

# THE Hundred Call

*“The Club  
with a Heart”*

President: Jason E. Leavitt  
Managing Director: Dale P. Hourigan

Volume LVII, No. 1  
Spring 2026

Phone: (860) 633-8357 Email: ct100@hundredclubofct.org Website: www.hundredclubofct.org



## Remembering Officer Gregory Swiantek

**December 20, 1977—March 12, 2025**

**Yale University Police Department**



**Obituary — East Haven Memorial Funeral Home:** On December 20, 1977 a policeman was born, as heroes are quite often born and not made. At least that's the case for Officer Gregory Christopher Swiantek who left us far too soon and unexpectedly on March 12, 2025.

His life began in Danbury, CT, but he and his parents soon relocated to East Haven. While typical two year olds were running from the sounds of sirens with their ears covered, little Officer Gregory ran toward them, barely reaching the windowsill on his tiptoes and searching for their origin....fascinated. As he grew, Greg attended East Haven public schools, where he made many great friendships and even greater memories. He played in the school bands where his musical talent began to flourish. School was also where Greg solidified his reputation as a resident jokester. Humor would continue to play an important role in his life and the lives of those who knew him well. It was during his high school years that the little officer inside Gregory could once again run toward the sirens to fulfill one of his great life purposes as a first responder. He began volunteering at the East Haven Fire Department Volunteer Company 3 before moving on to Hunters Ambulance as an EMT and then CMED- New Haven as a dispatcher, and eventually Dispatch Supervisor. It was during his work with CT Search and Rescue that he found his favorite partner-Chunga the German Shepard. The lessons learned and bonds formed during those times set the foundation for future greatness. When Greg entered the Police Academy soon thereafter, it was evident that he was someone special and was exactly where he was meant to be. When graduation rolled around, he was selected by his graduating class to be a speaker. This was an intentional surprise for his family. His mom cried tears of pride when the words on the program told her what she already knew-her baby was a born hero and now everyone knew it. Little officer Greg had arrived. He was ecstatic to earn a position with the Yale Police Department, where he remained until his dying day. Throughout his 17 years on this force, Greg served in various roles in Patrol, as a Community Engagement Officer, Field Training Officer, and Bicycle Officer. He was also a proud member of the Honor Guard and was recently very excited about joining the New Haven County Firefighters Emerald Society Pipes and Drums. Through those roles, Greg's generosity, kindness, and sense of humor touched countless lives. His memory will live on because of this. On August 11, 2014 , Officer Greg took on a new title, and his most significant one yet-Daddy. Remy Adair Swiantek came into this world that day, into HIS world that day, and he was a changed man. He wasn't just born to be a hero, he was born to be Remy's hero. The father/daughter duo bond they shared was purely movie love. When it became clear that Remy had inherited not only her father's love of music but his talent for it, Greg worked tirelessly to support it. He also loved to take his daughter fishing, a hobby introduced to him by his father and enjoyed by he and his close friends. Dedicated does not begin to describe Greg as a father. Really, there are no words to describe it well. If you know, you know. Greg's parents Burton and Donna Swiantek were incredibly proud of their little hero and the musician and father he had grown to be. He was a devoted and loyal son, and while we remain here in grief and astonishment, they have been reunited with their pride and joy. By now, they have surely introduced him to the older brother he never had the privilege of meeting-Christopher Swiantek. Greg is also predeceased by his grandparents Stanley and Mary Swiantek and Mendes and Florence Pansetti. He is survived by Remy's mother, Michelle Swiantek, whose gratitude for the gift of their daughter is immeasurable. His sister, Melissa, and brother-in-law, Joe, also survive him. He trusted them with his life. Their children Nathan and Kevin Milano will miss their uncle greatly but promise to always be there for their cousin Remy. Greg is also survived by his Aunt Carla and Uncle Luciano Salvatore who were integral in he and his daughter's musical endeavors. His cousins Sergio (Meghan) Salvatore, Stefano Salvatore, and many dear second cousins are also mourning his loss as are numerous close friends.

Gregory Christopher Swiantek came into this world a hero, and he went out of this world exactly the same way. All can agree it's too soon; however, he did exactly what he came here to do.

Officer Gregory Swiantek was officially recognized as a 100 Club Fallen Hero at our April 2026 meeting, and his name will be engraved this May on the Connecticut Law Enforcement Memorial in Meriden.



# **Remembering Officer Jeffrey Michael Tafuto**

## **April 10, 1978—March 25, 2026**

### **State of Connecticut, Department of Correction**

*Obituary — Hamden Memorial Funeral Home*

We lost our beloved Jeffrey Michael Tafuto suddenly on March 25, 2026, at the age of 47.

Born on April 10, 1978, Jeff was a lifelong Connecticut resident and made his home in Woodbridge. He was a devoted husband to Michelle (Brescia) Tafuto and a proud, loving father to Jeffrey (JJ) Michael Tafuto Jr., Ty Tafuto, Gabriella Tafuto and his beloved dog Leia.

Jeff was the cherished son of David and Linda Tafuto of Prospect, and a loving brother to David (Amanda) Tafuto II of Newtown and Domonic (Denise) Tafuto of Prospect. He was a dedicated son-in-law to Vicki and Dennis Piscatelli of West Haven, Vinny (Lori) Brescia of South Carolina, and Michael (Cheryl) Duplessie of Texas. He was a caring brother-in-law to Cory Brescia and Jen Hancock of Kensington, Michael (Kelcie) Duplessie of Arizona, and Jenny (Micah) Rate of Texas.

Jeff was a proud and loving uncle to his nieces and nephews, Avery and Braelyn Tafuto of Prospect, and Cecilia, August, and Mac Tafuto of Newtown.

He was predeceased by his grandparents, Domonic and Filomena Tafuto, and August and Shirley Fusco from Woodbridge.

Jeff was a graduate of Holy Cross High School and Marist College, where he was an accomplished athlete and played collegiate baseball. He carried that same passion for sports throughout his life, becoming an avid and exceptional golfer. Above all, he found the greatest happiness in supporting his children in their passions, rarely missing a game and always cheering them on with pride.

Jeff worked for 18 years at Garner Correctional Institution, where he made friends who became like family.

Jeff's greatest joy was his family and he will be profoundly missed.

Visitation was held on Wednesday April 1, 2026 at Hamden Memorial Funeral Home, 1300 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden from 9am-12pm. Funeral procession will leave Hamden Memorial Funeral home at 12:30pm. A Mass of Christian Burial will be Celebrated in Our Lady of Assumption Church, 81 Center Road, Woodbridge at 1pm. Burial will follow in Eastside Cemetery of Woodbridge. Condolences may be expressed at [Hamdenmemorialfuneralhome.com](http://Hamdenmemorialfuneralhome.com).

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to support Jeff and Michelle's children, JJ, Ty, and Gabby. Contributions will go toward the children's educational and extracurricular expenses, helping to ensure they can continue their passions in the way that Jeff always encouraged.

Officer Jeffrey Michael Tafuto was officially recognized as a 100 Club Fallen Hero at our April 2026 meeting.



## **In Loving Memory ...**

**JOHN C. GAVALLAS November 22, 1945—March 25, 2026**

### ***The Hundred Club of Connecticut Director***

“Loving father, grandfather, brother and uncle”



John C. Gavallas, 80, of Watertown, CT, passed away peacefully on March 25, 2026, surrounded by his loving family and welcomed into the arms of the Lord. He was the beloved husband of the late Roxana (Hays) Gavallas.

John was born in Meriden, CT on November 22, 1945, a son of the late Nicholas and Sarah (Clayton) Gavallas. He grew up in Wallingford where he attended local schools and later served honorably in the United States Navy during the Vietnam era. After his honorable discharge, John earned an associate degree in Criminal Justice from Mattatuck Community College. Thereafter, he began his law enforcement career in August 1969, with the Watertown, CT Police Department. Starting as a Patrol Officer, John rose through the ranks to serve in the positions of Detective, Detective Sergeant, Chief Inspector, Deputy Chief, and ultimately as Chief of Police from June 2007 until his retirement on December 31, 2020, concluding 51 years of devoted service to the Watertown community. One of his proudest accomplishments was serving alongside his son, Lieutenant Tim Gavallas, who retired from the Watertown Police Department in 2024 after 30 years of service.

After his retirement in 2020, John continued to serve the community he loved in many ways. He was twice elected to the Watertown Board of Education and served on the Police Commission. He also served as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Connecticut Law Enforcement Memorial Foundation, honoring and remembering officers who lost their lives in the line of duty. In addition, John served on the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association where he held the position of President from June 2017 to June 2018, as well as on the Boards of The Hundred Club of Connecticut, and Water-Oak Crime Stoppers.

More important than his dedicated service to his country and community, John was a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother and uncle. He provided for his family and created countless cherished memories. Each summer, he loved taking family vacations – often to Virginia Beach, as well as on numerous treasured trips throughout New England.

John and his family shared many joyful holidays together, especially Christmases, Thanksgivings, and summer celebrations at the beach or watching fireworks on the Fourth of July. He always supported his children in every endeavor, even serving as Cub Scout Master for Pack 52 while his boys participated.

Known lovingly as “Poppy,” John adored his four grandchildren and took immense joy in attending their soccer, basketball, and softball games, track and cross country meets, dance recitals, and band concerts. He was present for every birthday and holiday, his love shining through in his kindness, generous time, encouragement, and pride in his family. In his free time, John was an avid reader of true crime and political books.

Left to honor and cherish his memory are his two sons, Tim Gavallas and his wife Heidi of Watertown; Matt Gavallas and his wife Christine of Berlin; his four cherished grandchildren: Teige, Ty, Bella, and Gina; his brother, Nicholas Gavallas and his wife Aleida of Miami, FL; his sisters-in-law, Joan Crebase of Cheshire, brother-in-law Guy Hays and his wife Nancy of Wake Forest, NC, Tammy Hays of Waterbury, Tina Hays of Waterbury, as well as several nieces and nephews. He also leaves behind his adored granddogs, Lucy and Marshmallow.

He was predeceased by his beloved wife, Roxana Gavallas; his brother, Joseph Crebase; his brothers-in-law, Clifford Hays and Kevin Hays.

In addition to his family and friends, the Watertown and Oakville communities, along with the members of the Watertown Police Department and the broader Connecticut law enforcement community, have greatly benefited from Chief Gavallas’ exemplary leadership and he will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

## **Reflecting on the Past & Looking Toward the Future ...**

Mr. Alexander Phibbs, grandson of The Hundred Club of Connecticut Founder Anthony Ustjanauskas, visited the office earlier this year, in January, meeting with President Jason Leavitt, Mrs. Alba Hanson and Managing Director Dale Hourigan.

Mr. Phibbs shared newspaper articles, founding documents and other historical facts of the early days of The Hundred Club, enhancing our historical archives.

A fascinating and beneficial meeting providing forgotten details and facts about members and the Board of Directors, to include invaluable influential assistance from notable citizens, politicians and military leaders who made a lasting impact on the future successes of The Hundred Club of Connecticut.



## **2026 Proposed Legislation Impacting First Responders**



**Proposed 2026 Connecticut Legislation (HB 5046)** aims to address public safety staffing shortages by offering tuition waivers at state colleges and mortgage assistance to police officers and firefighters with at least five years of service. The bill, introduced by Governor Lamont, seeks to boost recruitment and retention, providing housing and education incentives. (CT Mirror)

### **Key Aspects of Proposed Legislation (2026):**

**Tuition Waivers:** Police officers and firefighters (including volunteers) with at least five years of service can receive waived tuition and fees at Connecticut State Universities, Community Colleges, and UConn.

**Mortgage Assistance:** The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority is authorized to create a program to help these first responders purchase homes in the communities where they work.

**Targeted Recruitment/Retention:** The initiative is designed to counteract a "public safety crisis" involving a significant drop in firefighter and police staffing. (CT Mirror)

### **Recent Related Legislation (2025)**

**Fallen Hero Fund (PA 25-61):** Signed in June 2025, this law provides survivors of fallen police officers, firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics with financial support.

**Survivor Benefits:** Surviving family members of firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics can remain on the first responder's health insurance for up to five years, aligning with existing benefits for police.

(CT.GOV-Connecticut's Official State Website)

*The proposed 2026 legislation (HB 5046) is currently under consideration by the Public Safety and Security Committee and is expected to go into effect on July 1, 2026, for tuition waivers and October 1, 2026, for mortgage assistance.*



## From the Desk of the Managing Director

**2026 Membership Renewal** period has come and gone; 216 members have not renewed and will be removed from our membership roster. Should these past members wish to rejoin, they must complete a new on-line application. Failure to renew does impact future Life Memberships.

**AUTO RENEWAL** As a reminder to all current members, we encourage you to call our office and if you have not done so, please make arrangements for auto renewal. Benefits include maintaining uninterrupted membership while preserving your future opportunities for obtaining Life Membership status.

**Life Membership Requirements:** you must have **uninterrupted** membership for **15 years**, be **75** years of age and donate **\$500**.

**As previously announced**, we no longer rely on the US POST OFFICE for mailing invoices and processing membership services. All business is conducted by email unless you have made other arrangements with the Office. Please check your SPAM or JUNK mail. Your cooperation will result in significantly lowering our cost of doing business, helping us reduce unnecessary spending and increase operational efficiency.

**We have a new website** [www.hundredclubofct.org](http://www.hundredclubofct.org) please take time to visit our new and expanded webpage. It contains new information regarding club history; we can now accept donations to include payments for future tournaments and luncheons. You can also purchase Hundred Club apparel online. Monitor the webpage to keep up to date on Club news, information and upcoming events.

This year to date your membership dues have supported the following **benefits to our Fallen Hero Families:**

**\$50,000 in Line of Duty Death Assistance**

**35,496.00 in Scholarships**

**\$7,503.20 Birthday Remembrance, Holidays, and Special Assistance**

**Save The Date:** Our 2026 Golf Tournament at Tunxis will take place on 24 June, the tournament sells out every year so be sure to register your foursome early. Our 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Luncheon, October 28<sup>th</sup> to be held at The Aqua Turf of Southington.

**Board of Director Positions:** Members interested in serving a volunteer three-year term as a director are encouraged to call the Managing Director for details. Appointments to the Board of Directors are made every Fall.

**Remember:** Every member is a recruiter. Help us expand our base by sponsoring a new membership! Please direct the applicant to our online application form, simply complete the form and hit the send button, it's that easy and quick. Spread the word and help our hero families.

The Office Team stands by to assist with membership and Fallen Hero Family needs. Our hours are posted online Monday - Friday. The Office is closed on all federally recognized holidays.

Sincerely,

Managing Director Dale P. Hourigan



"The Club with a Heart"

The Hundred Club of Connecticut  
119 Oakwood Drive  
Glastonbury, CT 06033

## Reminder

**Be sure to visit our new website at <https://www.hundredclubofct.org>**

### **SAVE THE DATES**

**Golf Tournament @ Tunxis Plantation—June 24, 2026**

The tournament sells out every year so be sure to register your foursome early!

**Annual Meeting and Luncheon @ The Aqua Turf Club—October 28, 2026**

Thank you,

Dale P. Hourigan - Managing Director





LUNCH  
BEVERAGE CART  
DINNER  
CASH BAR

# THE HUNDRED CLUB OF CONNECTICUT

ED FUNK MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

**JUNE 24 2026**

**8:30 REGISTRATION OPENS**

**10:00 SHOTGUN START**

**TUNXIS COUNTRY CLUB**

87 TOWN FARM RD.

FARMINGTON CT 06032

**\$180 PER PLAYER - \$50 DINNER ONLY (4:00pm)**

**REGISTER ONLINE AT <https://www.hundredclubofct.org>**

**PAYMENT CAN BE MADE ONLINE WHEN REGISTERING OR**

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: The Hundred Club of CT**

**MAIL TO: 119 Oakwood Drive - Glastonbury CT 06033**

## **SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

TEE SIGN - SILVER - GOLD - BREAKFAST - GOLF CART - BEVERAGE CART

More information available on our website

<https://www.hundredclubofct.org>

**860-633-8357 - [ALBA@HUNDREDCLUBOFCT.ORG](mailto:ALBA@HUNDREDCLUBOFCT.ORG)**