

In memory of Charlotte, Josephine, Daniel, Avielle, Rachel, Jessica, Victoria, Benjamin, Anne Marie, Dawn, Caroline, Ana, Madeleine, Catherine, Noah, James, Mary, Emilie, Lauren, Allison, Chase, Dylan, Jessie, Olivia, Jack, and Grace.



Many of the family remembrances were taken from

<http://mysandyhookfamily.org/>

The site contains links to various memorials that were set up by the families.



December 14, 2014



Charlotte Helen Bacon
Born February 22, 2006

Charlotte was a free spirit who jumped, skipped, and ran to the beat of her own drum. She was boldness, she was mischief, and she was love. She made us laugh daily with her crazy antics and were amazed by her clever insight and curiosity. We miss her singing loudly with the car radio, hearing her feet always running, never walking down the hallway in our home. She was a little girl that loved having her hair in pigtails. “Piggies”, as she called them. She fought hard every day against the suggestion of wearing a pair of pants. She loved dogs, especially Lily, our yellow Labrador. She was always on the search for a new stuffed dog to add to her collection. Most of all, Charlotte loved her family, whether it was going out for sushi, roasting marshmallows and sharing spooky stories by the firepit, or cuddling in bed reading her favorite books. She was and continues to be our brightest star in the sky.



Josephine Gay
Born December 11, 2005

Born in Maryland, Joey was the youngest of three girls in our family. She enjoyed many things in this life, but her favorite was being with her older sisters and playing games with them. She liked to snuggle on the couch and watch movies with us. Her favorites were The Chipmunks, Lemonade Mouth, and all of the Barbie movies. She loved to swim and went to the pool each weekend and throughout the summer. She liked art and playing outside on her playset – and all of our neighbors’. Her favorite books were the Fancy Nancy stories, and she never tired of having them read to her each night at bedtime.

Joey was loved by her family, friends, and teachers. She had a way with people, a way without words. She spoke with her eyes, her gentle hugs, her sweet spirit, and her little hands. She was a happy, affectionate, little girl who overcame many challenges in life. She laughed loudly and gave love freely and genuinely. Her smile lit up a room and captured everyone around her. Joey radiated God’s love and goodness and during our time with her she taught us how to be better people.



Daniel Barden
Born September 27, 2005

For Daniel, kindness knew no boundaries. Daniel was a child who would hold the door

open for strangers, scoop up his tiny ant friends to reunite them with their families, and befriend the classmate who always sat alone. Through his constant show of empathy towards all living things and his effortless joy for life, Daniel taught us so much in his short stay with us. Wherever Daniel was, he served as an inspiration to others – the stories are endless.

What Would Daniel Do is our family-endorsed effort to honor Daniel's memory by inspiring others to share his kindness, compassion, selflessness, and gratitude. Our mission is to empower every person to act with kindness in order to make a positive cultural change. By bringing awareness to these issues and by providing opportunities for interaction and acceptance, we hope to help individuals build a sense of community and reduce social isolation.



Avielle Rose Richman
Born October 17th, 2006

Avielle Rose Richman was born in San Diego, California on October 17th, 2006 into a fami-

ly of story tellers. With a spitfire personality, and a love of laughter, Avielle was rarely without a giant grin, and was often barefoot. Like her parents, she loved stories and demanded them as she was falling asleep, taking a bath, riding in the car, and on every walk she took. She already understood that her life — her growing up — was going to be a series of stories.



Rachel D'Avino
Born July 17, 1983

Rachel was a loving, caring teacher who had much to give to her students. She was born on July 17, 1983 in Waterbury, Connecticut. Her

mother was Mary Carmody D'Avino and her father was Ralph D'Avino. She graduated from Nonnewaug High School in 2001, and later received her bachelor's degree from the University of Hartford, a master's degree from Post University, and when she was killed she was studying to receive her Ph.D from St. Joseph's College in West Hartford. Just the week before her death, she had completed her course work to become a board certified behavioral analyst. Rachel had a real way about her. She possessed a smile that could light up a room the moment she entered. She had many interests beyond work. She loved animals, cooking, photography and karate. She was the oldest of three children, and she cherished her younger sisters, treating them as if they were her own children. When it came to work, she was passionate about her role as a behavioral therapist working primarily with autistic children. How ironic it is that the person who ended her life was possibly suffering from the same affliction that Rachel understood. Her own professional life was devoted to helping those with autism lead happy, healthy lives. Rachel's chosen profession gave her an acute awareness of the problems anyone with this disorder faces in their daily lives, and a unique perspective regarding the patience and forgiveness it takes to help those suffering from autism. She likely would have forgiven the perpetrator for his actions had she lived to discover that he may have been suffering from autism. That's who Rachel was, and her memory serves as a reminder that there are people in this world who may look past the failures of others into a deeper sense of who and what they really are.



Jessica Adrienne Rekos
Born May 10, 2006

Jessica was our beautiful little girl who brought so much happiness to our lives. She was an independent,

smart, and creative little girl who was always eager to learn new things. She spent hours "researching" Orca whales and just wanted to be "friends with an Orca". She also spent her time watching movies about horses, and she had fallen in love with the idea of becoming a cowgirl. She took horseback riding lessons every week, and she loved going on trail rides through the woods.

Jessica made us laugh until we cried with her one-liners and funny responses. She was a natural leader, and we called her our little CEO. She was always planning, asking questions, and figuring out the details. Jess adored her little brothers and loved being with them. Weeks before she died, her horseback riding instructor asked Jess who her best friend was and she replied, "My brother, Travis".



Victoria Leigh Soto
Born November 4, 1985

Vicki was the loving daughter of Donna and Carlos Soto, who at 27 years of age was living her dream teaching first grade at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Vicki lived at

home with her sisters Jillian, Carlee and her brother Carlos Mathew along with her favorite dog Roxie. Her family including her cousins were as important to her as her career as a teacher.

Her zest for life was evident to all who knew her, she was serious if she needed to be and silly more often than people would expect. She was beautiful with sparkling blue eyes. Vicki was the perfect daughter, loyal and loving cousin and friend as well as, the best person you would ever meet. Vicki's mantra was to live each day as if it was your last and to always: Live, Laugh, Love

Her family has set up a foundation to provide scholarships to students going into the field of education. They also collect and donate new books to schools in need.



Benjamin Andrew Wheeler
Born September 12, 2006

Ben woke up with a smile on his face and carried it everywhere he went. The constant sparkle in his eye showed his delight with all

the world and his slightly mischievous plans for it. And he was figuring it all out. We loved his inquisitive mind and his desire to have every question answered, with the utmost urgency. We loved his thirst for experience and that little bit of shyness that came out from time to time. We still hear the echo of his insistent voice, clamoring for the attention he knew he deserved and the world would give him. We followed every direction he gave as we scratched his back at bedtime, played every Beatles song he requested, and knew that if we skipped a page in that night's book we would certainly hear about it. His gap-toothed grin and his concern that he hadn't yet lost a tooth. Benny, we think about you every second of every minute of every hour of every day and now you are our lighthouse. Forever.



Anne Marie Murphy
Born July 25, 1960

Murphy, a mother of four who was a special education teacher, was reportedly found with her arms wrapped around 6-year-old Dylan Hockley. She worked with Dylan one-on-one, and the boy was so taken with his teacher that he kept a picture of her on his family's fridge, the Connecticut Post noted. The Associated Press wrote that other children were discovered under Murphy's protective embrace as well.



Dawn Hochsprung
Born June 28, 1965

Dawn was strong, confident, inspiring and compassionate. She was always willing to fight for what she believed in and to help in any way she could. She was a dedicated educator who inspired her students to reach their fullest potential by instilling in them the importance of life-long learning. Dawn spent many summers sailing

Long Island Sound with her husband George. They also enjoyed kayaking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing, or just talking in front of the fire with a glass of wine (and, of course, a box of chocolate). She loved her dog, a black standard poodle named Bella. She carried Bella on her hip like a baby and shared her own meals with Bella (often with her own fork).

Dawn had two daughters at a young age and raised them mostly by herself, but she never wavered in her ambition. She balanced her own education with her responsibilities as a mother. She never missed her daughters' softball games—she may have been in the bleachers doing homework, but she was always there. Her career advanced and her schedule grew hectic, but she never failed to be there for her daughters. They would often call during her workday and get her voicemail, but always got a text right back that said, “I’m in a meeting. Are you OK?”

Dawn also loved spending time with her grandchildren. She took them on sailing expeditions, trips to the Adirondacks and visits to museums and science centers. Ever the educator, she bought books as their gifts—always inscribed with a special note of how proud she was of them. She went to their sporting events and advocated for them at their schools. She often joked that she was their “mean grandma” because she wasn’t afraid to tell them ‘no.’ She could say this in good spirit, because she knew that she was also their favorite grandma.

Dawn died as she lived: always in control, handling whatever came her way. There is nothing that could have stopped her from trying to protect the people she loved.



Caroline Previdi
Born Sept.7, 2006

Caroline was our bright-eyed and cheerful little girl. The word that comes to mind when we think about her is "joyful". She found delight in the smallest things in life and often exclaimed things like, "Isn't that WONDERFUL?". We sometimes marveled at her sheer enthusiasm and zest for life. It wasn't difficult for her to elicit smiles from family,

friends, and even people we passed in a store; her lighthearted nature was contagious.

She cared deeply for others. When Caroline was five, just before Christmas, she brought her piggy bank to us. She told us she was going to donate all of her money to our church. She wanted to make sure that every child had a present under the tree on Christmas morning. Her compassionate spirit wasn't limited to gifts at Christmas time; she had always been aware of the needs of others. Her teachers often told us that Caroline was the friend who wanted to "make sure everyone was ok." She was an encourager, a helper. She would offer a hug or hold a hand. Her joy came from within, and she wanted to share it. When talking about our family, or herself, she would tell people, "We are not lucky. We are blessed!"

She was exceptionally energetic and embraced new activities in the same exuberant manner that she approached life. Swim team. Girl Scouts. Gymnastics. Soccer. For Caroline, trying something new was fun and being involved was exciting! She wanted to do it all. At home, we could usually find her coloring or drawing, and she often left her artwork with special notes around the house for us. Other times, she was busy twirling, dancing, or singing. From all of her drawing and twirling emerged Caroline's two true passions: art and dance.

Caroline was a blessing to us. She danced through this life with enthusiasm and compassion



Ana Grace Márquez-Greene
Born April 4, 2006

Ana Grace was widely known for her enthusiastic love of God, people, music, food and fun. She instituted the house rule of "seconds". Her favorite seconds included second breakfast, second dessert and second hugs... And

she could out-groove just about anyone. A budding little musician, Ana wanted to be a teacher, dancer or pop star when she grew up.

Sweet Caramel Princess, your family misses you desperately despite the comfort that comes from knowing you are wrapped safely in the arms of Jesus. We grieve your loss every minute of every day, along with the legion of friends and family in the US, Canada and Puerto Rico whose lives you have touched. We will fill our hearts with praise until reunited with you again.

Love Wins,
Daddy, Mami and Isaiah



Madeleine Hsu
Born July 10, 2006

To our beautiful, joyful daughter, a petite princess with a big personality: We remember how life for you was a dance and a race. You

loved to run ahead to the next big adventure. Always running...never walking but sometimes dancing, skipping and hopping to whatever you were going to do next.

A music lover you loved to sing along with the radio and play the piano. Everything you did, you did with enthusiasm and determination, riding your bike without training wheels the day they were taken off, jumping waves at the beach, swimming at the pool.

Once you set your mind to do something it was as good as done. So energetic, you ran, played and strived at 100% from the time you awoke until you fell asleep exhausted at night, only resting quietly to read books about fairies, princesses and Pinkalicious. You were an amazing little girl.



Catherine Hubbard
Born June 8, 2006

When we close our eyes, we see Catherine mesmerized by the butterflies. She would stop short when she spied the first butterfly of the season. She would run to get her net and would throw it back and forth as she ran across the yard. When she finally caught a butterfly she would hold it,

only for a minute, before gently nudging it to fly away. On warm summer days, we would smile as we watched her crouched in the garden with a huge butterfly on her finger. She had finally figured out how to catch one without a net. She would whisper secrets that would float to the sky on the butterfly's wings.

Catherine spent her summers playing with bugs and butterflies in the backyard. And she always kept a loving eye on their 14-year-old Labrador, Sammy.

"Sammy had arthritis," explained Jenny. "So Catherine would get underneath her, pull her up and help her."

Without Catherine, Sammy took a turn for the worse. And a week after they buried their daughter, the Hubbard's had to tell their 8-year-old son Freddy it was time to let Sammy go.

"We said to Freddy, 'do you want to say anything to Sammy before we take her in?'" said Jenny. "He got on the floor and got in her face and said tell Catherine I say hi."

Catherine's dream was to open an animal shelter. She even created her own business card.



Noah Pozner
Born November 20, 2006

Noah loved a joke and playing tricks on his sisters. We miss his full-bellied laughter and the twinkle in his beautiful eyes every minute of every day

Noah was an energetic boy, an animated boy with big blue

eyes. He loved unusual foods for a child: pickles, broccoli, salmon, cheese. And tacos — he often talked about wanting to manage a taco factory when he grew up, in addition to being an astronaut and a doctor.

He already knew how to read; he had a vocabulary well beyond his years, using words like “DNA” and “dynamic.” “He excelled academically,” says Danielle. “His teachers said he was really, really, smart.” He was on a constant path of discovery. “It was always, ‘How does this work? Why does this happen?’ He wanted to understand cause and effect,” says Veronique.

Noah also wondered about God, asking his mother, “If God exists then who created God?” He wanted to know what happens after death. “I would always tell him, ‘You are not going to die until you are a very old man, Noah.’ He was afraid of death, I know he was. He feared the unknown,” Veronique says. “Sometimes I wonder whether he had some foretelling, some prescience about it. Of course I will never know for sure, maybe it was just the random fears of a child.”

When his mother told him she loved him, Noah replied, “Not as much as I love you, Mom,”. In another classroom, his twin sister, whom he called his best friend, survived the shooting. Along with their older sister, 8-year-old Sophia, the siblings were inseparable. “He was just a really lively, smart kid,” added his uncle. “He would have become a great man, I think. He would have grown up to be a great dad.”



James Radley Mattioli
Born March 22, 2006

James was an energetic, loving friend to all. He loved baseball, basketball, swimming, arm wrestling and playing games on the iPad (especially the lawn mowing game). He loved to wear shorts and t-shirts in any weather, and grab the gel to spike his hair. He would often sing at the top of his lungs and once asked, “How old do I have to be to sing on a stage?” James loved to dive off the diving board at the Treadwell Pool, swim like a fish in both of his grandparents' pools and ride his bike, proudly without training wheels. He often said, “I need to go outside Mom, I need fresh air.” He loved

and admired his big sister and wanted to do everything that she could do. They were the best of friends, going to school together, playing games together, and making endless drawings and crafts together. James was working very hard to advance his reading in 1st Grade and his sister was his endless partner in supporting this effort and challenging him to read more and more difficult words. James was born 4 weeks early at Bridgeport Hospital. It was an ongoing quip that James came into the world early because he was hungry. He loved hamburgers with ketchup, his Dad's egg omelets with bacon, and his Mom's french toast. He often asked to stop at Subway for dinner for a ham sandwich, and wanted to know how old he needed to be to order a 'footlong' sandwich. James was an early-riser, always the first to wake the family up, ready to start the day and get dressed. He loved to 'cuddle' on the couch at the end of the day with his Mom grabbing his pillow and brown fleece blanket. He adored spending time with his Dad doing yard work, walking at Fairfield Hills and watching him grill burgers on the deck. If Dad was outside, James wanted to be right there with him. Their love of one another was one of a kind and James was his Dad's mini look-a-like. James was especially thoughtful and considerate, always the first to welcome guests at the backdoor with a hug and his contagious smile. Recently he chose to forgo a gift for himself, and decided to use that money to purchase a mug for his Grandfather for Christmas instead. James loved all teachers and staff at Trinity Day School and Sandy Hook Elementary School and found special joy in math and recess. He spent endless hours playing hockey with his best bud and cousin. James will be incredibly missed by all who loved him: his Mom and Dad, his beloved sister, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and his many friends.



Mary Sherlach
Born February 11, 1956

When the shots rang out, school psychologist Mary Sherlach, 56, threw herself into the danger.

Janet Robinson, the superintendent of Newtown Public Schools, said Sherlach and the school's principal ran toward the shooter. They lost their own lives, rushing toward him.

Even as Sherlach neared retirement, her job at Sandy Hook was one she loved. Those who knew her called her a wonderful neighbor, a beautiful person, a dedicated educator.

Her son-in-law, Eric Schwartz, told the South Jersey Times that Sherlach rooted on the Miami Dolphins, enjoyed visiting the Finger Lakes, relished helping children overcome their problems. She had planned to leave work early on Friday, he said, but never had the chance. In a news conference Saturday, he told reporters the loss was devastating, but that Sherlach was doing what she loved.

"Mary felt like she was doing God's work," he said, "working with the children."



Emilie Parker
Born May 12, 2006

Before Emilie grew a full set of teeth we saw the beginnings of her enthusiasm for art. By the time she was 2 years old, she could write her own name and draw family stick portraits. Over time this enthusiasm grew into something of an addiction. As parents we were often frustrated (and more times amazed) at constantly finding beads, bits of paper, colored cotton balls—or anything else Emilie thought she could use to create art—all over the house. She loved accompanying Alissa to the craft store to brainstorm her next project and also to fill her pockets with discarded materials she found on the ground. Eventually, we were forced to let go of our parenting instincts and allow our 3-year-old to use scissors.

At night we often caught Emilie hours after bedtime with a light on, an open book and a pad of paper, drawing her favorite characters. Once, Robbie tried to explain to her that bedtime is for sleeping and that she wasn't supposed to stay up late to draw. When he saw her light on the next night, he went in to tell her to stop drawing and go to bed. She explained herself like this: "Dad, I wasn't drawing, but I have so many ideas in my head I can't get out, so I am writing a list of things I need to draw so I won't forget."

This passion and persistence with art shaped Emilie's characteristics and attributes that we love so much about her. It was obvious to anyone who knew her that art was how she expressed herself and viewed the world. Art was a way for her to not only express herself but also a way for us to understand the world through her eyes.



Lauren Gabrielle Rousseau
Born June 8, 1982

Lauren was a sensitive and focused young woman. As a child she played school and always kept her desire to become a professional educator as she grew. She recently worked three jobs to cover her expenses, including the most recent at SHES as a building substitute. She was so happy to finally get a position in educating young children. Memories of her love of family, friends, customers at Starbucks and her cat Layla will always keep her alive.



Allison Wyatt
Born July 3, 2006

Allison was a kind-hearted little girl who had a lot of love to give, and she formed special bonds with most people who spent any amount of time with her.

She loved her family and teachers especially, but would often surprise us with random acts of kindness – once even offering her Goldfish crackers to a complete stranger on a cross-country flight.

Allison loved drawing and wanted to be an artist, often turning parts of our house into an “art studio” with rows of pictures taped to the walls. She often drew pictures for her teachers, her school bus driver, school friends, relatives and anyone else she adored.

We found a final picture that Allie had drawn for her first grade teacher, Miss Soto, complete with “I love you, Love Allie”.



Chase Michael Anthony Kowalski
Born October 31, 2005

Chase was an amazing son, brother, and grandson whose heart was only filled with love for all the people he touched. He was a fun-loving, energetic boy who had a true love of life. He completed his first triathlon at the age of six and ran in many community road races. Chase had a deep love for the game of baseball and enjoyed practicing with his father and teammates. Joining the Cub Scouts was just one of his many interests. He could often be found in the yard playing ball, riding his bike or quad. Chase's love will continue to live on and touch many more lives through the work of our foundation in his memory



Dylan Christopher Hockley
Born March 8, 2006

We remember his smile. His laugh. His love of bouncing on trampolines and eating chocolate. His beautiful eyes and mischievous grin. His deep empathy in reacting to the feelings of others. His favorite books. The giant purple dots he made almost every day at school. His sensitivity to loud noises and his love of routine. His computer games and his most loved movies. The way he would lie in the warm sand at the beach, or take joy in finding the moon in the sky. How he called lightning "beautiful", even while he was scared by the thunder. How he would ride a rollercoaster time after time and still not want to get off. The way other children were drawn to him, and how he wanted to play with them so much, even though he didn't always know how. The way he loved to cuddle, have his back stroked, be tickled, or use other people as pillows when he snuggled against them.



Jesse McCord Lewis
Born June 30, 2006

Jesse McCord Lewis was a remarkable child, full of light and love that radiated in his presence. He brought joy to the world with his infectious and ever ready smile and was wise beyond his years. Jesse used his last few minutes on earth yelling to his friends to run, saving many lives. His

bravery has inspired many all over the world. His actions were consistent with the way he lived his life; passionately embracing everything, a perfect combination of courage and faith, like a little soldier, his favorite toy. The true love his family shared was abundant and all encompassing.

If you met Jesse once, he would leave an indelible mark on your heart. The picture that remains etched in our souls is one of him in his boots, no socks, ripped jeans and a t-shirt, an army helmet strapped to his head, a smudge of dirt on his cheek, tromping through the pasture on his way from one adventure to another. Jesse McCord Lewis was an amazing child, full of light and love that was unmistakable in his presence. He brought joy to the world with his infectious and radiant smile. He was smart and compassionate beyond his years. Jesse died bravely trying to lead other children to safety. He ran into the hallway to help when he heard the shots. In our hearts we already knew because that was the way he lived his life – fearless, full of courage and strength.

We take comfort in knowing what a brave child he was. His actions were consistent with the way he lived his life; passionately embracing everything, a perfect combination of courage and faith, like a little soldier, his favorite toy. The love we shared was abundant and all encompassing. He slept in his mother's arms almost every night of his precious life, with her thanking God for him.



Olivia Rose Engel
Born July 18, 2006

Olivia's zest for life began early. With help from her adoring parents, she quickly developed an affinity for all things fun. On any given afternoon, one could just as easily find Olivia twirling in a pink tutu in dance class, developing

her swing on the tennis court, kicking the winning soccer goal, drawing, painting and gluing things in art class, or honing her inner songstress in her community musical theater class. The budding swimmer also loved to join her dad or grandpa on their boats, so she could explore the world from the water.

As Olivia continued to grow, she developed a love and affinity for math and reading, arts and crafts, and her parish. Participating in her church's CCD program and leading the family's Grace each evening were sources of great pride for Olivia, as was being a big sister. Ever patient, Olivia took joy in helping her three-year-old brother Brayden explore the world she'd grown to love. This smart, bubbly NY Yankee fan and Daisy Girl Scout would instantly light up a room with her humor, charm, and wit. She was a sweet and appreciative six-year-old with a lot to live for. Her physical loss will deeply be felt every day by those who loved her most, but her sparkly spirit will live on forever.



Jack Armistead Pinto
Born May 6, 2006

Jack was a happy, inquisitive and energetic boy. He loved being with his friends, going to school, playing sports and most of all he loved being with his big brother. He was a son, brother, grandson, nephew, cousin and friend. He was the heart of our family.

We miss his huge smile, his giggles, and the excitement he brought to our life each and every day. We miss the mischievous grin on his face when he was caught eating snacks before dinner and the laughter in his voice while having a football pass in the driveway. We miss him more than words can say. Jack lived a full and joyful life and his light shines bright in the hearts of those who knew and loved him.



Grace Audrey McDonnell
Born November 4, 2005

Grace was beautiful, kind and loving. She was full of life, imagination and sparkle. She loved her family, and her big brother Jack was her best friend. They were inseparable, and she took great pride in keeping up with him as they shared adventures big and small. Grace enjoyed running with her Dad and baking with her Mom.

Grace was an artist. She saw beauty in everything and was fortunate to have found her passion early in life. She took art classes since the age of three and was truly gifted. We hope to honor her life and dreams by supporting young artists and youth art programs through scholarships and grants.