



Richard Grant Thomas

June 18, 1946 - May 29, 2021

We're sad to announce that Grant passed away on May 29, 2021, at Lakeshore General Hospital from complications related to PSP.

Grant is survived by his children, Sarah and Trevor, his sister, Patti, and his two grandsons, James and Mason.

A proud Montrealer, he was raised in Rosemont, or Rosemount, on Masson St, before moving to Pointe Claire in his teens. He attended Lindsay Place High School, before attending Sir George Williams University, where he graduated with Honours with a degree in World History.

From there, Grant moved into the field that would become the passion of his life: education. In 1971, he began his career at Beaconsfield High School, teaching English and History to grade 7-9. In his years at BHS, Grant was heavily involved in student life from athletic, to new teaching methods, to the founding of the first student radio station. He also developed an interest in alternative education, which led him to his next adventure, the founding of Odyssey, the Lakeshore School Board's first alternative education program, aimed at helping struggling students graduate high school. Then he shifted gears again, moving into his first administration role at MacDonald High School. After a couple of years at Mac, he was given the opportunity to go back to where it all began, and become the Vice Principal of BHS. His second stint at BHS were some of the most special years of his life, as he worked alongside many lifelong friends, and saw both of his children and almost all of his nieces and nephews graduate from the school. Through his work in and out of the school, he became an indelible part of the community. So, when he left for his first Principal job, at Courtland Park Elementary, it left a big hole in BHS. Courtland Park was his first experience with elementary students, but his energy and warmth were a perfect fit, and again he became a well-loved member of the community. Next, he became the Principal of Beacon Hill Elementary, where he again established himself as a pillar of the school community, and was able to see his first grandson graduate from the school. His final role was at the

board level, where he was the Principal of Alternative Programs, for the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

Outside of school, sports were his true passion. He was well-known around the West Island as a coach (numerous BHS and Lakeshore teams), a teammate (Beaconsfield Old-Timers Hockey and Beaconsfield Men's Slo-Pitch), and a fan (a fixture at his son's games). He was also a lifelong Habs fan who would take tremendous pride in their current playoff run.

Throughout his life and career, he impacted so many: students, teachers, athletes, parents all have fond memories of Mr. Thomas. He was the first face they saw on their first day of kindergarten, or the encouraging face they saw at their convocation ceremony. He was a man who would stop everything if he recognized you on the street and go out of his way to help you out if you were in need. His warmth, energy and enthusiasm were contagious, and he will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

There will not be a funeral at this time, but the family will be planning an outdoor celebration of life this summer.

[Published in The Gazette, June 5, 2021](#)