



### Billy Cartwright, 42 New job brought out his best

Billy Cartwright's boss at the Providence Yarn Co. was a tough act to follow.

So, when the man retired as warehouse manager a couple of years ago, Charles Samdperil, the owner of the company, wasn't sure Cartwright could fill his shoes.

"I said to Billy, do you think you could do this?" Samdperil recalled. "He took over and he felt good about the responsibility, and the more responsibility, the better he got."

Things weren't always so smooth with Billy, the only son of William H. Cartwright Jr. and the former Charlotte E. Collins, who died of cancer when Billy was 20.

The Cartwrights had four girls, three born before Billy. "He gave me more headaches than all my daughters put together," his father said.

As a boy, Billy used to worry his father sick by staying out late and not calling to say where he was. The elder Cartwright said he would call the police to find him.

As Billy got older, however, he settled down. He still liked to camp and fish and ride motorcycles.

But he also had a girlfriend, Kristen Aris, whom he was hoping to marry. He had an apartment on the east side of Pawtucket, and had just bought a new van.

Billy, 42, planned to register the van that Friday, and had asked his father to pick him up and drive him to work.

The elder Cartwright said he had a premonition his son was dead late Thursday night when television reported that there had been a devastating fire at a heavy-metal concert.

After Billy's death was confirmed, the elder Cartwright and his longtime companion, Doris Bryant, went to the Providence Yarn Co. to return Billy's keys to the warehouse. There, they found his Yamaha motorcycle, as well as the clipboard folder he had used to keep track of shipments.

Samdperil said he and others had spent the days since Billy died going through the 30,000-square-foot warehouse looking for things — things that Billy would have been able to find immediately.

— John Castellucci



### Eddie Corbett, 31 Reached out to all

Edward B. Corbett III went to Earth Day in Boston every year, and he always made a point of giving homeless people a dollar and a few cigarettes, his family remembers.

"He was compassionate," says his stepfather, Mike Eaton. "People on the street you would shun or ignore, Eddie would go right up to them and talk to them."

A perfectionist at work, Eddie disliked "hackers," says his brother, Shawn P. Corbett of East Greenwich, who worked alongside his elder brother for 11 years. The brothers were self-employed plasterers for Classic Interiors of Narragansett.

Together, they had plastered several mansions in Newport.

"Ed hated people who didn't do things professionally, who didn't care," Shawn says. "Because he cared."

Eddie, 31, who lived on Bank Street in West Warwick, was the eldest of a tight-knit family of full and half siblings who all call each other brothers and sisters. They were reunited in the late 1980s, when Eddie moved from Florida.

He reveled in socializing and having a good time, and took over the grill when the family threw its annual Fourth of July cookout.

"He felt unification," says his brother Daniel B. Casey of East Greenwich. "He just finally felt like this was home, just all one big family, when all of us came together."

Eddie loved to surf, skateboard and hang out at the beach in Narragansett, both for the waves and the cute women.

He was opinionated — never shy — and always wore a baseball cap, even to his brother's wedding.

Eddie also dressed in layers — sometimes wearing three T-shirts he'd take off gradually — one shirt for work, one for dinner, one for going out.

The extra clothing padded his 5-foot, 8-inch frame.

"He just had everything on him —

ready to go," says his sister Ruth M. Corbett of East Greenwich. "In every season. That was just him."

When they found him at The Station, Ed was wearing two pairs of shorts, two pairs of socks and two fleece pullovers.

Eddie was a collector who hoarded the front pages of newspapers after a big event, coasters from bars, and odd bits and pieces from rummage sales. Once, he found an old roll-top desk and delivered it as a surprise to his brother's house.

He loved Moët champagne and was the first one to buy friends a drink. He doted on his nieces and nephews, taking them canoeing on the Narrow River near his parents' house in Narragansett or buying them treats when the ice cream truck arrived.

Eddie wouldn't just buy for his relatives — he would buy for all the children who raced up to the truck.

"He remembered what it was like to not get an ice cream," Ruth said.

— Jennifer D. Jordan



### Mike Cordier, 32 Always put others first

Mike Cordier could often be found along the shores of Quonochontaug Pond. It was there that he fished, clammed, and thought.

"He spent more time there than any place else," said his father, Ron.

Mike would cast a line anytime, day or night, hoping for bluefish, bass or whatever the waters held.

"Whenever the fish were running, he was there," confirmed Nicole Dorcas, Mike's girlfriend of four years.

Those were fun times shared with family and friends.

"Even if we didn't catch anything we had a good time; we'd hang out," said John Herlihy, of Westerly.

Mike and John became fast friends in seventh grade after meeting during a Westerly football game that pitted neighborhood against neighborhood. A love of sports — baseball, hockey and football — and the outdoors fused their friendship. The best times were spent just hanging out, sharing a beer, talking.

"He's like the brother I never had; he's my best friend," Herlihy said.

Mike was known as a prankster with a warm smile and quick wit. His hijinks, his family and friends say, are not fit for print.

But it was his generous spirit that set him apart, they say.

"There was never a time that he said no," said Paul Woerner, a friend since the two attended junior high school in Westerly years ago.

He tended to put others first, often tipping double and insisting on treating his companions to drinks and dinner.

"It was one of those things that used to irk me," his father said. "I used to tell him to put himself first. He would give people more than he'd give to himself."

After a recent snowstorm, Mike appeared at his parents' house. He hadn't been around for a few weeks, but knowing that his father had a bad back, he came to shovel the driveway. Amid the snow and cold, father and son reminisced and planned for the fishing season ahead.

"He was my best fishing partner," Ron Cordier said.

Mike, 32, who moved to North Kingstown last summer, was dedicated to his job as a merchandiser. He was working a promotion for his employer, McLaughlin & Moran, when the fire at The Station broke out. His family said he filled a shift at the last minute for a coworker, handing out T-shirts and hats near the front door.

— Katie Mulvaney



### Freddy Crisostomi, 38 A talent for finding fun

Alfred Crisostomi — "Cousin Freddy" to his friends — was the man to see if you wanted to talk sports or music, or better yet, go to the game or the concert and have a time to remember.

He was a young 38, with enough positive energy and enthusiasm to not only keep up with but lead a group of friends and cousins more than a decade younger.

He kept in touch with them all via cell phone, announcing his plans on the fly. He was on his way to a good time in his Ford Explorer — who could get away and meet him there?

"He electrified and lit up the room," his cousin Brian Valcourt said. "He'd always hug you and say, 'Great to see you!' He showed everybody the utmost respect."

"We didn't think of him as a 38-year-old cousin," Brian said. "He was like a brother and a best friend."

But kind feelings never stopped him from destroying his challengers at any game going: tennis, darts, cards, pool.

On Sunday, the day of rest, Freddy would go only so far as to stop moving. At his home on Haswill Street, in Warwick, he commanded his satellite-powered big-screen TV, remote in one hand, cell phone in the other, calling every local-team fan he knew to glory in the victories of his all-New York heroes — Yankees, Jets, Islanders.

Whenever New York lost, naturally, he'd duck the return torment by not answering the phone.

"It was highly competitive," his friend K.C. Jarest said. "His teams always had to be Number 1."

His friends remember how much Freddy loved his children, Nicole, 15, and Brandon, 10, and his girlfriend, Gina Russo of Cranston, who was with him at The Station and remains critically injured.

His friend, Alivia Sarno, said the couple met on the Internet and had mutual interests in sports and music.

"You couldn't see him with anyone else," she said.

Rene Valcourt, a cousin, often teased Freddy about his slowness in proposing marriage to Gina. "He'd say, 'I'm too young!' — but pretty soon. She's the one."

Freddy's friend Bill Marcello said, "The last year of Freddy's life was probably the best, the most successful, the happiest I'd ever seen him."

Rene went to a tattoo artist the Monday after the fire and had his left shoulder inked with a four-line tribute: "Cousin Freddy / R.I.P. / 02-20-03 / Keep Rockin' "



### Robert Croteau, 31 Band was his favorite

There was no bigger Great White fan than Robert J. Croteau.

If you needed proof, you could check out his album collection, every one signed by the band. Or look through his collection of autographed memorabilia, including guitar picks, shirts, and dozens of concert tickets.

He was on a first-name basis with the band members — and even the lead singer's mother.

"He died doing something he really loved," his mother, Judith, says.

Robert, 31, had been assaulted and spent 4½ months in a coma last year. To try to bring him out of it, his family played Great White's songs in his hospital room. One album in particular was being played a lot on the radio at the time. It was called Recovery. When he woke up, all Robert wanted was to hear that album.

"I tried to get him to listen to other bands, but he didn't want to hear it," says his brother Tommy.

Robert, who grew up in Fall River and graduated from Durfee High, lived with his parents and Tommy. For them, he was an amazing fix-it man and housekeeper in one, happy to clean and arrange the house if anything was out of order.

"The way he collected stuff, and cleaned and fixed everything. Things I couldn't be bothered with, he'd do," Tommy says. And he was always excited, whether he was watching wrestling or reruns of All in the Family. "He acted younger than he was. He was 31, but he acted like he was 21," Tommy said.

Robert worked as a landscaper for Barnes Tree Service in Rochester, Mass., and for Summit Grove Landscaping in Dartmouth, Mass. In his free time, he visited residents at the Cardinal Medeiros elder-care home in Fall River to watch television and play bingo.

"He was just a friendly guy," his mother says. "He liked everybody, and everybody liked him."

— Daniel Barbarisi



### Lisa D'Andrea, 42 A zest for living, giving

Lisa Maria D'Andrea adored the summer season. It gave her plenty of opportunities to garden and walk along the waters near her home on Blanding Avenue in Barrington, sifting

the sand for seashells and unique rocks.

She brought nature into her home as well. Potted plants thrive along window sills, complementing the many treasures found during Lisa's walks. A framed picture of Ozzy Osbourne, angel statues, Hello Kitty paraphernalia, snow globes, and penguin figurines are scattered about.

"There are so many things from our childhood here," said her youngest brother, Peter D'Andrea of Los Angeles, walking through her home.

"She had a tremendous zest for living," added her sister, Paula D'Andrea, also of Los Angeles. "We're all proud of her. . . ."

Lisa was the oldest of four. Another brother, Mark D'Andrea, lives in Newport.

Lisa, 42, was a teacher who worked for more than 20 years with special-needs children.

Bethany Aspinwall teaches the special-education classroom across the hall from Lisa at Cranston High School East. The two close friends had also worked together at Meeting Street School and Bradley Hospital, both in East Providence.

"She was my very, very good friend," Aspinwall said. "She babysat my kids. I sold her this place when I moved around the corner into a bigger house. . . . I've worked every place she has worked."

Lisa wouldn't have been at The Station that night if school had been in session, Aspinwall said. She went with several friends, including Abbie L. Hoisington, a special-education teacher in Burrillville, who also died in the fire.

"She went to bed by 8:30 p.m. every night," the friend recalled. "She woke up at 4 a.m. to work out and was at school in the morning by 6:15, 6:30. . . . She only stayed out late maybe three to four times a year."

Aspinwall most remembers her friend as a giver. During the recent snowstorm, Lisa didn't hesitate to shovel the driveway of her parents, William and Phyllis D'Andrea, who live in Riverside, her hometown.

Lisa also worked with her Bay Spring and West Barrington neighbors to restore the Allin's Cove salt marsh.

"There's so many slackers around, but that wasn't Lisa," Aspinwall said. "She gave back so much of herself. You call Lisa, and she'll be there."

— Alisha A. Pina



### Matthew Darby, 36 'He just took life full on'

Matthew P. Darby liked fast cars, an occasional prank, and anything to do with water.

"He was a little boy at heart," his wife, Melinda, says. "He loved toys, any kind of toys."

Once, while taking his friend's Corvette for a test drive on New York City streets, he stopped traffic, spinning the wheels of the car in the middle of an intersection. (He had hoped to buy the fastest boat he could afford this summer.)

"He just took life full on, and then he would sit there and just laugh," Melinda says.

Matthew, 36, met his wife at a beach in Florida 17 years ago; she was a waitress and he was a painter. When her parents moved back to Coventry, she stayed with Matthew in Florida. They were fast in love.

They lived there until their first child, Jessica, was born in 1993. At that time, they moved to Coventry to be closer to her parents while raising Jessica.

Matthew and Jessica were extremely close. They played video games, built an elaborate model train set-up, and, occasionally, he even let his "Marshmallow" drive the car.

He was the owner and operator of Cousins Painting in Coventry.

"He liked his independence," his father-in-law, Ed Keenan, said. "He tried to work for other people but didn't like it."

"He knew what he wanted and he went for it," Melinda said. "He couldn't be told what to do. He was a leader, not a follower."

He liked to surf, swim, and sit in the sun — it cleared his mind.

"Florida was his favorite place to be, because of the ocean — until he found Newport," Melinda said. "He just liked everything about the water."

He enjoyed surfing so much that while painting on a job in Newport, he once slipped away, bought a board and hit the waves.

"I've seen him go surfing one time in Newport and come out of the water so beat up," his father-in-law said. "He had no fear."

But the most important thing for Matthew was providing for his family.

"That's what gave him pleasure, making sure we didn't need anything," Melinda said.

He dreamed of buying a large, waterfront home for Melinda and Jessica. Any day now, Melinda expects Jessica's little sister to be born; her name will be Sara Michelle Darby.

— Andrew C. Helman



### Dina DeMaio, 30 Her son 'was her world'

Always in motion, always pushing forward, always planning the future. Those who loved Dina Ann DeMaio, 30, say determination defined her life.

"Nothing was going to stop her," her brother Vincent M. DeMaio said in the kitchen of the West Warwick apartment Dina shared with their mother, Patricia Belanger, and Dina's 7-year-old son, Justin Perry DeMaio.

"She was motivated. She had energy. People around here have a simple life, simple jobs. Dina wanted more, for herself and her son."

She graduated from Lincoln High School in 1991 and went on to be the first in her family to graduate from college, earning her associate's and then her bachelor's degree in court stenography from Johnson & Wales University in 1999.

She worked full time for the last six years at Textron Financial Corp. in Providence as a legal secretary. She was a single mother, raising Justin with the help of her mother.

Last year, Dina started a master's program at her alma mater, studying to become a paralegal.

She'd get home from night classes and get to work on a computer in a corner of her mother's small living room, studying until midnight, rising at 6 a.m. to get Justin ready for school.

She never complained.

Dina took a job waitressing at The Station last November to make a little extra pocket money "so she could take Justin out, get him things," Patricia said.

Patricia raced to Rhode Island Hospital hours after the fire with a photograph of her eldest daughter, begging for information, and drove to Boston to see if one of the two Jane Does was her Dina.

But no one matched the description: 5'3", slim, with short, sleek light-brown hair and a wide, warm smile.

That Thursday was Dina's 30th birthday.

Her older brother, Vincent, called her to wish her a happy birthday between fares at his job as a cab driver near Austin, Texas.

"She said, 'I'm 20, not 30,' and I said 'I guess that makes me 22, then, not 32,'" Vincent said.

She told him that her boss had called her in that night so that she could celebrate her birthday with her friends on Friday, the night she usually worked.

One of Dina's friends who worked with her at Textron, Dawn Brindamour, said a group of 12 cousins and friends planned to take her to their favorite haunts, Restaurant Prov and Art Bar.

"She was the organizer, pulling us all together," Dawn said. "She loved life. She planned trips. We all went to Universal Studios last year with our children and had the time of our lives."

Before she left for work that night, she and her mother discussed houses — Dina was starting to look at two-families near her mother's Pawtuxet Terrace apartment. She told her mother she wanted them all to go to Las Vegas this year. She said maybe after her master's, she'd join the reserves.

"She was always making plans," Patricia said. "Justin was her world. How she had the energy to do all she did, I'll never know. She amazed me."

— Jennifer D. Jordan



### Albert DiBonaventura, 18 Dreamed of being rock star

His fingers conjured magic from the neck of a guitar. Albert A. DiBonaventura, 18, could play on his knees, or swing the instrument behind his back and rip into a melody without seeing the strings.

Six guitars hang on a wall in one room in his parents' cream-colored house on Wheeler Street, North Dighton, Mass., where he lived. Music posters dot another room.