



Morrell Livingston "Morrey" Thomas III

August 30, 1955 - January 18, 2026

Morrell "Morrey" Livingston Thomas III, a devoted steward of community journalism and a member of one of Darlington's most respected publishing families, passed away early Sunday morning, January 17. He was 69.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, January 24, 2026, at 2PM at Kistler-Hardee Funeral Home Chapel officiated by Reverend Kevin Cauley.

Born in 1955, Morrey was the son of Morrell L. Thomas Jr., who guided The News & Press for nearly half a century, from 1966 until his death in 2005. Raised in a household where journalism was both a profession and a calling, Morrey developed a deep respect for the role of local newspapers in preserving the voice and values of a community.

He was married to Pam Thomas and earned a Master of Business Administration from the College of William and Mary. A retired Navy veteran, Morrey brought discipline, leadership, and a strong sense of duty to every chapter of his life.

Reflecting on the importance of The News & Press, Morrey once said, "If somebody had an event or if an announcement was made, The News & Press was the first place they called." That philosophy guided not only his own work, but generations of the Thomas family, who resisted industry trends that pulled

newspapers away from grassroots community coverage.

Following the passing of his father, Morrey's sister, Ann Boyd, assumed the role of publisher in 2005. Tragically, her tenure was cut short when she lost her battle with cancer in 2008 at the age of 45. During her illness, the family turned to Morrey for help in keeping the paper running.

At the time, Morrey was deeply engaged with the Brunswick Beacon, where over 19 years he helped owner Eddie Sweatt build the paper into the largest community newspaper in the nation, boasting a weekly circulation of 17,000 and editions averaging 80 pages. Though he initially attempted to split his time between Brunswick and Darlington, it soon became clear that the family legacy needed his full attention. After his sister's passing, Morrey returned home to Darlington to carry on the tradition begun generations earlier.

During his 12-year tenure as publisher of The News & Press, Morrey became an active leader within the South Carolina Press Association, eventually serving as its president—a title once held in the organization's female division by his mother. Under his guidance, the newspaper earned numerous SCPA honors, including multiple General Excellence awards.

Though he acknowledged the challenges facing the newspaper industry, Morrey believed passionately in the enduring value of local journalism. "I believe in my heart that community newspapers like the News & Press will always have a place because we're going to cover things that a daily newspaper doesn't," he said. "Little League games, daddy and daughter dances, the sweet things about life in your hometown—a community newspaper satisfies those needs. We also serve as a community watchdog, making sure people know what's going on with their government, things that would otherwise go unchecked."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Morrey made the difficult decision to sell The News & Press to the Herald Group, expressing full confidence in its future. “The future of the News & Press for Darlington County and the City of Darlington could not be in finer hands,” he said.

As the community mourns Morrey’s passing, it also honors a legacy of more than 60 years of dedicated service by the Thomas family—providing critical information, thoughtful insight, and a steadfast commitment to Darlington County.

Thank you to Morrey and the Thomas family for your hard work, your judicious ethics, your generosity, and your unflagging love for Darlington County.

Tribute Wall

AM

“ Heavenly Father 🙏

We lift this family up to You as they grieve the loss of their loved one. Wrap them in Your peace, comfort their broken hearts, and give them strength in the days ahead. Remind them that they are not alone and that Your love surrounds them even in their sorrow.



Your Word says in Psalm 34:18:

“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”

Lord, be near to them now. Fill their hearts with comfort, hope, and the promise of Your eternal love.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Anthony Matthews - March 15 at 06:52 AM



“ 46 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Kistler-Hardee Funeral Home - January 24 at 11:53 AM

MM

“ *Marcella And Jerry McCall lit a candle in memory of Morrell Livingston "Morrey" Thomas III*



Marcella and Jerry McCall - January 23 at 06:55 PM

AM

“ *He may no longer be with us, but his spirit will live on in our hearts.*



A. McRavin - January 22 at 02:45 PM

SM

“ *My prayers go out to the family of Morrey Thomas. I knew his parents well and appreciate the huge contribution that the Thomas family made to outstanding journalism in Darlington County and beyond.*

Susan D. Reynolds, MD - January 22 at 12:28 AM

AS

“ *Pam I'm sincerely sorry for your loss. You guys were always so good to me at the country club. May God watch over you in the days to come 🙏*



Angela Spencer - January 20 at 08:44 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Morrell Livingston "Morrey" Thomas III.



January 20 at 03:59 PM



“ - Your friends at SC Press Association planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Morrell Livingston "Morrey" Thomas III.

- Your friends at SC Press Association - January 20 at 03:59 PM



“ Gene and Elaine Hubbard



Elaine Hubbard - January 19 at 03:00 PM

CB

“ *Morrey was a person that enjoyed his life, so glad we have memories to look back on, the laughter and friendship we shared... a lot about cooking and sharing recipes, he sure did love to cook! Larry enjoyed sharing his garden with you and you loved those fresh veggies...had a few times fishing in the pond, catching a few bass was great! We feel blessed to have known you, you were a great friend... Our deepest sympathies to Pam and family. We will miss this special man...May God be with you and comfort you during this time..*
Larry and Cheryl Boykin

Cheryl Boykin - January 18 at 05:33 PM

JJ

My dear friend Morrey it's hard to put in words how much you will be missed I will always cherish our friendship with you and Pam.

jeff johnson - January 18 at 07:55 PM

AF

So very sorry Pam I thought the world of Morrey. He was always trying to get me to work for him he's a great man
Anne Foster

Anne Foster - January 19 at 01:19 PM

SL

“ *Farewell to a great boss and newspaperman.*
Condolences to his family and friends.



Samantha Lyles - January 18 at 02:51 PM

DG

“ *Diane Gardner lit a candle in memory of Morrell Livingston "Morrey" Thomas III*



Diane Gardner - January 18 at 02:20 PM



“ *Pam, I am so sorry about the loss of your husband... I know that you two have made many wonderful memories in the last years... Think on those in times of sadness,.. sending you, family, and loved ones my thoughts, love, and prayers..*



Dianne James - January 18 at 01:49 PM



What happened to his mother Margaret Ann Thomas? She was instrumental in starting the news and Press and a wonderful woman? I heard she passed away but never saw an obituary or funeral arrangements. J Todd Hardee, do you know? I saw her in 2022 in respite care and she was supposed to go home the next day. What happened?

Beverly Burnette - January 18 at 05:13 PM

TC

So Sorry to learn of Morrey's passing ...

Tim Cunningham - January 19 at 06:46 AM

BB

Morrey was a great guy and a great newspaperman, and he will be missed greatly.

Bobby Bryant - January 19 at 04:08 PM

DC

The Thomas family has a special place in my heart, which began when I started working as a reporter for News & Press. What a very wonderful person we have lost in Morrey. He always seemed a person of deep personal conviction, while being warm, supportive, and friendly. With deep sympathy.

Dyan Cohen - January 19 at 08:08 PM