



Roy Thomas "Tom" Ossman

December 21, 1942 - July 13, 2015

Roy Thomas "Tom" Ossman, age 72, a resident of Huntington Woods since 1981, formerly of Pleasant Ridge, passed away July 13, 2015 at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak. He was born December 21, 1942 in Detroit to the late Roy Merrill and Louise Geraldine Ossman.

Tom earned his MBA at Michigan State University and was just short a doctoral thesis for his PhD in Industrial Psychology. He was also a graduate assistant while completing his degrees and still found time for fraternity activities and a term of presidency with Sigma Alpha Epsilon.

After graduation, Tom went to work at Michigan Bell as a special elect for the IMPD (Initial Management Development Program). Throughout his career with the phone company, he was a successful troubleshooter and problem solver. He made things happen. He was a steadfast employee who remained loyal even through all the company transitions of Michigan Bell to AT&T to Ameritech and, finally, in collaboration with IBM.

An extremely talented individual, Tom could build anything ranging from a simple child's toy to a complex new addition on his home. Not only was he talented, but he also knew how to have fun. Not just with his own kids and grandkids, but with the kids in the neighborhood too. They always knew Tom would have a new magic trick or game to play or be available to take them for

ice cream on annual block parties.

Tom also had other hobbies including, collecting antique toys, restoring prewar Lionel and American Flyer trains, playing the piano, traveling, writing and inventing. He was an advocate for the arts and an artist himself. Many friends looked forward to his colored pencil and marker drawings at Christmas time with a special Christmas wish that he wrote himself.

Despite his many talents and interests, his first priority and devotion was to his family. Family was the most important part of his life. Rearing his son and daughter was a joy that he took very seriously. He was a mentor for many junior high and high school boys who apprenticed with him over the years on various projects. Welcoming their help, he was also eager and willing to teach them everything he knew about so many things.

He was the beloved husband of Dessa Ann (Stepanovich); the couple married September 10, 1967 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; loving father of Mark Thomas (Amye) Ossman and Jeremi Lynn (Lawson Tate) Ossman; proud grandfather of Brady Ossman, Brennan Ossman, Vann Tate and Sterling Tate; dear brother of Geraldine Louise Ossman; brother-in-law to Melanie Stepanovich; uncle of Nicole Cuva, Christopher Gradwohl and Louise Gradwohl; and great uncle to Austin Cuva. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Memorials very appreciated to:

gifts.mdanderson.org/ for cancer research

~ or ~

Revitalization of the fraternity house at Michigan State University

Phone – 847.513.2378 – Jason Andrick, SAE Foundation

Online – www.sae.net/donate

Designation: Other with comment "MIGA CAF"

Mail – payable to Sigma Alpha Epsilon Foundation, 1856 Sheridan Rd,
Evanston, IL 60201 – check remittance "MIGA CAF"

Tribute Wall



“ Truly I did not know my dear Tom Ossman passed away. He was a guiding light in my career. Tom made things happen. He will always have a place in my heart! Tom opened doors for me that I used to only imagine. I salute you always! Marian Murphy

Marian Murphy - May 03, 2024 at 03:41 PM

RW

“ Dear Dessa,
I reflected on the time that Tom, me, Chris Jones and Tom Draper rented a tent-trailer and went to Seattle and back. Tom put his many talents to good use. He constructed a rectangular food box that he specially designed to fit into one of the compartments of the tent-trailer. We stored some food, pots & pans and the like in the box. We went west on highway 2. I don't remember which route we took back. We all saw parts of the country that we had only read about. We all bought berets to show our togetherness. We all had a ball. I was very sorry to hear about Tom's passing.
Please accept my condolences.
Bob Woodworth
woodwort@ohio.edu

ROBERT WOODWORTH - July 22, 2015 at 05:18 PM

JT

“ I'm not sure if you remember me, Dessa, but Tom and I worked together at Michigan Bell in the 70s. I was his secretary (my first job out of the steno pool). Tom was a wonderful boss and very protective of me. I was quite young then, in my early 20s, and Tom was extremely helpful to me and very protective. One of Tom's reportees began harassing me (in the days before sexual harassment was even discussed), and the moment I told Tom about it, he had that guy in his office so fast it would make your head spin. My mother thought he was the best guy in the world, and she appreciated someone looking out for her daughter in such a classy manner. I admired his spirit, his talent (those wonderful Christmas cards!), and his genuine love for his family, which he showed with pride every day. The world has lost a great guy, but I know your family's loss is even greater. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you today. Jacqueline Shay Tinney

Jacqueline Tinney - July 20, 2015 at 09:33 AM

DO

It's so very kind of you to share those memories. Of course, I remember you! He WAS the best guy in the world--hard to capture all that he was in an obit.

Dessa Ossman - July 22, 2015 at 10:55 AM



“ Sympathy Fruits Abound was purchased for the family of Roy Thomas "Tom" Ossman.



July 20, 2015 at 09:10 AM



“ We want you to know that we are thinking of you and your family, Dessa. We, too, will celebrate that wonderful laugh and remember many good times that we shared in our early years. It is amazing that we have kept in contact for 48 years and have known you for longer than that. We will miss our RTO Christmas cards, but have so many fun memories to dip into...making Christmas presents, admiring your Union dinners that went with your first teaching job, Dessa. We spent so much time with you two both during college and after in East Lansing. I was so touched to have you name your daughter, Jeremi. We will be celebrating our 47th anniversary this year and were talking about our trip to your wedding in Pittsburgh and how much we enjoyed ourselves and how special it was to be there with you...ah, Pittsburgh...a tie that Dessa and I share:) We have been thinking about you and your family non-stop and hope that you can be together and celebrate all that Tom was to you. Take care. Love Mike and Jeremy

Jeremy Connolly - July 17, 2015 at 12:53 PM

DO

Thank you for that lovely tribute. When we were trying to find the right name for Jeremi, what came to mind were all the qualities that you had that we hoped for our daughter--bright, personable, compassionate, creative, beautiful, and on and on. Really, she was named after you. I, too, remember spending wonderful times with you. Despite the fact that we haven't spent time together in many years, that friendship still exists. I miss him terribly.

Dessa Ossman - July 22, 2015 at 11:03 AM



I know you do...

Jeremy Connolly - July 24, 2015 at 07:59 PM

TY

“ *Dessa, please accept my deepest sympathy for you and your family. Tom was a great guy to have as a friend and to work for. He was always able to bring some new insight into a situation, as well as bring some fun along with it. He really will be missed by all who knew him.*

Tom Yambasky - July 17, 2015 at 12:25 PM

DO

Thank you, Tom. He talked about you often and had great admiration for you.

Dessa Ossman - July 22, 2015 at 11:04 AM

NF

“ *Dessa, my deepest condolences to you and your family. Tom was a great boss & mentor but most of all a good friend. It didn't matter if we were working on service issues at the office or carpeting in the room addition, Tom would make sure to take the time to celebrate. He always had a smile to share and a story to tell. He'll be missed but never forgotten.*

Neil Ferguson - July 16, 2015 at 05:05 PM

DO

Thank you, Neil. I was always grateful that he worked with so many wonderful people, including you, of course.

Dessa Ossman - July 22, 2015 at 11:05 AM

AC

Hi Dessa! Words cannot express how much I feel for you and your family at this difficult time. Tom was a truly great man and wonderful soul with remarkable wit and intelligence, creativeness, and compassion. I am so glad that we had lunch when I was back in Michigan and regret we did not get together again before I moved to North Carolina. There is so much to remember about him, including his love of his family, carpentry, trains, artistry (Christmas cards were so beautiful), work dynamics, contagious laugh, love of James Brown, writings (Tom-isms), honesty, and just being downright fun! I am proud to have known him. The world lost one of its best! I will be in Michigan the week of Aug 15th – let's plan to have lunch. Hope you are doing OK. My deepest and heartfelt sympathy.

Adrienne Charron - July 27, 2015 at 05:51 PM