



Thomas J. Condon

September 10, 2024

Thomas J. “Tom” Condon, a journalist who for more than 50 years informed, challenged and entertained readers, died Tuesday of cancer. He was 78.

Tom’s career was wide-ranging and influential. From his start in the Courant’s Old Saybrook bureau, he went on to become a general assignment reporter on a team known as “the bullpen,” open the newspaper’s New Haven bureau as its chief and be one of two reporters on the paper’s first investigative team.

In 1980, he became the special projects editor on the state desk, mentoring its large staff of reporters to report and write stories of consequence. Later, as the Hartford education writer, his ability to land front-page stories led to his role for 18 years as a widely read columnist on the city desk. For several years, he delivered commentary on WVIT-TV, Channel 30, earning a Boston/New England region Emmy award in 1991.

Courant colleagues frequently sought his advice and guidance, particularly on how to dig out and tackle a story. He was skeptical but never cynical, industrious, exacting and dedicated to truthful reporting. No one knew his state and its characters or loved them more than Tom.

In 2003, Tom joined the editorial page, where his lively writing and diligent reporting earned so many awards that they covered a wall in the department’s

conference room. He created the Place section covering urban affairs, land use, historic preservation and transportation. He became chief editorial writer, a role he held until he retired from the paper at the end of 2015.

The next week, he went to work part-time at the Mirror, where he was its urban and regional affairs reporter until his death. He was honored by numerous journalistic and civic organizations in his career. The Junior League called him “Hartford’s conscience.” He was inducted into the New England Newspaper Hall of Fame in 2016.

Tom was born on Feb. 7, 1946, in New London, the eldest of seven children of M. Carolyn Condon and Thomas P. Condon, the city’s long-serving probate judge. “TJ” attended St. Mary’s School and St. Bernard’s High School, where he was on the varsity football team.

At the University of Notre Dame, he played on the club rugby team that was the first Notre Dame team to compete in Ireland, joined the staff of the university’s then-newly founded newspaper, The Observer, and wrote for a humor magazine, The Leprechaun.

He joined the Courant in December 1968. The following March, he left for military service, which included a tour of duty in Vietnam. He was discharged in 1971 with the rank of first lieutenant.

Throughout his life, Tom read deeply about the war, reported on a humanitarian trip back to Vietnam by a group of veterans in 1989 and testified in Congress in support of lifting the trade embargo with Vietnam.

While working at the Courant, Tom attended the University of Connecticut School of Law, graduating in 1975 and passing the Connecticut bar exam. He worked part-time briefly for Neighborhood Legal Services in Hartford.

Although he chose journalism over law, he was proud of his legal education and tapped it throughout his career.

Tom reveled in the companionship and love of his boisterous family and cherished friends from every chapter of his life. He was a devoted husband and father, coaching his daughter, Clare, and son, Jack, on sports teams, ferrying them to music lessons and activities, serving as a Cub Scout troop leader, amusing them with his corny jokes, and sharing his love of rock and roll, the Red Sox, UConn women's basketball and Notre Dame football.

Athletics and physical activity were vital to Tom. At various points, he was a runner (completing the Chicago marathon), softball and basketball league player, biking enthusiast (riding with brothers Garret and Brian in New York's Five Boro Bike Tour several times), avid tennis player and longtime member of the Hartford Tennis Club.

Tom is survived by his wife, Anne (McGrath), of 37 years; children Clare Condon-Grade of Wallingford and John Condon of Chicago, and son-in-law Aaron Grade; brother Garret Condon (Daria Caruso) of West Hartford, and sister Deirdre Wyeth of New York City; sisters-in-law Virginia McGehee of Colchester, VT, Sherri Condon of New London, Maureen McGrath (James Manfredi) of East Haddam and Margaret DiScipio (Joseph) of Falls Church, VA; and nieces, nephews and grandnephew: Carolyn Jacobs (Matthew), May Wyeth, Thomas Condon, William Jacobs; Cara, Emma, Maria and Matthew Manfredi; Adelia, Joanna and Margaret DiScipio.

Tom was predeceased by his parents, four siblings and brother-in-law: C. Patricia, Brian, James and David Condon, and John Wyeth.

The family will receive visitors from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 19, at

St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church, 285 Church St., Hartford, where Tom was a parishioner and volunteer in its food ministries. A funeral Mass will be held on Friday, Sept. 20, at 10 a.m. and live-streamed (visit spsact.org or molloyfuneralhome.com). Burial will be private.

Tom asked that memorial donations be made to the CT Mirror (ctmirror.org) or Camp Courant (campcourant.org). If you can share a story or two about Tom, email the family at rememberingtomcondon@gmail.com. To honor Tom's life, subscribe to a local newspaper, volunteer in the community and attend a baseball game on a warm evening.

Previous Events

Calling Hours

SEP **19**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

St. Patrick St. Anthony Church
285 Church Street
Hartford, CT

Mass of Christian Burial

SEP **20**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Patrick St. Anthony Church
285 Church Street
Hartford, CT

Tribute Wall



“ *Molloy Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Thomas J. Condon*



Molloy Funeral Home - September 20, 2024 at 09:44 AM

MB

“ *To Anne, Clare and Jack - I am so sorry for the loss of your husband and father. TJ as I always called him and I go back 73 years when we were in kindergarten class. Ms Casey was our teacher. Was a leader then when he led a parade around the class room holding the American flag. Throughout the years, he was always fun to talk to. His vocabulary was amazing. I high school he wrote a play - Christmas in Moscow which was way over our heads. TJ was always kind, sincere and took care of other. He loved to laugh and always made me smile. I will miss my dear friend! Mary Brown, Atlanta Georgia*

Mary Brown - September 19, 2024 at 03:29 PM

FB

“ *From Den is Gallagher and Carol Barthel purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Thomas J. Condon.*



From Den is Gallagher and Carol Barthel - September 18, 2024 at 08:00 PM

FB

“ From Den is Gallagher and Carol Barthel planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Thomas J. Condon.

From Den is Gallagher and Carol Barthel - September 18, 2024 at 08:00 PM

BJ

“ Bill, Toni, Karen, John, Steve, Jane planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Thomas J. Condon.

Bill, Toni, Karen, John, Steve, Jane - September 17, 2024 at 01:56 PM



“ Rose Remembrance was purchased for the family of Thomas J. Condon.



September 17, 2024 at 01:56 PM

SP

“ My condolences to Anne, Clare, and Jack. Tom was a wonderful human being, so intelligent, funny and warm, always laughing and joking, a pleasure to be around. He lived life to the fullest. He will be sorely missed.

Steve Penella - September 17, 2024 at 11:14 AM

SD

“ From: Steve Penella & David D'Amato planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Thomas J. Condon.

Steve Penella & David D'Amato - September 17, 2024 at 11:09 AM

SD

“ Steve Penella & David D'Amato purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Thomas J. Condon.



Steve Penella & David D'Amato - September 17, 2024 at 11:09 AM

MD

“ Tom's pieces were always considered a “must read” for me. It was always a pleasure to encounter and chat at the Capitol. Sincerest condolences to your entire family.

Mark Davis - September 14, 2024 at 07:24 AM

BB

My condolences to Tom's family. I played football with Tom at Saint Bernard High School. He was a fantastic athlete, student, and human being. Bernard "Bing" Bartick

Bernard B Bartick - September 16, 2024 at 11:10 AM

JW

My condolences to Anne, Clare, and Jack and to the entire Condon family. I had the pleasure of meeting Tom at CCSU and in interviews with the Courant's editorial Board. He was truly "one of a kind". I was struck by his professionalism, depth of knowledge, willingness to examine and evaluate the subject at hand, and most of all his unique humanity. Journalism will never be able to fill his shoes. He will be missed

John Woodcock

john j woodcock - September 17, 2024 at 03:35 PM

AL

On behalf of the Junior League of Hartford, we recognize the impact that Tom had on the League and the impact he had on the Greater Hartford community. We appreciate Tom for his service, and he will be missed. Please accept our deepest condolences.

*Amie Lugo
Junior League of Hartford President 24-25*

Amie Lugo - September 17, 2024 at 09:36 PM

DS

I was just an ordinary reader of Tom Condon's columns but I did meet him in person at a Short Course on home repair we both participated in 40 years ago. I still remember a joke he told one freezing night - "It was so cold, the politicians had their hands in their own pockets".

Deena Steinberg

Deena Steinberg - July 28, 2025 at 10:55 AM