



Paula Cornelio Anderson

March 18, 2026

Paula Marie Cornelio Anderson of West Hartford and Guilford, CT passed away holding the hands of those she loved. She was born on December 17, 1952, and lost her life to scleroderma, a rare form of lupus. She was the only daughter of very loving parents, Marie L. and Lt. Colonel E. Martin Cornelio. To mourn her, Paula leaves her beautiful family, her brother Tim (Jody) who she had a fun childhood with and his children, her godson and nephew Jason M. Cornelio (Brittany), and her niece Lindsay E. Cornelio (Vigo), and great-niece Alma Iris. Paula held a deep mother's love for them. She rejoiced watching Jason steal bases playing baseball and seeing Lindsay sing her solos. Her favorite vacation was celebrating their graduations with a family trip to Hawaii. She also leaves her longtime loving supportive companion, Daniel Copeland, her cousin, Dean Cornelio (Thea), Uncle Carl Cornelio, along with many cousins and her closest friends, Robyn, MJ, Larae, Angela, Maggie, Cheryl, Dianne and her late childhood friends, Mamie and Beverly S. She was born with an adventurous spirit and enjoyed many different activities. She felt her biggest accomplishment was at Camp Asto Wamah when she was the only girl to complete the "Frog Island Swim" swimming across Columbia Lake at 12 years old. This encouraged her to pass her Jr. Life Saving and Water Safety Aid. She loved sailing on her catamaran, water skiing with cousins at Lake Bungee, singing and dancing in community theater, attending Broadway shows, visiting the Caribbean Islands, modeling in a bridal fashion show, playing catcher in a coed softball league and

kayaking. She painted Christmas ornaments by hand and sold them at craft shows and gift shops for many years. She wanted all of her ornaments on her tree to be hand made. Paula also enjoyed having dinner parties for her friends and family and hosting holiday get-togethers. A highlight every Labor Day weekend at the Cape was being with her family and special Cape Cod cousins enjoying an amazing clam bake. Another love she had was her “Beach House” in Guilford, it was a fun place for boat rides and celebrations. Paula graduated from W. H. Hall High School where she received a “Letter” for athletics, Post College (A.S. Interior Design) where she was named to “Who’s Who Among College Students” for Campus Leadership, the University of Hartford (B.A. Communication Art) and Wesleyan University (Master of Art in Liberal Studies). For her graduate thesis she created a little stitchery business she named “Hearts and Threads.” She wanted to bring back the lost art of hand stitchery and painting on fabric.

Her career path began as an Interior Decorator, then as a Corporate Trainer at CIGNA and lastly her academic career as a College Professor which she enjoyed for over 30 years. She felt it was what she was meant to do. Tunxis Community College was her first teaching position. Interestingly enough, she was not a technical person but in 1997, managed to receive a “Pioneer in Distance Learning” award for being the first faculty member in CT to offer a class 100% online, it was The History of Ancient Art, and it still reaches full capacity every semester.

Paula’s teaching at UH was vast, she taught in the Hartford Art School and also in the departments of Art History, Hillyer College and University Interdisciplinary Studies. She earned her Collegiate Chair for over 25 years of teaching and she loved it! UH is where she led a study abroad program with MJ and planned trips for students traveling to two countries on spring break. Some favorite places were Barcelona, and Italy from Milan, Lake Como and Florence down to Sicily. Visiting Amalfi, Pompeii, Naples and Capri along the way. Also, Paris to the south of France, Nice, Monte Carlo, Monaco, Vienna, Budapest, England and more!

In addition to teaching at UH, for several years she headed an Interior Design program in West Hartford for Post University. This was fun for her because she loved classical architecture and decorating and re-decorating her home! "The Tea Rose Antique Company" was a small antique business that she had for many years. Her love of pretty dishes was the focus of this business, and it was something that brought her pleasure.

A special thank you goes to Dr. Wm. Traverse, Dr. Julian Estaban, Dr. Richard Soucier, and Dr. Kaur for their wonderful care. Their concerns and warm compassion made a difference.

Paula's passion besides loving her family and friends was for animals. Her life was full of love from her rescued animals and most recently, her dog, Teddy, and her cat, Lily. Her wish is for all animals to be able to go to bed with a full belly. This love made her establish "Feeding Topsy's Friends," which honors her late rescue dog Topsy Girl. Through fundraising, home parties and donations she has raised close to \$30,000 to help small shelters have food for animals in need. It would certainly make her happy to have this continue because the need is so great. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Paula's memory to any animal shelter under "Feeding Topsy's Friends."

There is a memorial bench in Fern Ridge Park in West Hartford, honoring all of the family dogs that Paula's family have loved throughout the years. It is located at the baseball diamond, facing the first base line.

There will be a funeral service held Saturday, April 11th, at 11:00am at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 872 Farmington Ave, West Hartford.

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

APR **11**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Thomas the Apostle
872 Farmington Ave.
West Hartford, CT
(860) 233-8269

Tribute Wall

BD

“ To Dan and all of Paula's loving family I send my deepest condolences. John Hanley and I just learned of Paula's passing. She was a close and loving Cobbs Road neighbor for many years. She continually advocated for our return to West Hartford after we retired to North Carolina. The best we could do was get back for a few cherished visits. She was so loved by both of us and we will continue to hold her close in our hearts. She was able to reach out to us during her last days and for that John and I will be forever grateful. Rest peacefully dear Paula. You are one in a million. Your positive influence will continue to be felt as we face each new day.

Barbara Dworak - May 25 at 09:44 AM

FG

“ Paula was a great friend from high school and beyond. Always a smile to welcome everyone. I always looked forward to seeing her at reunions. She was a member of our school reunion committee and we will miss her!

Fran Gloekler - April 10 at 01:54 PM

LB

“ Cigna sends out a monthly listing of people that have passed. I was so saddened to hear about Paula. We started our careers together at Cigna. They were about 8 of us ladies. We had such a tight click and we had so much fun. Paula was a light and a joy to be around. I believe we laughed more than we worked, but what a way to start out a career. She will be missed by many. My thoughts and prayers go out to her family and her friends.

Lori A Bell - April 01 at 05:51 PM

UR

“ *Urania R. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Paula Cornelio Anderson.*

Urania R. - March 31 at 07:10 PM

LM

“ *To Paula's Loved Ones. She was a phenomenal teacher, friend, co-worker. She taught me about the beauty in art. She will be sorely missed and fondly remembered. Linda KcKeen*

Linda K. McKeen - March 29 at 09:28 AM