

Area Obituaries



Thomas "Bob" Connor
Forest City

Thomas Robert "Bob" Connor, 81, of Forest City, died Saturday morning, March 14, 2020 at home. His wife is the former Kathryn Kost, Forest City.

Born August 7, 1938, in Dunmore, he was the son of the late Antoinette Kutch and Gerald Arnold. Bob was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. Prior to retirement he worked for Kost Tire and later Jerry's Sportscenter. He loved the outdoors and sports, and his greatest enjoyment was spending time with his family and grandchildren.

Also surviving are two sons, Gerald A. Connor, Esq. and wife Michele, South Abington Twp.; and Robert Connor, Ph.D., and wife Kim, of Indiana; three grandchildren Sarah, Gerald R. and Mara; two sisters-in-law Helene Petrus and husband Francis, Langhorne, and Mary Aubel, FL; nieces and nephews.

Cremation is through the Kevin M. Lesjack Funeral Home, 513 Main Street, Forest City. Services are private.

Condolences: www.lesjackfuneralhome.com.

Andrew Crowley
Private Funeral Services

Andrew P. Crowley, 75, of Bethlehem, and formerly of Endwell, NY, and Forest City, passed away peacefully at Moravian Village Memory Care Unit in Bethlehem, on Friday, March 13, 2020. He was the widower of Anne Coar Crowley, who predeceased him in March 2018.

Due to current public health policy, private funeral services will be held with interment in Saint Agnes Cemetery, Forest City. Arrangements by the Jones & Brennan Funeral Home, 430 Main St., Forest City.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Kidney Fund, 11921 Rockville Pike, Suite 300, Rockville, MD 20852 or to the Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, IL 60601.

To send online condolences, visit brennanfuneralhomes.com

Donkey Basketball at Mt. View Postponed

The Mountain View Student Government Association will host Donkey Basketball at the Mountain View High School Gym on Sat., October 7 at 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$8 pre-sale and \$10 day of the event. Children 4 and under are free.

All proceeds benefit the PA Student Council State Conference which Mountain View is hosting in the fall.

For more information email rihlefeldt@mvsd.net or aaten@mvsd.net



Rebecca Taylor Gordon
Kingsley

Rebecca Taylor Gordon, 55, of Kingsley, died tragically on Monday, March 16, 2020.

Born February 25, 1965 in Montrose, she is the daughter of Brian and Mary Jane Wilmarth Taylor of Kingsley.

Rebecca was a 1983 graduate of Mountain View High School, Kingsley, and had been employed as an over the road truck driver.

She is survived by one son: Vincent Gordon of Kingston; one daughter: Kendra Kohnke and husband, Adam of Milton, WI; three grandchildren: Kallyn Paige Gordon and Vincent Gordon, Jr., both of Kingsley and Xander Kohnke of Milton, WI.

As per Rebecca's request she was cremated and no services will be held.

Arrangements were entrusted to the Shifler-Parise Funeral Home and Cremation Services, Clifford.

To share condolences and photos with Rebecca's family visit her book of everlasting memories at www.parisefuneralhome.com.



Lucille Miller
Forest City

Lucille Miller, 82, of Forest City, died Monday, March 16, 2020 at the Forest City Nursing Center. She was the wife of Elmer Miller; the couple had been married for 68 years.

Born in Carbondale, daughter of the late John and Catherine Kalasinski Mozeleski, she was a member of Christ Episcopal Church, Forest City. She was a graduate of Forest City High School. Prior to her retirement, she was employed as a stitcher at the Endicott-Johnson Shoe Factory, Forest City. She loved shopping from her computer.

Also surviving are a daughter: Cathy Chadwick and husband James, Scott Twp.; two sons: Richard Miller and Edward Miller, both of Union Dale; 7 grandchildren; 8 great grandchildren; a sister: Veronica Price, Honesdale; two brothers: Paul Kalasinski and John Kalasinski, both of Forest City; and several nieces and nephews.

She was also preceded in death by a grandson: James Miller; and two brothers: Richard and Stanley Kalasinski.

Due to current public health policy, private funeral services will be held with interment in Lyons Street Cemetery, Union Dale. Arrangements by the Jones & Brennan Funeral Home, 430 Main St., Forest City.

To send online condolences, visit the funeral home website.



Stephanie Marie Vasquez
Port Jefferson Station, NY

Stephanie Marie Vasquez, 41, of Port Jefferson Station, NY, went to be with her Lord and Savior Monday, March 16th at Stony Brook University Hospital, Stony Brook, NY, after her battle with terminal illness.

Born in Scranton, she was the daughter of Joseph and Audrey Paye-Vasquez of Uniondale, PA. She was a graduate of West Islip High School, West Islip, NY, and was nominated for Miss West Islip. There she excelled in all sports, especially Lacrosse, which she received a full athletic scholarship to SUNY Cortland. She also graduated from Katharine Gibbs with honors in clerical administration. She was employed in sales and was a dedicated volunteer at Options Thrift Shop, a non-profit to benefit those less fortunate in her community.

Also surviving are a brother: Robert Vasquez, wife Leoni and their two sons Zac and Landon, Babylon Village, NY; brother: David Vasquez and fiancée, Dana Garifo, Smithtown, NY; sister: Beverly-jane Aniano and husband Tommy, Lindenhurst, NY; a paternal grandmother: Rosina Vasquez, Fair Oaks, CA, and numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins in PA, CA, and IN.

She was preceded in death by her maternal Grandparents: Andrew and Beverly Paye, formerly of Uniondale, and her paternal Grandfather, Robert Vasquez.

Stephanie's passion for sports carried all throughout her whole life, as she followed all pro-sports and would astound you with statistics and with her knowledge of players and their teams. She enthusiastically followed her nephews' progress in all sports and encouraged them with her presence at their games.

Stephanie's life bible verses: John 3:16 and Philippians 4:12, inspired and carried her throughout the most difficult times in her life, but her hope was in God's promise found in Romans 8:38-39, "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life...shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus."

Due to current public health policy, private funeral services will be held with interment in Ararat Cemetery, Ararat Twp. Arrangements by the Jones & Brennan Funeral Home, 430 Main St., Forest City.

To send online condolences, visit brennanfuneralhomes.com

Coronavirus Assistance Fund Established

A new charitable endowment has been established at The Community Foundation of the Endless Mountains to help ease difficulties local families are experiencing due to the Coronavirus epidemic.

A group of concerned citizens have established the Susquehanna County Coronavirus Assistance Fund that will be able to provide financial assistance to local agencies and non-profits that provide such services as food and fuel assistance, transportation expenses for medical appointments, and assistance with rent and utility expenses.

An influx of requests for such assistance is anticipated by local assistance agencies in the coming weeks, and this charitable endowment is intended to help provide financial support to budgets that are stretched thin or have already identified their expected assistance projects for the year.

Additional donations to the Susquehanna County Coronavirus Assistance Fund are certainly welcome and can be made online at www.community-foundation.org or sent to The Community Foundation at 270 Lake Avenue in Montrose, PA 18801.

The hope is to ease the economic shock to vulnerable local families and all assistance is welcomed very much.



John Martin Murphy
Union Dale

"I have a plan, but it has to wait until after St. Patrick's Day." True to his word, John Martin Murphy, 79, of Union Dale, passed away on the morning of March 18, one day after St. Patrick's Day, surrounded by love.

Born April 18, 1940, in Scranton, he was the son of the late Martin and Nan (Burke) Murphy. John graduated from South Scranton Central Catholic High School in 1957 and enlisted in the United States Marine Corp directly out of high school. He was stationed in Africa and traveled the world as a middleweight boxer representing the marines before returning home as rank sergeant to Pearl in 1961.

Over the next three decades, John and Pearl grew their family to double-digits, moved from Scranton to Clifford before settling in Uniondale, and built their business, Murphy Well Drilling. After family, water well drilling was their life's work. Murphy Drilling continues to operate 50 years later under the leadership of son Joe; the business survives because it was, and remains, a labor of love—built on solid principles of hard work, fairness, and integrity.

John and Pearl were an institution in Uniondale and surrounding areas. Not only for their large, colorful array of offspring (oh, you're another Murphy!) but also because of their open hearts and good will for anyone who needed a hand, hot meal, or cold drink. John loved people and there was nothing that pleased him more than visitors. His ability to make people feel comfortable and welcomed was uncanny; he never turned a person away or was too busy for a song. John's engagement with the world gave him genuine presence and deepness. But as much as he loved the world, he loved his wife Pearl most of all. For his stories, she provided facts. For his socializing, she said it's time for bed. He was Dad, and she was Mom—all to the great benefit of their children and beyond. There could never be a doubt in any of their children's minds that they had two parents who loved them uniquely, fiercely, unconditionally, and boundlessly. John and Pearl's love for each other was their greatest gift to each other, their family, and the world; endless people benefit from it today, and will continue in the years to come.

Surviving are nine children, John Murphy, Jr., Union Dale; Kathy Demianovich and husband Stephen, Forest City; Margaret Murphy, Browndale; Donna Marie Foster and husband John, Morgantown WV; Carol Ann Murphy, Wayne, NJ; Michael Murphy, Union Dale; Joseph Murphy and wife Donna, Thompson; Patrick Murphy and wife Marily, Union Dale; and Coleen Alexander and husband Matthew, Catskill, NY; four sisters Ann Shields, Scranton; Mary Coolbaugh, Pittston; Patricia Burke, Scranton; Margaret (Peggy) Kasson, Front Royal, VA; one brother, James, Scranton, and over a hundred nieces, nephews, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

John was preceded in death by his wife Pearl; an infant son James; brother Martin; and grand-children Justin and Sara.

With respect to current issues, viewing and funeral services are private. Arrangements are through the Kevin M. Lesjack Funeral Home, 513 Main Street, Forest City, www.lesjackfuneralhome.com.

He became the most prominent martial arts figure in the region and directed an association that had many karate master instructors and karate schools.

He was the first man to break three 2 inch non spaced concrete patio blocks which was a sanctioned World Record. In addition, he was inducted into numerous martial arts Halls of Fame.

Phil was known for his quick wit, energetic charisma, and his friendly charming personality and will be missed by all that knew him.

He loved his children, grandchildren, his wife Linda and sister Eileen. He had a very deep faith in God.



Paul J. Verkitus
Archbald

Paul J. Verkitus, 33, of Archbald, passed away Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, after a short illness.

He was the son of Suzanne Golden Verkitus and Peter Verkitus, Archbald. Paul worked hard as an employee of Leeward Construction. His co-workers would often tease him about his extra-large hands and feet, but they were no comparison to his big loving heart. Paul loved riding his quad in the country and his many hours target shooting. He cherished his visits to the Jessup Sidebar, where he made many wonderful friends.

Paul's passing will leave a huge void on his family and many friends who truly loved him. Please speak his name often, tell the many stories and great memories and they will keep him forever in our hearts.

Paul is also survived by his brother, Chris and wife, Jacqui, and nephew, Wyatt, Mayfield; aunt, Carolyn Richards; and cousins, Justyn Richards, who was like a brother, both of Dickson City; John Richards, Throop; his longtime companion, Laura Bailey and daughter, Kirra, Scott Twp.; aunt, Fran, and cousins, Melissa Golden and Kian Golden, Malverne; and cousin, Jeff Verkitus.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, John and Dorothy Golden, Peter and Veronica Verkitus, aunt Carol Verkitus; uncles, Dr. Gary Golden, Gary Golden, John Richards; and cousin, Karrce Golden.

There will be no viewing. A celebration of Paul's life will be held at a later date. Arrangements by the Joseph W. Scotchlas Funeral Home Inc., Simpson.

For condolences, visit www.scotchlasfuneralhome.com.

Philip "Remo" Avery
Formerly of Thompson

Philip "Remo" Avery, formerly of Thompson, passed away on March 6, 2020 after a lengthy illness at Erlinger Hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Phil had been residing in Blue Ridge, Georgia for many years. He is survived by his wife Linda Danksy and his sister Eileen Avery Kerr, both of Blue Ridge, Georgia; his three children Jennifer Saul, Chad Avery and Kayla Oakes and her husband Dr. Jerome Oakes; and three grandchildren Avery Gail Saul, Owen Oakes and Daphne Oakes, all of Port Angeles, Washington.

Phil was born on July 21, 1946 in Scranton. He resided most of his life in Thompson, Pa. He graduated from Susquehanna High school where he starred in baseball and basketball.

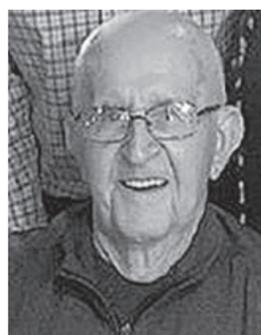
He was a Vietnam Era Air Force veteran and held a bachelor of science degree in computer science from the University of Scranton. Phil was employed as a system analyst all of his working career.

He reached the highest Martial arts rank of 10th Degree Black Belt Grandmaster and operated karate schools in several locations including Thompson, New Milford and Lawton. He became the most prominent martial arts figure in the region and directed an association that had many karate master instructors and karate schools.

He was the first man to break three 2 inch non spaced concrete patio blocks which was a sanctioned World Record. In addition, he was inducted into numerous martial arts Halls of Fame.

Phil was known for his quick wit, energetic charisma, and his friendly charming personality and will be missed by all that knew him.

He loved his children, grandchildren, his wife Linda and sister Eileen. He had a very deep faith in God.



Leo Frank Skorupa
Formerly of Simpson

Leo Frank Skorupa, formerly of Simpson, Pa., died Tuesday afternoon, March 17, 2020 after a brief illness.

Born in Simpson, Nov. 2, 1927, Leo was the son of the late John and Katarzyna Pokora Skorupa; he was one of nine children. He was the husband of Jean Caviston Smugeresky Skorupa and the late Mary Magdalene "Maggie" Franks Skorupa, who passed in 1997.

Leo graduated from Fell Twp. School District in 1945. Upon graduation, he joined the United States Army and later attended G.I. School. Through his life, he was an employee of Banner Shoes in Honesdale, his brother's establishment, Chet's Bar in Jermyrn, and Telephone Engineering, where they made more practical jokes than telephone repairs.

Family was the major thing that made Leo happy. He was proud of his four boys and their families. Leo enjoyed picking blueberries and mushrooms, taking walks and attempting to conquer the Sunday crossword puzzle. The Oakland A's were the only professional sports team that he was passionate about, along with being a Penn State football fan.

Throughout Leo's life he was involved in his community. Being part of "the Greatest Generation," Leo served as commander of VFW Post 4712, and years as quartermaster and member of the Honor Guard and firing squad. As a member of Holy Trinity Church, now St. Michael's Church/St. Rose Parish, Leo was a member of its Holy Name Society and a volunteer at the annual block party.

As our churches merged you could hear Leo yelling out the numbers on the Big Six wheel as his wife Maggie was yelling "B chicken legs 11!" at the bingo stand of St. Michael's Picnic.

Leo is survived by his sister, Josephine Marchuck, Old Bridge, N.J.; four sons, Leo and his wife, Maryellen, Carbondale Twp.; Jerome and his wife, Sandra, Endicott, N.Y.; Robert and his wife, Marsha, Simpson; and Edward and his companion, Tracy Roche Carey, Carbondale; nine grandchildren, Stacy, Eric, Leo, Jenna, Eddie, Hayley and Sam Skorupa, Carly Lamay and Ashley Unovich; eight great-grandchildren, twins Reese and Finley Lamay, twins Jack and Stella Unovich, Grady, Emma, Ava and Wes Skorupa; godson, Carl Yaklic Jr., Simpson; four stepchildren, Mary Lee and Michael Martines, Joan and Jeff Hoyt, Stanley Smugeresky; and Stephen and wife, Kate Smugeresky; plus several stepgrandchildren, step-great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and in-laws.

Leo was preceded in death by brothers, John (Skrup), Edward (Sam), Chester, Ignatz, Adam; and sisters, Genevieve (Genny) Maksymiuk and Mary Russian.

The family of Leo would like to thank the staff at the Forest City Nursing home and Regional Hospital of Scranton for their compassion, care and advice throughout Leo's care.

Since Leo's wife, Maggie, passed way too soon from colon cancer, his family wishes, in lieu of flowers or gifts, to please get screened for this curable but deadly disease and donate to the American Cancer Society; Carbondale YMCA, 88 N. Main St., Carbondale; or the St. Rose Restoration Project, 6 N. Church St., Carbondale, PA 18407.

A private graveside service will be held at Holy Trinity Cemetery, Simpson. A memorial Mass will be conducted at a later date.

Arrangements by the Joseph W. Scotchlas Funeral Home Inc., 621 Main St., Simpson. For condolences, visit www.scotchlasfuneralhome.com.

Jones & Brennan Funeral Home
430 Main Street, Forest City, PA 18421
(570) 785-3500

John P. Brennan, Supervisor Joseph J. Brennan, F.D.
John P. Brennan, Jr. F.D.

Established 1901 * OFF-STREET PARKING AVAILABLE

JENKINS

HOWELL FUNERAL HOME INC.

Funeral • Cremation • Pre-Planning

EDWARD R. HOWELL
Funeral Director, Supervisor

(570) 488-6100 269 Belmont St., Waymart, PA 18472
www.jenkinshowellfuneralhome.com

Funeral Arrangements

KEVIN M. LESJACK
FUNERAL HOME

513 Main Street, Forest City, PA
570.785.3153

lesjackfuneralhome.com