



# Thompson, Stephen

FEB 15, 1960 - OCT 13, 2025



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OAKLAND

Funeral, Cemetery  
& Cremation Services

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# Thompson, Stephen

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## **E**ARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Born on February 15, 1960, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Stephen was the youngest of five children born to Bettie and Robert E. Thompson. Growing up in a lively household, Mike, as he was affectionately called by his family, was surrounded by the love and support of his siblings: Bobbette, Michelle, Robert II, and Dawn. He attended schools in the Pittsburgh Public School system and graduated from Langley High School in 1978.

## MUSICAL TALENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

From a young age, Stephen displayed remarkable musical talent. He played both the vibraphone and piano, always eager to take on new challenges. During high school, a friend invited him to perform in a school musical, and after just a few rehearsals, their performance was met with enthusiasm from classmates.

Stephen's passion for music led him to audition for the Ozanam Strings, an all-Black youth orchestra comprised of Pittsburgh's most talented young musicians. He excelled, playing a wide range of genres including jazz, rock, and rhythm & blues. One of the highlights of his musical journey was performing with jazz legend Stanley Turrentine at Heinz Hall, playing selections from Earth, Wind & Fire's "Gratitude" live album. The orchestra's travels took them to Chicago, where they performed at universities and high schools and had the unique opportunity to visit Johnson Publishing Company, meeting the founders of Ebony and Jet Magazine. The Ozanam Strings visited New



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York, New Orleans, Canada, and Chicago. They recorded two albums and made regular appearances at Heinz Hall and Carnegie Music Hall, as well as at The Three Rivers Art Festival in Pittsburgh. In 1975, they appeared on episode 1401 of Mister Roger's Neighborhood. In 1979, they played at the Pittsburgh Man of the Year celebration for Willie Stargell of the Pittsburgh Pirates.

### PROFESSIONAL LIFE

After high school, Stephen attended Point Park College at night, studying journalism. His career was as diverse as his interests. He worked at Rohrich Cadillac selling automobiles, and at Warner Cable Company. On Saturday mornings, he could be found at WDUQ (Duquesne University's radio station) or WYEP public radio, sharing his favorite jazz tunes with listeners.

### THE RADIO MAN

Stephen truly found his calling in media Radio sales. His infectious personality and genuine curiosity about people made him a natural in the field. He managed advertising sales teams in Texas for the Walt Disney Company – ABC Radio Networks as Vice President of Affiliate Sales & Marketing; Westwood One/Shadow Broadcasting as a General Manager and General Sales Manager and the Bay Area where he worked at KDIA-AM as a General Manager and a General Sales Manager, Infinity Broadcasting - KOME-FM as a General Sales Manager and Infinity Broadcasting as a KROQ-FM Account Executive.

### PERSONAL PASSIONS

Beyond his professional achievements, Stephen was a lover of good food and wine. He worked for an online wine distributor, developing a refined palate and deep knowledge of wines. In the kitchen, he was a gourmet chef, known for his creativity and skill—never relying on cookbooks, but always crafting delicious meals from scratch.



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### LEGACY

Stephen's memory will live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved him. He passed away with his two loves by his side, Arlene Branch and their daughter, Monet Isabella Thompson. He also leaves to celebrate his memory, his siblings, Bobbette Thompson, Michelle Bolton, Robert Thompson II, and Dawn Iles; as well as his nephews, niece, and a wide circle of friends. Stephen Michael Thompson's life was marked by courage, grace, and a generous spirit. His music, laughter, and kindness will be cherished and remembered always.



# Events


**Thompson, Stephen**

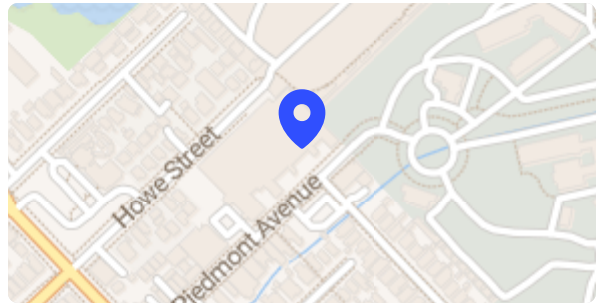
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## Memorial Ceremony

 **Friday**, November 21, 2025

 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM PT

 **Chapel of the Chimes**  
4499 Piedmont Ave, Oakland CA 94611





# Tribute Wall

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**Judith M.** planted a grove of 3 Memorial Trees in honor of Stephen.



November 3 at 5:50 PM



**Lana March** sent a virtual gift in honor of Stephen.



October 16 at 5:03 PM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Stephen by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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