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The late Wayne D'Amico, CCIM built a network of friends as a commercial real estate agent

March 21, 2025 - Connecticut



Wayne D'Amico

Ivoryton, Conn.'s Wayne D'Amico built a network of friends as a commercial real estate agent.

And many of those friends gathered at the Library Studio at 134 Broad St., Middletown to honor their friend, who died in 2017 from cancer at the age of 50. The event, which was organized by Tom Hill III and Trevor Davis Jr. (the owner of the library) was a fundraiser for D'Amico's family.

Sam Bradford, Madison CT and Chad Rhodes, CPA

But just as importantly, D'Amico had built a network of friends as a musician and some of those like-minded pals were on hand to help entertain the crowd with tunes from their favorite artists such as Creedence Clearwater Revival, Steely Dan, Billy Joel and the Traveling Wilburys.

D'Amico had a definite passion for commercial real estate. He was committed to the CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member) Institute.

“He loved negotiating real estate stuff and helping people,” said his widow, Betsy D'Amico. “And he just loved... the whole brotherhood of (the commercial real estate agent network). They're very loyal.”

Even though several years have passed since Wayne D'Amico died, his friends from the commercial real estate world still take time out of their days to see how Betsy and their children are doing.

Geoff Fitzgerald, PE, Bohler Engineering

But her husband also was passionate about music, according to Betsy D'Amico.

“Even in high school, he had a band,” said his wife. “He started a DJ business that he did on the side that he did through college. He went to (New York University) and in college he was going around the city with a cart with all the stuff... He just always was into music, whether it was playing, listening to classical music, playing the blues. He had a great collection of guitars... He loved playing music for people and performing.”

Jack Lynch was one of the musicians playing at the fundraiser in Middletown. He also played with Wayne D'Amico in the CCIM All-Star Band. And Lynch, a commercial real estate agent for 30 years, became a member of the CCIM thanks to D'Amico.

Lynch said, “D'Amico was one of my inspirations when I first started... We stayed close colleagues throughout his career and through his life. He guided me and we played together... Every few years we'd get together with some of these same guys (playing at the fundraiser).”

These days, Lynch is also a member of the band, the C-Sides. “We play about 35-40 shows a year. All around Fairfield, New Haven, and Litchfield counties.”

You might have caught the C-Sides performing at the Two Roads Brewery at the Hartford HealthCare Amphitheater prior to one of the summer concerts at the Bridgeport venue.

As a member of the C-Sides, Lynch is part of the musical world that can be best described as the

weekend warriors. He has a day job that pays the bills. And when he gets a chance, he grabs his instrument or a microphone and gigs with a band.

Music has long been part of Lynch's life. He said, "I've been playing since I was a little kid... Different instruments. Through college and different bands."

Mike Bassick is a bookkeeper by day; but a member of the C-Sides on the weekends and nights.

"Bookkeeping is something I've always enjoyed," said the bass player for the C-Sides. "I had my own business for a few years. And, obviously, did the books there. I kind of got into the corporate world... working with a lot of top 20 pharma and healthcare companies. The focus there was really around data visualization, taking all these reports and all these numbers on a page and making a picture out of them...I really wanted to start doing that with small business owners."

Shown (from left) are: Mike Bassick, Trevor Davis CCIM, and Geoff Fitzgerald, PE

As for his love for music, Bassick explained, "I had the bug from an early age. Just sitting around, my dad would leave records on the stereo (and I'd check them out)."

Chad Rhodes is a member of the C-Sides. He is also a certified public accountant.

Rhodes said the life of a CPA came calling because he had a couple of accounting classes at the University of Connecticut that he really enjoyed.

But music was a much earlier love for Rhodes.

"I've been playing guitar and bass since I was 12 years old. And I've always had some musical project that was sort of the hobby or the thing I did outside of work," said Rhodes.

"I was one of those traditional band kids, band nerds, who played. I was the band president in high school, played tenor saxophone. I was friends with all the other band kids, and we were growing up in the '80s - and good or bad, we were really into the hair bands, so I was a big Whitesnake, Metallica fan. I had a mullet. I begged my parents to get me a guitar and we would just sit there, try to play this fast as we could. It was a lot of fun."

Rhodes said "Joining the C-Sides was like kismet. I knew these guys. I would go see them. They happened to be looking for a bass player. I just moved back to town. We're like, 'Let's see how this works out.'"

For Lynch, Rhodes and Bassick, music is a definite respite from the day job.

“There’s definitely a connection between the mind and the body that you get in. You know, certain hobbies that you have that find yourself at peace when you’re doing it... I feel the way we listen to everybody who’s trying to play. We try to work hard to learn our parts. It’s very rewarding and very relaxing after you do it,” said Rhodes.

“It’s like a workout, getting to play out with the C-Sides,” said Lynch. “Honestly, after a practice or a gig... We’ve got to load in the equipment, we get to set up shop, then we’ve got to load up after and go home.”

“Without a doubt, if I didn’t have a rehearsal or a gig to go to, I’d probably be going to a bar and having a couple of beers, right?” said Bassick. “In a lot of ways, this is healthier.”

As much as Wayne D’Amico loved real estate, Betsy D’Amico said her late husband still felt the call of music.

“If he ever thought he could make enough money, he would have just been a musician. That was what he really wanted to do. When he retired, he wanted to go to Nashville... He’d be like, ‘Oh my gosh, I could just go play out.’”

And if the musicians didn’t have the C-Sides to fill their time, how do they think that would affect their mental well-being?

Rhodes figured if he couldn’t play with the C-Sides because they weren’t available for some reason, he’d still find another way to make music.

However, if some injury or ailment permanently halted his ability to make music, Rhodes was honest. He would be depressed. “It would be devastating,” said the guitarist.

For information about the CCIM Institute, visit www.ccim.com.

For information about the C-Sides, visit CSides.com.

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New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540