

# Guy Sweatland, longtime Suffield resident, dies

By Doreen Guarino

Journal Inquirer

SUFFIELD — Guy Sweatland, a lifelong town resident and devoted public servant who served on several town boards, including the school building committee which oversaw construction of the new high school, is being remembered as someone who dearly loved his family and his town, and worked hard for the betterment of Suffield.

Sweatland, 62, of West Suffield, died Friday at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Hartford.

His wife, Mary Jane Sweatland — they celebrated their 43rd wedding anniversary in June — said Sunday that her husband was proud his hometown remained closeknit and kept its small town quality of life.

The couple's son, Timothy Sweatland, who also lives in West Suffield, said Sunday that his father deeply loved his children and grandchildren.

"He was a great father and always looked out for us," he said.

Samuel Fuller, who formerly served on the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures with Guy Sweatland, who was its chairman, said Sweatland was "just a wonderful, wonderful person."

Fuller said that Sweatland had a way of being concise and getting to the heart of any issue considered by the commission.

"He got right to the matter with a sensible direction," Fuller said.

Fuller said Sweatland always had "very good, sound judgment" when it came to capital expenditures, always managing to get things done in town by squirreling away money so it was in reserve and the town didn't take "a big hit all at once."

Gary Mandirola, former chairman of the Board of Finance, remembered Sweatland, his friend

since they were youngsters, as a man who had three loves in his life — his family, stock car racing, and the town.

"I don't know if there's anybody in town that didn't like him," Mandirola said.

"He was a lifelong Republican and I'm a lifelong Democrat, and we were still the best of friends. It didn't matter."

Mandirola, who served as an alternate on the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures, said that what Sweatland did most for the town was to make sure there was a long-range plan for all major capital expenditures.

Sweatland's vision in that respect resulted in the town never running into a situation where "all of a sudden we have everything breaking at once," Mandirola said.

Sweatland also served with Mandirola on the Blue Ribbon Committee, which was created by the Board of Selectmen last year to review the structure of the Police Commission and its operational procedures.

Sweatland was also a member of the Building Committee, which built the new multimillion-dollar high school and had the old high school converted into the Suffield Middle School.

Sweatland was retired from a more than 30-year career at Aetna Life & Casualty, where he had worked as assistant to the vice president of computer operations.

Graveside funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday at the West Suffield Cemetery.

Friends may call from 2 to 4 and from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the Heritage Funeral Home, 1240 Mountain Road.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Suffield Volunteer Ambulance, Box 642, Suffield, CT 06078.

# People You Should Know



Photo by Sam Fuller

## Guy Sweatland

*by Sam Fuller*

Guy Sweatland is a role model for all of the townspeople of the field. Even though he suffers from a kidney condition that requires dialysis five times a day, he still manages to actively play a part in town affairs. He presently serves on the New High School Building Committee that entails frequent visits to the site. Previously, he served on the School Facilities Committee and the Bonding Task

Force that led to the contracting for the new school. Guy has served the town so well that when he comments in concise terms at a town meeting everybody listens – he has credibility. In addition to his role with the high school, Guy has chaired the Advisory Committee on Capital Expenditures for the town for the past 10 years.

Guy, the son of Harold “Cookie” Sweatland and Helen

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## Sweatland

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Monell Sweatland, has lived all his life in Suffield. His father was a builder who spent the late thirties repairing homes on the shoreline damaged by the 1938 hurricane. In the early forties he was considered the quality homebuilder in Suffield, building, among others, homes for Mead Alcorn, Dr. William Davis and Ed Brodeur. His brother John married Judy Price and lives in Columbus, Ohio. His brother Gary married Sharon Jenkinson and lives in Abilene, Kansas. His sister, Gail Sweatland Gamache, lives in Suffield.

Guy went through the Suffield school system and then on to the University of Connecticut. He joined Gary Mandirola, a life-long Suffield friend at Aetna Life and Casualty Insurance Company where they managed the computer systems. Guy married Mary Jane Sniadowski. Her father, Chester Sniadowski, was very active in Little League and well-known in western Massachusetts as a basketball referee.

When Guy was asked why he spends so much time working on Suffield town commissions, he said, "As chairman of the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures, I want to know what is going on in town and how we are spending our money. Schools are our largest capital expenditure, so that has led me into serving on various school committees." Yet, in spite of all his work at Aetna and for the town, when asked of what he is most proud, Guy says, "I am proudest of how my kids turned out." He and Mary Jane have raised two daughters, Jillian Bruning, and Jodine Dubiel, and a son, Timothy. He certainly was a great role model for them and I am sure some of that must have rubbed off on them.

In closing this interview, I asked Guy what changes he has seen in Suffield during his lifetime. His response was, "The town hasn't changed all that much and it is still a great place in which to live." As long as Suffield continues to have people like the Sweatlands, that will always be the case. ¶