he grabbed my hand and started singing whatever track happened to be playing at that moment. He loved our life and so did I.

Our children will need support getting through this. Jason was an exemplary dad, engaged with every single facet of our children's upbringing. We were

both so intent on that and know that we each and our children benefited from it. The void that Jason's death will leave in their lives is unfathomable.

Jason was an incredible partner. He supported and championed me without exception in every aspect of our lives. His love was unconditional. And, for all of the practicalities we'd figured as we balanced a full life of family and careers and volunteer activities, etc. we were also madly, madly in love. We were preparing for our 25th wedding anniversary on October 7, 2019 with excited anticipation.

And about Jason's teaching. He was one-of-a-kind, inspiring students to love science, to believe in themselves, to have fun learning, and to never stop growing. Jason loved teaching and, over the past three years, he filled the hallways at Maumee Valley with his gargantuan laugh. I suspect the absence of that will be deafening, most notably for Hank and Sam.

Thank you to all those who have reached out to our family and to those who have posted their condolences. Please know that it means a lot to us and we cherish every word. I offer a humble and perhaps beggy request: would you please share with my children and me every memory, funny story, and/or fond recollection you can think of about Jason? Send it to me by email or snail mail or simply post it. I want to devour those stories and share them with our children to foster strong, lasting memories of their beloved dad.

I'm struggling to imagine a forever without Jason. He was quite simply the love of my life and a dad like no other.

Jason C. Thomas, born on June 10, 1971 in Toledo, Ohio, died unexpectedly on August 5, 2019. He taught chemistry in Maumee Valley Country Day School's upper school for the past three years. Prior to that he taught high

school science at both Toledo School for the Arts and his alma mater, St. Francis de Sales School. He also taught middle school at West Side Montessori. After attending Ohio University for a year, he earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from the Universities of Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Toledo. Jason is survived by his partner in everything and wife of nearly 25 years, Sally Gladwell, and their three children, Henry (Hank) Gladwell Thomas, Samuel (Sam) Gladwell Thomas, and Eleanor Gladwell Thomas, as well as his parents-in-law, Donna and Tony Gladwell; his dad and step-mother, Philip and Judy Thomas; brothers-in-law, Andy (Cindy Seffernick) Gladwell, and Tom Gladwell; and siblings, Dave Thomas, Jenny Thomas, Amy Sauer, Jill Thomas, and Laura Platz; nieces, nephews, and countless students and former students who credit him for teaching them a love of science.

A celebration of Jason's life will be held at 3:00 on Saturday, August 17 at Maumee Valley Country Day School, 1715 S. Reynolds Road, Toledo, Ohio. Parking will be available across Glendale Avenue with shuttles to the school. Following the ceremony, there will be food, fellowship, and opportunities to preserve your stories and recollections of Jason's life. We hope that all who loved Jason will join us.

In lieu of flowers please consider contributions to The Gladwell-Thomas Family Education Fund, care of Signature Bank. Coyle Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements. Please view and leave a condolence message at CoyleFuneralHome.com

Previous Events

Memorial

AUG 17. 3:00 PM (CT)

Maumee Valley Country Day School

Tribute Wall

BB

“ Sally:

Please receive my sincere sympathies at this sad time. Having worked with you for a few short years, it was easy to get a sense of the special bond that you two shared. And as Rose pointed out, we were indeed blessed that Jason was Adam's chemistry teacher at the time when he needed the help to deal with his injury. Know that our prayers for you and your children will be lifted up at this difficult time and that little by little you will feel God's healing grace.

Bill, Rose, Adam, and Jordan Biehl

Bill Biehl - August 22, 2019 at 09:48 AM

RB

“ *My family and I were saddened to hear the news of "Mr. Thomas" death. When my son was a senior at St. Francis DeSales he was involved in a very serious accident and suffered severe head trauma. Jason was instrumental in getting him the appropriate help he needed to finish high school and ultimately go on to earn his bachelors and masters degrees. Without Jason's guidance he may not have reached the level of success that he has. Jason brought the entire team at St. Francis and ourselves together to make sure he got the assistance and medical care he required. Our family was blessed by Jason's actions. We are forever grateful of the direction he provided and know that he helped so many others reach their potential too. We were all blessed by his time here on earth, may you carry his beautiful memories forever in your hearts.*

Rose Biehl - August 22, 2019 at 08:24 AM

JC

“ Dear Sally and Family...

We are so very saddened by the passing of Jason, your husband, father, and our dear friend. Ever since we met you guys in Pittsburgh (before kids) and we did our Eco-vacation to Belize together in which we got to know you and enjoy your company... then sharing many other happy occasions at your house when you lived in the Burgh, we have always treasured your friendship and love. You were very special to us.

We can still remember when you took our young son Connor with you on a hike on the Laurel Mountain Trail to get a feel for what it would be like to have a child with you while you were doing the hiking you loved. On the hike, Connor was in a backpack on Jason's back... and he LOVED every minute of it! Maybe he felt the incredible love that Jason exudes to everyone around him! What a wonderful memory we had of Jason and you after that occasion. Then, when we visited you in Toledo and went to a Toledo Mud Hens game, we bought a Mud Hens T-shirt for Connor and guess what, he STILL has it! Since he is now 21, it doesn't fit him anymore but he wouldn't let us give it away! We also have Mud Hens cups from that game and Connor still ALWAYS uses them! I am washing them in the dishwasher all the time and I think of you guys every time I put them away! So you guys are still living on in our lives...

Sally, please know that we are praying for you, Hank, Sam, and Eleanor... we know that God is there with you and will give you strength to move forward but... remember... Jason is also with you... just close your eyes at night and he will be right there...always!

Love...

*Jan, Ed, Connor, and Casey Krugh
Pittsburgh PA*

JANICE CONLEY - August 19, 2019 at 10:57 PM

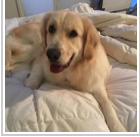
PV

“ Dear Hank and family,

We are so sorry for your loss! Your Dad was my favorite teacher at Maumee Valley and I was so looking forward to Kurt having him for a teacher this year. Please know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers ~ sending lots of hugs and love your way!

Patty, Tony, Taylor and Kurt Viers

Patty Viers - August 17, 2019 at 03:31 PM



“ I first remember Jason when our youngest child, Ben, became friends with Henry in pre-school at WSM. I'd see Jason in the classroom as Henry's father, not as the teacher. The big smile, that contagious laugh, his deep involvement in his son's experience each day. I remember Henry had a Birthday party that somehow had us eating cake at the mall. It was not mall cake or food, though. Oh, no. It was a Lemon-Strawberry-Something-Something Layer cake. It was one of the best tasting cakes I have ever encountered! It was a chemistry experiment expertly executed! I cannot remember if it was Jason or Sally that baked it, (clearly a close team), but it was made to lovingly comply with Henry's wishes, and Jason was engaged and proud of the outcome. This cake experience made such an impact on young Ben, that months later when his birthday rolled around he wanted that Lemon-Strawberry-Something-Something Layer cake too, only for his family Birthday cake. I did my best and it took most of a day to make a facsimile of Henry's cake. As far as cakes go, Ben's was pretty fantastic too, but without Jason Thomas's infectious enthusiasm, and that laugh, our cake experience was a little lackluster. Seemed he was the secret ingredient. Time passed and Ben changed schools. Our eldest child, Samantha, began attending TSA. We happily became reacquainted with Mr. Thomas. There was that same laugh, smile and infectious enthusiasm. Seeing Jason Thomas participate in Improv and Dancing with the Staff was a joy and also extremely funny. The Kerger kids got to experience Jason as a teacher too. It's hard to imagine him being gone even at a distance. Our prayers and deepest sympathies are with Sally and the kids. May God hold you tightly. May time pass swiftly to allow you to arrive at a place where you can, again, laugh and smile with ease, and without pain. I am thankful to have known Jason Thomas, he enriched my life and the lives of all who had the good fortune to cross his path.

Jessica Kerger - August 17, 2019 at 02:34 PM

DP

“ Dear Sally and Family -

All of the Perisutti's send their thoughts and prayers to you. We are thinking of you.

Doug and Lisa Perisutti - August 17, 2019 at 06:52 AM

KI

“ *I met Jason when your kids were yoga students at WSM many years ago. What I remember most was his warm smile and gentle laughter. He truly lit up the room when he came at the end of class and all of the kids were mesmerized by his genuine delight in seeing not only his children, but all of them as well. I remember Hank, Sam, and Eleanor as magical little people who inherited not only Jason's smile, but his kindness and wit.*

Wishing your family comfort and peace in the midst of sorrow.

Kate Ingersoll - August 16, 2019 at 04:08 PM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Jason Christopher Thomas.*



August 16, 2019 at 01:54 PM

PS

“ Dear Sally,

The Scheuer Family is saddened by the sudden loss of Jason. Of course we did not know him as well as we knew you but after reading the beautiful tribute, the story of your love, we know him much better. We are all praying that God in his mercy will turn those cherished memories into laughter to relieve your sorrows over the coming months and fill your heart with only the joy you shared. We will always be around to help you in any way that we could, just give a call! All our best to your family as well..... Pete, Pat, Peter and Shannan

Pat Scheuer - August 13, 2019 at 08:18 PM

AW

“ To Sally and Thomas kiddos,
I'm so sorry for your loss. I was acquainted with Jason sometime in High School (he was the friend of a friend) and he was a genuinely nice guy. Much peace to you all.
Anne (Johnson) Wanner

Anne Wanner - August 13, 2019 at 02:10 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Jason Christopher Thomas.



August 12, 2019 at 12:52 PM

LS

“ Sally, Hank, Sam and Eleanor,

I can't begin to tell you how sorry I am that you have lost your wonderful Husband and Dad. Several years have passed since I first saw all of you at the TFA soccer games.



Such a nice family. I remember one time when Hank held the door open for me. He was only about 9 yrs old. Sam and Eleanor who brought things to keep them occupied while big brother was playing soccer. And Mom and Dad were always there. When Sam and Eleanor got older and in to their own activities, a lot of times Mom or Dad couldn't be at Hank's game because they were off w/one of the other kids.

I will always remember how kind and respectful Jason was. He went way, way too soon, but I know God has his reasons. Sally, your tribute to him was beautiful! I pray that all of you will muddle through these coming days and beyond and may each day get a little brighter.

Sending you love, courage, strength and prayers,

*LuAnn Sarnes
(Jacob's Grandma)*

LuAnn Sarnes - August 12, 2019 at 11:12 AM

CZ

“ To the Thomas Family,
Unfortunately, I don't know any of you, but the obituary brought me to tears. It sounds like you had a wonderful life. Share those memories. I said a little prayer for all of you as you must be going through unfathomable grief. Just know that he lived life to the fullest and from reading these tributes, he definitely left a great footprint on this side.
Connie

Connie Zolg - August 12, 2019 at 09:03 AM

BP

“ I was lucky enough to have Mr. Thomas as my chemistry teacher at St. Francis. He instilled in me a love and respect for science that I take with me every day in my career as a Professional Geologist in Pittsburgh, PA. Whenever I utilize acids for chemical preservation, I am washed in fond memories of acid-base reactions in his chemistry lab and discussions of stoichiometry, moles and Avigadro. His teaching was a major influence in my eventual decision to become a scientist. I will forever miss his laugh and warmth of spirit, but I feel that a small part of him lives on within all of the students that were fortunate enough to have him as a teacher. My deepest condolences on the loss of a truly wonderful human being.

Sincerely,
Brendan M. Poffenbaugh, P.G.

Brandan Poffenbaugh - August 11, 2019 at 01:48 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Jason Christopher Thomas.*



August 11, 2019 at 12:17 PM



“ *To the Thomas family,*

I had the great fortune to have shared a BGSU student teacher with his TSA students and him. The unique setting fit his qualities well, allowing him to be himself while still being able to instill into his kids, the beauty of science and its processes. His personable approach seemed to invite his students to learn, what was to be learned.

*Our lives were made better because of his presence; no better measure of a man's being than that! May these days of mourning be short and may the fond memories of his life, be long. God bless!--
Rick Briggie, adjunct BGSU*

Rick Briggie - August 11, 2019 at 10:57 AM

CV

“ Dear Hank, Sam, and Eleanor,
I loved your Dad's laugh--it drew people in, when he laughed, he wanted everyone to be part of the moment. Mike knew your folks in Pittsburgh, and when we met, your parents scooped me in--- because a friend of a friend is their friend, too. I don't remember anyone who did not like Jay, and he was a rare and precious person who made people feel good when they were with him. I know that you lived this daily, but allow me to remind you that you three kids are his greatest creation. Jay loved you boundlessly. Each of you looks like him, separately and startlingly; you are his legacy. He was not a proud man, but he is so proud of you. Your loss is unimaginable, but your sadness is shared by all who miss your dad. Rely on your memories to sustain you. Take good care.

cheri velto - August 11, 2019 at 08:53 AM

AS

“ I pray for you, Henry, Sam, and Eleanor daily. I pray for your strength and comfort. I pray that each day will be a reflection of his life and how he was such an inspiration to many. Although I only knew you for a short time I was truly blessed with your family and the stories you shared. What a true testament to our wonderful creator. God bless and I will continue to pray for healing. Continued prayers Angie

Angie Smith - August 10, 2019 at 12:14 PM

JB

“ Sally my deepest sympathy to you and your family, I found your husbands obit to be very deeply uplifting and inspirational how you two shared your life and family. Thoughts and prayers for all of you as you move forward. Joe Boes, friend of your parents.

Joseph Boes - August 10, 2019 at 10:59 AM

MR

“ WOW!! What a BEAUTIFUL LOVE STORY written of a loving husband and dad.
You all have treasured memories of Jason keep them close to your heart. When you look up to the night stars you will find the brightest one, blow that star kisses for that will be Jason/your dad blowing kisses back to you. He is a Guardian Angel to All.

Thinking of you,

Maggie Reed

Maggie Reed - August 10, 2019 at 08:26 AM

AY

“ Sally,
My deepest Sympathies to you and your family. I never met Jason but I know he had to be a wonderful and amazing man to be married to you. Know that I am praying for you and your family to have the strength needed to proceed forward without this incredible husband at your side. You are such a wonderful person and I hope you know that you are surrounded by the love and kindness of everyone who knows you.

Amy Yersavich

Amy Yersavich - August 09, 2019 at 08:34 PM

GL

“ George Lewis sent a virtual gift in memory of
Jason Christopher Thomas



George Lewis - August 09, 2019 at 04:48 PM

GL

He was always an inspiration as a gentleman, inside and out. May your wonderful memories comfort you in the next few months.

George Lewis - August 09, 2019 at 04:50 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Jason Christopher Thomas.*



August 09, 2019 at 04:10 PM