

Because We Care

Presented by Brian W. Havens

BLACK ROSES FOR FUNERALS

It comes as no surprise that black roses symbolize death and mourning. While black roses are increasingly popular at funerals, many families prefer to add color to an otherwise somber occasion. Black roses have deep meanings that have changed through the centuries, from power and purpose, to sorrow and sadness, and eternal love transcending death. A true black rose doesn't exist in nature, but deep shades of red and purple can look black, and florists may tint, dye, and even burn the petals to create the right look. Black roses were used in ancient Greece and Rome as a symbol of power and determination. They were popularized in the Victorian era as a method of coded communication through flowers.

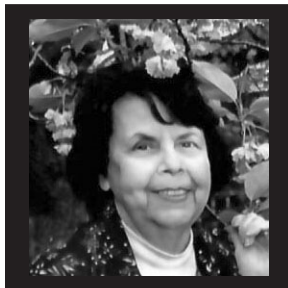
Planning a funeral service can be a difficult process for families who have just lost a loved one. But it's important to provide those who are grieving with a supportive environment in which they can begin to find closure, say goodbye, and come to terms with the loss. To learn about our services, please call 203-239-1179. We are located at 36 Washington Avenue.

Quote: "Black is always elegant. It is the most complete color in the whole world, made of all the colors in the palette."

North Haven Funeral Home, Inc.



OBITUARIES

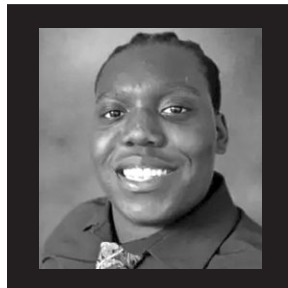


Betty Jo Delgrego Buck, 91, of North Haven, passed away on December 3, 2025, surrounded by her family. Born on July 4, 1934, in New Haven to Dr. Arthur Delgrego and Eloise Howes Delgrego, she proudly embraced her upbringing as an "Army Brat," moving frequently as the daughter of a WWII Lieutenant Colonel.

Betty purchased her lifelong home at 18 and lived there for more than seven decades. She worked tirelessly to support her family, later earning a college degree in her 50s and ultimately serving as Recreation Director at Whitney Center in Hamden.

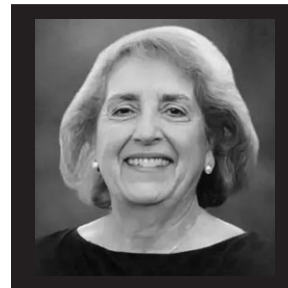
She is survived by her children, Jodie Blake Lande (John) and James Buck (Elizabeth); her grandchildren Christina Johansen (Chris), Joshua Lande, Joseph Lande, Ethan Buck, Ryan Buck, and Noah Buck; and her great-grandchildren Madison, Hannah, and Sam Johansen. She also cherished time with cousins Josie Wildi and Martin McGroary III, and with her niece Dr. Nedda Hobbs.

Betty was predeceased by her parents, her son Robert Blake, and her sister Rosemarie Hobbs. Visit www.forevermissed.com/bettyjo-buck for an extended obituary.



Gabriel Toppin, 19, departed this life too soon, on December 28, 2025. He was the beloved son of Michael and Patricia Toppin, and devoted brother of Michael Toppin Jr. Gabriel was born in New Haven, CT on October 15, 2006. Affectionately known as Gabe, he was a graduate of Lyman Hall High School in Wallingford.

In addition to his parents and brother, Gabriel is survived by his beloved grandfather, Wilfred Facey; grandmothers Iceneth Lindsay and Wendy Toppin; uncles Wilfred Facey Jr, Andrew Facey, Anthony Worrell and Steven Worrell; aunt Georgina Bramwell and a loving host of cousins, extended family members, friends, teammates and coaches.

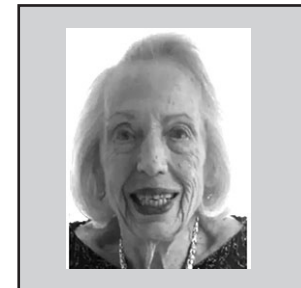


Carmela Zurolo Lee, 85, of Wallingford, daughter of the late Dorothy and Carmine Zurolo, entered eternal life on Jan. 2, 2026. She was the devoted wife of John (Jack) Lee, of Wallingford, CT and stepmother of Katherine Lee (Kevin) Rezendes of Portsmouth, R.I., John (Terry) Lee and son-in-law Michael Devine (late Mary Ann Lee Devine), both of Wallingford.

She leaves behind brothers Carmin (Susan) Zurolo, of Wallingford, Gene (Bonnie) Zurolo, of Cheshire and John (late Mayrill) Zurolo, of Bethany, sister-in-law, Joan (late Gabriel) Zurolo, of Hamden and several nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews and grandchildren.

A 35-year career teacher at Highland School in Wallingford, she was honored as Teacher of the Year in 1992.

Should friends desire, memorial contributions can be made to St. Anastasia Parish, 407 South 33rd St., Fort Pierce Fla. 34947 and to The St. Baldrick's Foundation, for childhood cancer research, 1333 South Mayflower Ave., Suite 400, Monrovia, CA, 91016.



Carol Giannotti Spinaci, 92, of North Haven, passed away peacefully on Monday December 29, 2025, at Yale New Haven Hospital with her family by her side. She was the beloved wife of 65½ years to the late Charles E. Spinaci, Sr. Carol was born in New Haven on January 11, 1933, and was the daughter of the late John and Mary Benzi Giannotti. Mother of Charles Spinaci, Jr. (Carol Amato) and Richard Spinaci. Beloved grandmother of Chad (Ashley), Crystal (William) Mezei and Craig Spinaci. Loving great grandmother of Dominic and Anthony Mezei. Also survived by many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her sister Georgianne DeMaio.

Should friends desire, memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association at www.heart.org.

Services were held at the **NORTH HAVEN FUNERAL HOME** www.northhavenfuneral.com.



Marilyn A. (Clancy) Erff, age 83, of Hamden passed away January 3, 2026 at St. Raphael Hospital. She was the widow of Frank W. Erff, Ret. NHFD. Born in New Haven on October 22, 1942, she was a daughter of the late John and Alice (Brisson) Clancy. Living all of her life on Dante Place in Hamden, she is survived by her son, Matthew Erff, with whom she resided; her sister, Judith Boucher of East Haven; her brother, John Clancy and his wife Peg of Plainville; and several nieces and nephews.

Should friends desire, contributions in Marilyn's memory may be made to the American Cancer Society at www.cancer.org.

Services were held **BEECHER & BENNETT** at the www.beecherandbennett.com.



Patricia Ann Parker, age 87, of Wallingford passed away suddenly at home December 30, 2025. She was the loving wife of the late Maynard J. Parker. Patricia was born in New Haven, the daughter of the late Carl and Viola Hemstock Clark.

She is survived by her son Kevin Trageser and his wife Wendy of Middletown, her granddaughter Jessie Trageser-Way and her husband Tyler of Middletown, along with several nieces and nephews. In addition to her husband and parents, Patricia was predeceased by her siblings, 4 sisters and 1 brother.

Should friends desire, donations may be made in her name to Friends of Hammonasset at hammonasset.org.

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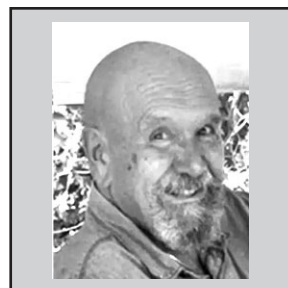
Bernice (Bongoll) Dorsey, 97, of Branford, formerly of Wallingford, passed away peacefully Saturday, January 3, 2026, at Yale New Haven Hospital. She was the loving wife of 64 years to the late Kenneth R. Dorsey. Bernice was born in Meriden, December 6, 1928, a daughter of the late Charles and Antiona (Schott) Bongoll and had been a Wallingford resident before moving to Branford.

Bernice is survived by her daughter, Lynn Dorsey (Marianne Hanas) of Branford; her grandson, Anthony Dorsey; her daughter in law, MaryJo Barnes, Auntie to Tim Oneto. She was predeceased by her husband, Kenneth Dorsey. Her father Charles Bongoll and her mother Antiona Schott Bongoll and her brother Richard Bongoll.

Should friends desire, gifts in her memory may be sent to: Wallingford Animal Control, 5 Pent Rd., Wallingford, CT. 06492.



Wallingford-Yalesville Funeral Homes



Michael Stanley Papa, 82, of Northford, passed away peacefully on Thursday, January 1st, 2026, at the Yale New Haven Hospital. He was the beloved husband of 60 years to Patricia Clark Papa. Michael was born in Meriden on December 2nd, 1943, and was the son of the late Frank and Doris Ciszek Papa. Michael was a 1964 graduate of North Haven High School. Michael is survived by his children, Frank M. Papa, Sr. and Carla Papa Perone (Louis, Jr.), his grandchildren, Carissa and Lorenzo Perone, and Frank, Jr., Faith, and Fiona Papa, and his brother, Stanley Papa. Michael was predeceased by his sister, Sandra Bogunicki.

Should friends desire, memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association, www.heart.org, or the American Cancer Society, www.cancer.org.

Services were held at the **NORTH HAVEN FUNERAL HOME** www.northhavenfuneral.com.

St. Ann's Food Pantry

Hamden: St. Ann's Food Pantry at 322 Circular Avenue (rear building), is open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month from 9:30-10:30am.

For more information, please call (203) 248-0141.

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Wallingford-Yalesville Funeral Homes



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