



Richard "Rick" Cote

May 22, 1947 - August 12, 2025

Richard J. "Rick" Cote, 78, of New Britain, passed away Tuesday (August 12, 2025) at the UConn Health Center in Farmington. Born in New Britain, son of the late Virginia "Ginny" (Erickson) Cote and Ralph E. Cote, he was a resident of New Britain CT and Chicago IL, before moving back to New Britain to take care of Aunt Viv. Rick was a graduate of Pulaski High School, class of 1965, and received a Bachelor's in Fine Arts from the University of Hartford.

Rick enlisted in the United States Navy in April of 1966 and proudly served aboard the USS Providence during the Vietnam War. He was later stationed in Japan and Newport RI. During his service, Rick received numerous commendations and medals including the Vietnam Service medal with two Bronze Stars. He was honorably discharged in April of 1970.

Ricky taught music at St. Thomas the Apostle School in West Hartford CT where he also was the musical director for many scholastic stage performances spreading his love of music and entertainment to the student body and staff. As an accomplished pianist, Rick exhibited his passion for music and performance through numerous "gigs" from the Gifford House in Provincetown to Pheasant Run in the suburbs of Chicago. His rollicking versions of popular American Standards & Broadway Show tunes delighted audiences and his lyrical comic improvisation sent folks reeling in laughter. Rick worked in the insurance industry for 30 years first at Connecticut Mutual and then subsequently Mass Mutual where he received service awards for his training and development of new recruits. He retired as an Assistant General

Agent in 2009 to come “home” to New Britain to care for Aunt Viv whom he tended and cared for in her own home until her passing in 2015.

Ricky had a keen sense of style and décor and was known for his elaborate Christmas decorations around the holidays which included half a dozen or more themed Christmas trees, such as one dedicated to the pets of family and friends, US presidents, and of course one dedicated to the British Royals. His sprawling village of Bedford Falls from “It’s a Wonderful Life” occupied nearly a third of his living room. And of course, Rick was the consummate entertainer hosting numerous gatherings for friends, family and neighbors.

Surviving Rick are niece Sandy Spring and grand nephews Nick & Joey Spring of Farmington CT, nephew Steven Tamaren of New Britain CT, and niece Kristina Johnson of Indianapolis IN as well as numerous relatives from the Cote, Jensen, and Erickson families. He is also survived by his most dear friends Todd Johnson and John & Ann Molyneaux, and his long time buddy Peter Morin. Besides his parents, Rick was predeceased by a sister, Donna Marie Johnson, and his very dear friend Sister Mary John and of course his most faithful companion “Buddy” his four legged friend of 14 years.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated Friday August 29, 2025 10:30AM at St. Jerome Church of the St. Catherine Drexel Parish, 1010 Slater Rd., New Britain. Burial with military honors will follow in St. Mary Cemetery, New Britain. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to CT Humane Society Russell Rd. Newington, CT 06111. The family would also like to express their deepest gratitude to the Doctors, Nurses, Aids, and Hospice staff at the UConn Health Center for their compassionate care of Rick. Carlson Funeral Home, New Britain, is assisting with arrangements. Please share a memory or note of sympathy at www.carlsonfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

St. Mary Cemetery

1141 Stanley Street
New Britain, CT 06053

Previous Events

Memorial Service

AUG 29. 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Jerome Church
1010 Slater Rd.
New Britain, CT 06053

Tribute Wall

JV

“ So sorry to see this, he was a wonderful person, not to mention a gifted pianist. I played drums with Rick in the 7th fleet Navy Band in Yokuska Japan 1967-69. We became close friends and when returning to the states he was a groom in my wedding, I still have pictures. He was a class act!

JOSEPH A VALERI - December 31, 2025 at 01:00 PM

DT

“ My sympathy to Rick's family at this sad time. My memories of Rick as our inspiring and talented music teacher at St. Thomas the Apostle and also as our piano teacher at home. I will never forget the album he made that brought the Saint Thomas the Apostle community together. My sisters and I still sing "Butterfly" at every occasion we can. "So free from care, beauty so rare, as you fly through the sky my butterfly. " We know that he is now free from suffering and in Heaven. He will forever live on in our memories

Deidre Dalton Toole

Deidre Dalton Toole - August 18, 2025 at 08:07 PM

MJ

Thank you Deidre... Rick was certainly special... I have a vinyl record of that album with butterfly...

Mike Jensen - August 20, 2025 at 08:10 PM

TB

“ Mr. Cote was my music teacher at St Thomas! I think he may have been a new teacher when I was in his class. He was always very nice and a good music teacher! I also participated in the plays and musicals that he put on at St Thomas-I have good memories of them!

So sorry for your loss

Trisha Beatty St Thomas, Class of 1974

Trisha Beatty - August 18, 2025 at 04:40 PM

LI

“ My sincere condolences to Rick's family. I will miss him forever. He was so welcoming and friendly when we moved to the neighborhood. And those Christmas gatherings with the decorations! Just wow. Rest easy my friend. Heaven gained a good one. ❤️

Lisa - August 17, 2025 at 06:19 PM

BR

“ I will miss you my friend ... and the Scotch we shared together
CHEERS!



Bruce - August 16, 2025 at 08:12 AM

BR

He loved my dogs especially Minnie

Bruce - August 16, 2025 at 08:14 AM

MJ

Bruce, you were a good friend and companion to Rick..

Mike Jensen - August 20, 2025 at 08:12 PM

BG

“ *Met Ricky on a YMCA trip to Provincetown with Dave Jensen. Was instantly drawn to him because of his charm and personality. Sincere sympathy to the Jensen and Cote families. RIP, 🙏🙏🙏*

Bob Gunning - August 15, 2025 at 02:19 PM

PM

“ *He was my Best Friend I will miss him a lot. SO Sorry for your loss to Sandy Steve and Kris and all of the Jensen family*

Peter Morin - August 15, 2025 at 12:44 PM

MJ

Thank you, Peter... he held you, dear in his heart...

Mike Jensen - August 20, 2025 at 08:13 PM