



## David John Paul Testen

September 9, 1970 - January 26, 2024

It is with intense sadness that we announce the passing of David John Paul Testen, affectionately known as Dave, Davey and D.T. to his family and too numerous to count friends. Dave entered the Lightning Lane to Heaven on Friday, January 26, 2024 at Robert Packer Hospital with the immeasurable love of his family and under the incredible care of the 5 Main staff.

Dave was born on September 9, 1970 also at Robert Packer Hospital, with a rare chromosome anomaly that gave him, according to medical experts, minimal chance to thrive. But God had other plans for Dave, giving him to a family that never saw his differences and to a community that would create a reciprocal relationship that allowed him to touch their hearts as much as, if not more than, they could touch his. Dave lived his entire life in the Rosh Road/Pine Tree Road neighborhood. While neighbors moved on and moved in, it would be remiss not to acknowledge the love and acceptance Dave received from so many of them as he walked from house to house, stopping to say hi, why and do it. Everyone knew Dave and were rarely surprised when he simply opened the door and walked into their home. While he was often referred to as the “Mayor of the Valley”, he certainly made everyone smile in his neighborhood.

Dave attended Athens Area Schools and, through the efforts of his mother and some parents of other students with severe learning differences, was

moved from isolated classrooms into the mainstream setting. While in grade school, Dave learned if you say hi to everyone you make eye-contact with, most of those people will be your friend. In his case, those people did not have much of a choice. Dave graduated from Athens Area High School in June of 1992 as one of the first students from a Life Skills classroom to receive his diploma during the graduation ceremony on the football field. Dave was an Honorary member of the Athens Township Volunteer Fire Company and thoroughly enjoyed the numerous parades, dinners, and events he shared with his “firetruck” buddies and appreciated the friendship and love they gave him. Additionally, Dave enjoyed attending Penn York Opportunities for many years, where he made many more friends as part of their community outreach program and was touched by their caring staff. Dave also started participating in Special Olympics at a young age and was thrilled to meet students and staff from across Bradford County each year.

Obviously, Dave’s greatest skill was meeting new people and his greatest gift was engaging everyone with his friendly personality and bright affect, which he shared locally and on his numerous trips across the country and abroad. Dave seemingly had a sixth sense as to where any type of construction, digging or tree trimming was taking place in the Valley. He would tell his parents where he needed to go, bring a chair and assume the role of supervisor at every site. In no time, Dave would start a conversation, befriend the workers and become part of the crew. We are forever indebted to all of the digger operators, construction workers and tree trimmers who accepted Dave and even let him participate, when it was safe to do so. Throughout his life, Dave’s parents took him on numerous trips across the country on planes, trains and boats as Dave always found a way to get into the cockpit, engine and helm to blow a horn or take charge of the vehicle. His favorite destination was Disney World, which Dave called Mickey’s House. He saved his own money for each trip and vacationed at all of the parks on more than a dozen occasions. Dave never experienced a ride he didn’t love.

Dave was predeceased by members of the Testen, Resnick and Sampson families. He is survived by his parents Joan and John Testen; brothers John (Roxanne) Testen, Michael (Lynda) Testen; his favorite sister Susan (Daniel) Kelleher; nieces and nephews Amber Testen, Ashley (Joe) Sherman, Allison (Brian) Cebulko, DJ (Marisa) Kelleher, Michael (Monica) Testen, Taylor Testen, Kaitlyn Testen, Lyndsey Testen; and eleven grand-nieces and nephews.

Dave's family would like to especially thank the nurses, care partners and doctors of Robert Packer Hospital's 5 Main Unit who loved and cared for Dave like he was their child. The staff provided extraordinary support to Dave's family during the saddest and worst experience of their lives. They're the best.

A time of visitation for friends and family will be held from 3:00PM until 6:00PM on Thursday, February 1, 2024, at the Alteri-Bowen Funeral Home, 314 Desmond St, Sayre PA 18840. A Mass of Christian Burial will take place at 9:30AM on Friday, February 2, 2024, at the Church of the Epiphany, 304 South Elmer Avenue, Sayre, PA 18840. Interment will follow Mass at the Tioga Point Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Athens Township Volunteer Fire Company, 211 Herrick Avenue, Sayre, PA 18840. Memories and condolences may be expressed by visiting [bowenfuneralhomes.com](http://bowenfuneralhomes.com).

One of the few things that upset Dave was seeing someone who was sad or crying. He would ask them to look at him and say his signature line, "Be Happy". Please consider your favorite Dave story and share it on the website above or with the family during visiting hours. No one expressed or enjoyed a smiling face more than Dave.



# Cemetery Details

## Tioga Point Cemetery

803 North Main Street  
Athens, PA 18810

# Previous Events

## Receive Friends

FEB 1. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Alteri-Bowen Funeral Home  
314 Desmond Street  
Sayre, PA 18840  
(570) 888-2113  
[info@bowenfuneralhomes.com](mailto:info@bowenfuneralhomes.com)

## Mass of Christian Burial

FEB 2. 9:30 AM (ET)

Church of the Epiphany  
304 South Elmer Ave  
Sayre, PA 18840

# Tribute Wall

IE

“ Dear Joan and John, Our condolences to you and your family on the loss of David. Take care. Love, Nancy and Irving Edmunds

Irving and Nancy Edmunds - February 04, 2024 at 11:32 AM

CL

“ To John and the Testen family my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family Buster

Clarence - February 03, 2024 at 09:43 AM

TR

“ I met Dave for the first time this summer. We were working on his street installing sod for one of the neighbors. Everyday we would fire up the equipment it wasn't long before Dave was showing up on the jobsite telling us to "Do it". Dave would hang out with us most of the day and would keep us motivated at all times even when it was 90 degrees he wanted us to "do it". Dave brought such joy and happiness to the jobsite and kept spirits lifted high. He will be missed by so many. Rest in peace Dave. You touched many many lives.

Tyler R.

Tyler Robinson - February 02, 2024 at 07:31 PM

BW

“ I first met my honey at Penn York. He was a ray of sunshine everyday. He has such a wonderful family. I shared many wonderful conversations with them over the years . Thank you always for your kind words and support. Unless you have a special person like David in your life you don't understand what this kind of support means . He will surly be missed . May your faith help you all through this most difficult time .Love to all

**B J Woodring** - February 02, 2024 at 12:05 PM

KW

“ I remember when David was at the Athens township fire hall and that's what he always said to me was be happy all the time.he will be dearly missed by me and everyone at the fire station.

**Keith Wilber** - February 01, 2024 at 05:31 PM

TA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Tammi Alexander** - February 01, 2024 at 03:54 PM

SA

On your left, Dave is the third one kneeling down in the front. Davy was like a member of our Alexander family and we all loved him.

**Shirley Alexander** - February 02, 2024 at 11:25 AM

JE

“ I've had a long history of being a chauffeur & driving memorable trips with some amazing people. Being able to experience 2 of David & his family's annual Christmas tradition of delivering gifts to his friends will always be one of the highlight's of my driving career. I can remember pulling into some deep snow, spinning the rear tires upon leaving with the snow flying up alongside the limo & Dave yelling...."Do it...do it!" God bless ya Dave & all your family! You always rocked that Santa suit!

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**Jamie Elvidge** - February 01, 2024 at 03:27 PM

SS

“ Dave will always be remembered in our hearts as the fella who reminded us to “Be Happy”. So many memories with Davey as well as all of us from Pine Tree Rd/Rosh Rd. He was always a joy and always welcomed. Thinking fondly of the day My Mom turned 80 and we had a Birthday party for her. Davey arrived just in time for his own t-shirt and pictures. God Bless and know our Love for someone who brings so many memories will always be remembered for his Big Heart 🌸 and Joy of everyday. Much Love.

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**Suzanne Smith** - February 01, 2024 at 12:58 PM

DA

“ Davie will always be remembered as he holds a special place in my heart. His warm caring heart, inquisitive nature, and relaxed outlook on life ("don't worry, be happy") has always, and always will, remain fresh in my thoughts as the wisest of guidance!

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**David Alexander** - February 01, 2024 at 12:02 PM

SS

“ We are heartbroken to hear of Dave's passing. A kind and gentle soul...and would put a smile on your face each and every time you were in his company. We had the honor of knowing Dave usually during Christmas tree season, first at the Athens Home Center, then again when we moved the trees to the lumber mill and how he always wanted to go on the hill to help cut the trees or help the fellas unload/ supervise the unloading of a fresh cut batch..with encouraging words of "Do it..." whether that was to make one of his sister's trees shorter or the fellas to get busy unloading so they could find that one tree....so for me the tears come freely knowing heaven has truly gained an angel. Our deepest thoughts and prayers, and smiles with each and every memory.

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**Stacey Secrist** - February 01, 2024 at 08:31 AM

SB

*My Aunt and Uncle, Clarence (Peanut) & Doris Frisbie. They lived on the corner in a green and white mobile home. I met Dave on day when I was walking in the yard. Dave came over to say Hello. Every time I was in the neighborhood, Dave always stopped to say hello. He always made me smile. I now live in Western North Carolina. Dave you were such a great person and I am better for knowing you. Until we meet again, ❤️❤️❤️*

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**Sue Buman** - February 01, 2024 at 09:48 PM

SB

“ Sarah B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David John Paul Testen.

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**Sarah B.** - January 31, 2024 at 09:02 PM

AB

“ God bless. David was a true gift to the world. I can hear him saying "Hi honey!" While I did not know him well, he always treated me like a dear friend. Heaven indeed has gained a fun, loving, delightful angel. - Love Alice and Jim Bennett

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**Alice Bennett** - January 31, 2024 at 07:44 PM

DR

David enjoyed visiting the band practice down the street and would always come in to say BE HAPPY.

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**David Rae** - February 01, 2024 at 08:09 PM

CC

“ Big Burt and Claudia Chacona are so sad to hear of Davey's passing. Always such a happy guy even though Big Burt lost a lot of weight Davey still referred to Burt as Big Burt. Prayers for peace.

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**Claudia Chacona** - January 31, 2024 at 03:44 PM

SR

“ Our family is so sad to hear of Davey's passing. During the "peace be with you" in church we enjoyed Davey's "Be Happy". Your family is in our thoughts and prayers. The Ryan Family

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**Sandy Ryan** - January 30, 2024 at 09:40 PM

TW

“ I'll never forget our graduation with Dave. I was the lucky one who got to help him while we were seated and walk up to get his diploma with him. The heartfelt letter I received from his family is something I will never forget. RIP Dave. Such a kind soul.

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**Tom Walker** - January 30, 2024 at 09:00 PM

RW

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with the Testen family during this difficult time of loss. Davey was the "welcome to the neighborhood man. Everyone that ever lived in Rosh Terrace knew who he was. Always willing to help in any way he could and smiling the whole time. Thank you Davey for being such a loving and caring neighbor, you will be missed! Bob Wandell

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**Robert Wandell** - January 30, 2024 at 06:07 PM

NB

“ The community has lost a piece of their hearts in the loss of Davie's passing. He was a light that brought so much joy and sunshine. To his Dad and Mom and to all his family, we are so sorry and may prayers lift you up in this sad time. May the fond memories that you shared, along with the love of family and friends, bring comfort to you. Love, hugs and prayers

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**Nick and Patti Ball** - January 30, 2024 at 04:14 PM

LI

“ DT, Now you are HAPPY. Be Happy and smile down upon us.

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**Lisa** - January 30, 2024 at 12:39 PM

LI

“ DT, you always brought a smile on my face. Being one of your friends and care provider of three years, seeing you around town, you always seemed to went out of your way. Thank you so much for being a blessing in my life DT. I will miss you, until we are all united in God's Heavenly home. ❤️

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**Lisa** - January 30, 2024 at 12:36 PM

TC

“ *i liked david at pyo saying my huney*

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**Timothy Carl** - January 30, 2024 at 11:26 AM

LC

“ *Love, Rocky, Jenny Penny, Tony & Chris purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of David John Paul Testen.*



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**Love, Rocky, Jenny Penny, Tony & Chris** - January 30, 2024 at 11:14 AM

KS

“ *Testen Family, I have never met any of you, but I had the pleasure of meeting Davey while my son took music lessons at Yale's, before they moved to their current location. Davey would greet us each week as we arrived, and remind us to "be happy" and to "do it." He was so kind and gentle to my kids, who were young at the time, and they grew to look forward to seeing him each week as well. Even though that was years ago, my kids still ask about him on occasion, and each time, it makes us all smile. We were blessed to have met Davey and to have seen him regularly during that period of time years ago.*

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**Kendra S.** - January 30, 2024 at 11:14 AM

EB

“ When we moved to the valley and to pine tree road from Germany we were lucky enough to live right across the street from the Testins. As an 8 year old, and perhaps under a little trepidation and nervousness one of my very first memories was seeing the “band of kids” that would become our neighborhood gang and in the middle of the pack, leading the charge was Davey and will never forget the massive and welcoming smile on his face ...we were all so lucky to form a bond with and learn from him what unconditional happiness both was and meant. The “turkey” relationship with my dad he had and of course his dog Arf are things I still to this day smile about and will continue to. Sending lots of love to an incredible family.  
Eric Breemen

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Eric Breemen - January 30, 2024 at 10:03 AM

SF

“ Joan, John and the entire family. We are heart broken to read of David's passing.  
Never again will we know such a sweet loving person as Dave.  
We have so many stories. We were always mama and the boys.  
Dave never missed a chance to ask "where boys"? Even when they were grown and no longer boys.  
Always a happy friendly face when I walked.  
Asking to ride my new bike with Ricky.  
Going around the neighborhood driving his tractor.  
Richard was always happy when Joan and Dave stopped to see him at Tops.  
We will miss hearing the fire truck jumping up and running to the window only to realize it was Christmas eve. Think we would learn after as many as 30 years.  
We will miss you David. Lots of love sent to your family. Heaven has gained a special angel. Why, why why?  
Ricky, Sharon,  
Richard and Shaun Chamberlain

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Sharon Chamberlain and Family - January 29, 2024 at 11:21 PM

CL

“ David had such an incredible personality and spirit, and we will all miss him very much. We are thinking of you during this time and are here to support you in any way you'd like.”

Craig and Wanda Lezak

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Craig and Wanda Lezak - January 29, 2024 at 08:53 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of David John Paul Testen.



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January 29, 2024 at 07:54 PM

JS

“ My father, William Shutkufski, thought alot of David and looked forward to seeing him in church. He loved how David would always tell him to, “Be Happy!” In fact, David’s words resonated with him so much that my father made a sign to hang in one of our doorways. It was reminder to smile through life, even when things became tough. When he passed, I took the sign as a reminder to have a positive spirit. So, thank you David for leaving a legacy of light and happiness. May you rest in peace and may your family find comfort in the many memories you made together. Sincerely, Jennifer (Shutkufski) Scala



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Jennifer Scala - January 29, 2024 at 07:42 PM

RF

*We have many fond memories of Dave as he pedaled around the neighborhood on his tricycle , telling everyone "be happy". He was blessed to have such a caring and loving family. The Fritz family*

Rebecca Fritz - January 30, 2024 at 09:20 PM

KC

*“ I will forever miss the fun times I had working with DT while at PYO. I will treasure the memories we had together, the "My Honey" that he always used and the "Do it now!!" I will miss playing hide and seek and him pretending to throw me outside and knock me to the moon. It was such an honor to meet him, work with him, and will keep those memories close. My condolences to the family, you raised such an amazing man! Miss you DT! 💜*

Katie Carpenter - January 29, 2024 at 07:32 PM

TS

*“ So sorry for your loss. I remember seeing David at the Athens Area High School events with Sue and Dan enjoying himself as his smiles always brightened everyones day. Sending Hugs to the family...*

Toni Shaw - January 29, 2024 at 07:12 PM

RA

*“ I remember Dave with such fondness. He would come over to our house often, sometimes for a glass of milk and other times just to say hi. Dave was the referee for our neighborhood wrestling matches, and knew to slap his hand on the mat when someone was pinned. Now, Being the father of a special Needs child myself, I think Dave was training me for my life yet to come. Rest easy Dave. I know I'll see you again.*

Robert Armstrong - January 29, 2024 at 06:46 PM

“ I swear the world just stopped spinning for a moment.

*To say that I loved David is quite the understatement. I too was blessed to be called "my honey". I met David my senior year while working at Ted Clark's. Joan and John would bring him in to do grocery shopping. We were both 17 at the time, but led such very different lives. Honestly, looking back now I think David led a much richer life than I could have ever wished for. He never missed a beat to greet anyone and everyone and make a new friend. Even at 17, he would come around to the back side of my register and give me a hug. He had the most infectious personality and smile. If he saw you and recognized you, he would come running up to you and give you the biggest hug.*

*One of my saddest days in my life is when I saw David sitting across from me while I worked in Oncology. In one of David's favorite words, I asked "Why?". It was the same feeling we had when Chris was diagnosed with cancer. Somebody who never hurt a soul and always was smiling being struck with such a horrible disease. David, however, took it in stride, much like Chris. He rarely had a bad day.*

*It didn't matter where I ran into him with one or both of his parents, the amount of love that poured from this man's soul was more than we as humans deserved. But I believe without a doubt, that love came from both of his parents who spent every minute of every day, making sure that David lived the most normal, happy life he could live.*

*David was a good reminder to to always try to find the good in each day. I will forever hear his voice saying, "be happy" until the day I draw my final breath. I truly wish David now to rest peacefully and to also continue to "be happy".*

*Big prayers going out to the entire Testen family. I pray for acceptance, comfort, and peace.*

*Kelly Stedge*

*"hi" "why" "do it"*

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**Kelly Stedge** - January 29, 2024 at 06:08 PM

SS

“ *I was so sorry to hear of Davey’s passing. His face and smile lit up a room and the hug you would receive was genuine. Prayers lifted for his family for strength during this time. Rest easy Davey.*

*Shelli Place Silkman*

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**shelli silkman** - January 29, 2024 at 05:02 PM