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**Town mourns Paul Newman, beloved Westporter**

By:Bonnie Adler, Staff Writer10/02/2008

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**Paul Newman, the internationally known actor, humanitarian and philanthropist who was a Westport resident for half a century, died at his home last Friday at the age of 83. The cause of death was cancer.**

A dashing handsome movie star, known for his beautiful blue eyes, Newman made more than 65 films in 50 years, including some of the most famous movies of the second half of the 20th century such as "Cool Hand Luke," "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," "The Hustler," "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," "The Sting," and "The Verdict."

He received an Academy Award for best actor in 1986 for "The Color of Money," was nominated for a total of 10 Academy Awards. He received two Golden Globe Awards, a Screen Actors Guild Award, a Cannes Film Festival Award, and an Emmy Award. So brightly glowed the flame of Newman's star power that the whole town of Westport seemed to shine a bit brighter because of it. In Westport, residents mourned the loss of a man whom they knew as not only one of the greatest actors of the 20th century, but as a man of equally great personal integrity who ultimately created a second and perhaps more enduring role as a leading humanitarian.

"I know all Westporters join me in mourning his loss," First Selectman Gordon Joseloff said. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to Joanne (Woodward) and all the Newman family. He loved Westport and was an avid and enthusiastic supporter of this community for 50 years. We will miss him greatly. He truly was Westport's Own."

"The impact both Paul and Joanne have had on this community is immeasurable. We have been so honored and fortunate to have had them as residents these many years. While we are deeply appreciative of their financial contributions, we are just as admiring of their love for Westport and how they interacted with ordinary citizens," Joseloff said.

Newman's wildly popular Hollywood film career, which began in the 1950s, was miraculously eclipsed in the latter portion of his life by Newman's Own, the company he started with his friend and partner, writer A.E. Hotchner, in 1982.

Newman's Own began with the sale of one product, the salad dressing which Newman used to make and give to friends in a wine bottle as a gift at Christmas. He said he started the company as a joke, because when the dressing ran out, a few months after Christmas, friends demanded more. Ultimately, the company, with Newman's face on the labels, mushroomed into a hugely successful business which currently sells a variety of products, including a new line of organic food, and has earned profits totaling more than \$250 million, all of which are given to charity. Newman often joked that he made more money selling salad dressing and spaghetti sauce than he did in the movies and knew that despite his Hollywood fame, today's kids often thought of him as a face on a jar of spaghetti sauce. Newman was also a passionate car racer. In 1976, he won his first national amateur championship, and the next year began racing with professionals. In 1979, he and two co-drivers finished second in the LeMans 24-hour road race. He continued participating in professional races in the 1980s and 1990s, reaching speeds of 220 mph.

Newman was married twice, first briefly to Jacqueline Witte, with whom he had three children, and then again to actress Joanne Woodward to whom he was married for 50 years. His marriage with Miss Woodward, with whom he made many films, including "Rachel, Rachel" and "Mr. and Mrs. Bridge," was considered remarkable given the often tempestuous and short-term marriages of their Hollywood counterparts.

In a 1998 television interview with talk show host Larry King, Newman speculated on the success of his long marriage: "The secret of a long lasting marriage: It is probably some combination of lust and respect and patience and determination."



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He had six children, including five daughters and one son. His son Scott, whom he had with his first wife, died of an accidental overdose of drugs and alcohol at the age of 29. When asked by Larry King how one recovers from that, Newman replied, "I'm not sure that you do. Everything gets different, but it doesn't get better."

He started a foundation in his son's name known as the Scott Newman Center, which was designed to try to encourage motion picture companies not to glamorize drug use, and ultimately operated a camp for families who were able to re-establish themselves after the parents recovered from drug abuse.

"There's not a lot of congratulations for that kind of transformation - getting your family back together. That's what we try to do," Newman said.

Newman was born in Shaker Heights, Ohio in 1925, the son of Arthur S. Newman, who was a sporting goods store owner, and Theresa Newman. Newman's father was Jewish and his mother was Catholic.

His children by his first marriage were Scott, Susan, and Stephanie. His children from his second marriage were Elinor Theresa, Melissa Steward, and Claire Olivia.

Newman and his wife and family lived in Westport for 50 years, shunning Hollywood in favor of Connecticut's rustic beauty. They lived in a farm house with a barn, where they often entertained friends and family. They also had an apartment on Fifth Avenue in New York City.

They were actively involved in Westport's community life, were avid supporters of the Democratic party candidates, and played a large role in the fight to preserve open space. The Newmans also became instrumental in the support of the Westport Country Playhouse, and helped the famed summer theater raise \$30 million in a recent renovation that turned the playhouse into a year-round theater. Joanne Woodward is artistic director at the Playhouse.

Most recently, Newman started a restaurant with Fairfield chef Michel Nischan at the Playhouse called The Dressing Room, which showcases organic products and locally grown and produced foods.

Newman has been the subject of warm tributes from around the world.

Former president Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary described him as "an American icon, philanthropist and champion for children," while French President Nicolas Sarkozy hailed him as a "Hollywood legend."

In Italy, actress Sophia Loren, who appeared in the film "Lady L" with Newman, called news of his death "a blow."

"When such important personalities die, one despairs and thinks that, little by little, all the greats are disappearing," she said.

"My life, and this country, is better for his being in it," said Robert Redford, one of his most famous co-stars, who appeared with Newman in "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid."

In Los Angeles, flowers were placed on Newman's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame as the Motion Picture Association of America hailed his "extraordinary career."

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