

JOHN BASCOM BUCHANAN HARRITY



We have lost one of the best of us. John Bascom Buchanan Harrity, aka Johnny, left us to begin his next adventure on Wednesday, November 7, passing unexpectedly at home in Hartford, one week shy of his 22nd birthday. Born on November 14, 1990 in Hartford, CT, John was the son of Linda Buchanan of Hartford and John Harrity of East Hartland, CT. He was the youngest of three, following his brother, Nicholas, and sister, Caitlin, whom he loved beyond measure.

John attended the Interdistrict Montessori School in Hartford, Two Rivers Middle Magnet School in East Hartford, and graduated from Watkinson School with the Class of 2008, earning a Creative Arts Program Diploma in addition to his academic diploma. He received numerous prizes while at Watkinson, including the Mary Jane Petrucelli award, voted on by the Senior Class and awarded to the Junior that embodied the qualities of enthusiasm, openness, warmth and tolerance; the William Zinnser Award for Writing; the Woodrow Wilson History Award; the Visual Arts 2D Award, for his photography; and, the Brackeen Human Rights Award. He went on to Clark University in Worcester, MA, and to Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA, which he was looking forward to returning to in January. He was formerly employed as a Cashier at Stop and Shop supermarket, and, at the time of his death, was employed by the CT Science Center as a Visitors Services Specialist, where he had many friends, and enjoyed helping children and young people discover science and nature.

John was a poet, photographer, activist, writer, comedian, traveler, student and teacher. He loved music, video games, Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert, nature documentaries narrated by David Attenborough, and the knowledge that Barack Obama had been re-elected. And he loved the city of his birth and his life, Hartford. His poem, "Schizophrenia, For My Brother," was nationally recognized, and he was honored to be the 2007 recipient of the Friends and Enemies of Wallace Stevens Scholarship, giving the first public reading of his poems in January, 2008. In 2009, he was selected as one of six collaborating poets to participate in the joint Age in America project of the Hartford Public Library and the Amistad Center for Art and Culture, which featured an art installation of beautiful banners along Main Street in Hartford, with excerpts from the original poems he contributed to the project.

John was a caretaker and a healer, he was our heart. He lived his life with compassion, humility, love and laughter, and the warmth of his spirit radiated out to all who knew him. He was fearless and funny, tenacious and resourceful about solving any problem. John hugged freely and often, holding you in his big arms, letting you know how much he cared. He believed that if we bring happiness to people, we will be happy. As a Buddhist, John believed that death is not the end of life, only of this life. We wish him an auspicious rebirth.

In lieu of flowers, John would be honored if contributions were sent to help fund a student in need of financial aid to participate in Watkinson's Service Learning trip to Cambodia, to work with Cambodia Living Arts. Write "John Harrity" in the memo section, and mail contributions to Watkinson School, 180 Bloomfield Ave, Hartford, CT 06105.

John set a high bar for the rest of us. Now we must all take up the task of making the world a better place. And we must all learn to give true John-hugs. Thank you, Johnny. Not goodbye, just see you later...

MEMORIAL SERVICE

WELCOME

Rabbi Donna Berman

EULOGY

John Harrity, Father

(Song) Take A Minute, K'Naan

READING OF POEMS Caitlin Harrity, Sister

- Schizophrenia, For My Brother

- Sonny

- Donnelly 2 South

EULOGY

Brendan Jonathan-Lusack, Friend

PHOTO COLLAGE

David Holdt, Creative Arts Diploma Advisor

(Song) Redemption Song, Bob Marley

JOHN'S POEMS

Read by Mark Junek and Kevin Connell

- Temples to See

- Slave Ship

- Hartford Stays

- Transplant

(Song) Johnny Too Bad, The Slickers

TIME TO SHARE

Rabbi Donna Berman

People are asked to share their memories, stories, feelings about John

(Song) High Tide or Low Tide, The Wailers

PRAYER

Reverend Patricia Nicholas, Aunt

(Song) Let It Be, The Ethiopians

EULOGY

Linda Buchanan, Mother with Nicholas Harrity, Brother

"Walk With Me" video

(Song) Change Is Gonna Come, Sam Cooke

BENEDICTION

Rabbi Donna Berman

POEMS

The Poem That Took the Place of a Mountain

by Wallace Stevens

There it was, word for word,
The poem that took the place of a mountain.
He breathed its oxygen,
Even when the book lay turned in the dust of his table.
It reminded him how he had needed
A place to go to in his own direction,
How he had recomposed the pines,
Shifted the rocks and picked his way among clouds,
For the outlook that would be right,
Where he would be complete in an unexplained completion:
The exact rock where his inexactness
Would discover, at last, the view toward which they had edged,
Where he could lie and, gazing down at the sea,
Recognize his unique and solitary home.

Stubborn Ounces

by Bonaro Overstreet

(To the One Who Doubts the Worth of
Doing Anything if You Can't Do Everything)
You say the little efforts that I make
will do no good; they will never prevail
to tip the hovering scale
where Justice hangs in balance.
I don't think
I thought they ever would.
But I am prejudiced beyond debate
in favor of my right to choose which side
shall feel the stubborn ounces of my weight.



“Inside every
man there is
a poet who
died young.”

– Stefan Kanfer

In Loving Memory of



**JOHN BASCOM
BUCHANAN HARRITY**

November 14, 1990—November 7, 2012