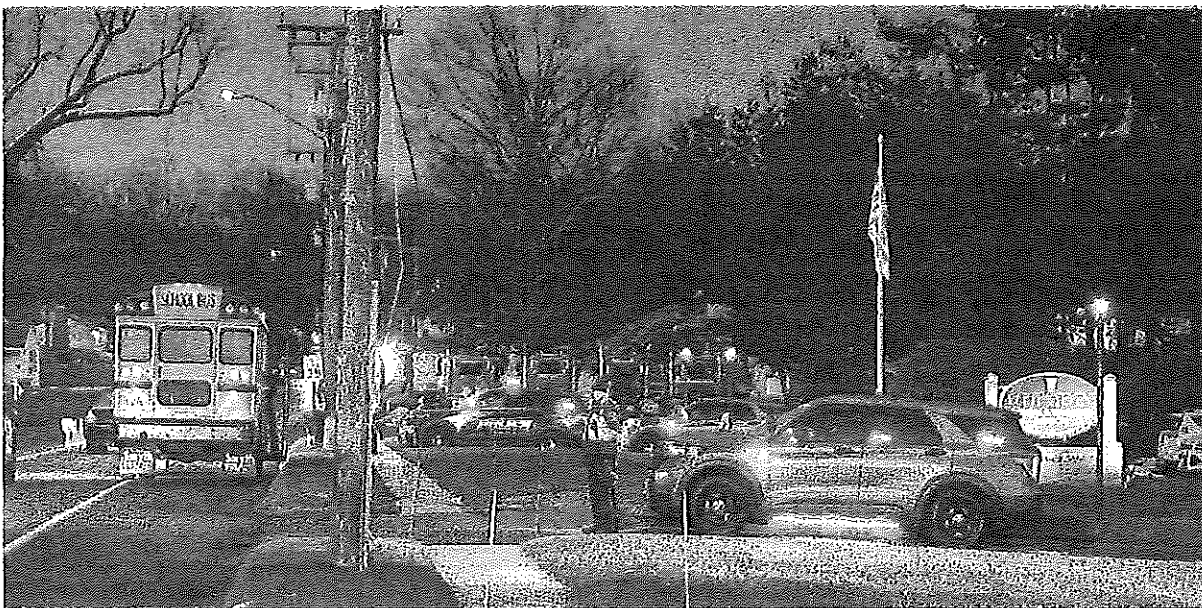


# Journal Inquire

CTINSIDER.COM/JOURNALINQUIRER • FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 2024 • VOL. 158, NO. 10 • \$2.00

## 'Emotional tribute'



Patrick Sikes/For Hearst Connecticut Media

People arrive Thursday at Leete-Stevens funeral home on South Road in Enfield for a wake honoring Archer Koropatkin, Benjamin Koropatkin, Genevieve Koropatkin and Lukas Koropatkin.

## Somers community joins family of children who died in house fire

By Susan Danseyar

STAFF WRITER

ENFIELD — The Somers community, along with friends from area towns and states, on Thursday night joined the family of the four Koropatkin children who died in a Jan. 2 fire.

Hundreds of mourners came in remembrance of Lukas, Genevieve, Benjamin, and Archer Koropat-

kin during visiting hours held at Leete-Stevens Enfield Chapels & Crematory. The children, who ranged in age from 5 to 11, attended Somers Public Schools.

The oldest, Lukas, loved YouTube. His sister Genevieve was a "girly girl." Benjamin was an artist. And the youngest, Archer, was a ball of energy and a "daredevil," their family said in the children's obituaries.

*Tribute continues on 4*

## Manchester \$850K skate pump track Charter Oak

By Joseph Villanova  
STAFF WRITER

MANCHESTER — hope to open a new \$850,000 skate park and pump track at Charter Oak Park in summer 2025. The project includes several enhancements to the park.

Manchester had a similar project at Robertson Park that was canceled in January 2019 after new city management took operation. Local skaters and the town are now planning a replacement park, and the town is planning a new Manchester Skatepark. Community members are supporting the development of new facilities.

Later that year, town officials announced a new concept for an "all-in-one" skate park to be located at Globe Hollow. The project is being managed by the town's Recreation Division. The new skate park to Charter Oak Park is part of the town's new master plan for the park.

Park

## ENFIELD RESIDENTS OPPOSE LIMB MEETING COM

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## ROSE'S BERRY SEEKING HELPER GLASTONBURY

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## Troconis trial begins with video inside Dulos' home

By Pat Tomlinson, Peter Frankowski and Liz Hardaway  
STAFF WRITERS

STAMFORD — Nearly five years after Jennifer Dulos' disappearance, the

The trial for Michelle Troconis began with testimony from several investigators who were among the first involved in the case. Through their testimony and body camera footage presented to the six jurors, the pros-

May 24, 2019.

In the lead-up to the trial, Troconis posted on X, proclaiming her innocence and saying she has "faith in justice and the jury system." Troconis, 29, has pleaded not guilty to two



# TRIBUTE

From page 1

There was a steady stream of visitors to the closed-casket wake, including families with young children and groups of teenagers, some of whom were wearing "Somers Strong" sweatshirts. Police directed the heavy traffic and regular bus drop-offs of people who had parked at the nearby Eli Whitney Elementary School.

The interior of the chapel was charged with emotion, Somers First Selectman Timothy Keeney said after leaving the funeral home. He spoke with the children's parents, Kevin Koropatkin and Rebecca Whiteley, who Keeney said expressed how thankful they have been for everything the town has done and how many people came to pay their respects Thursday.

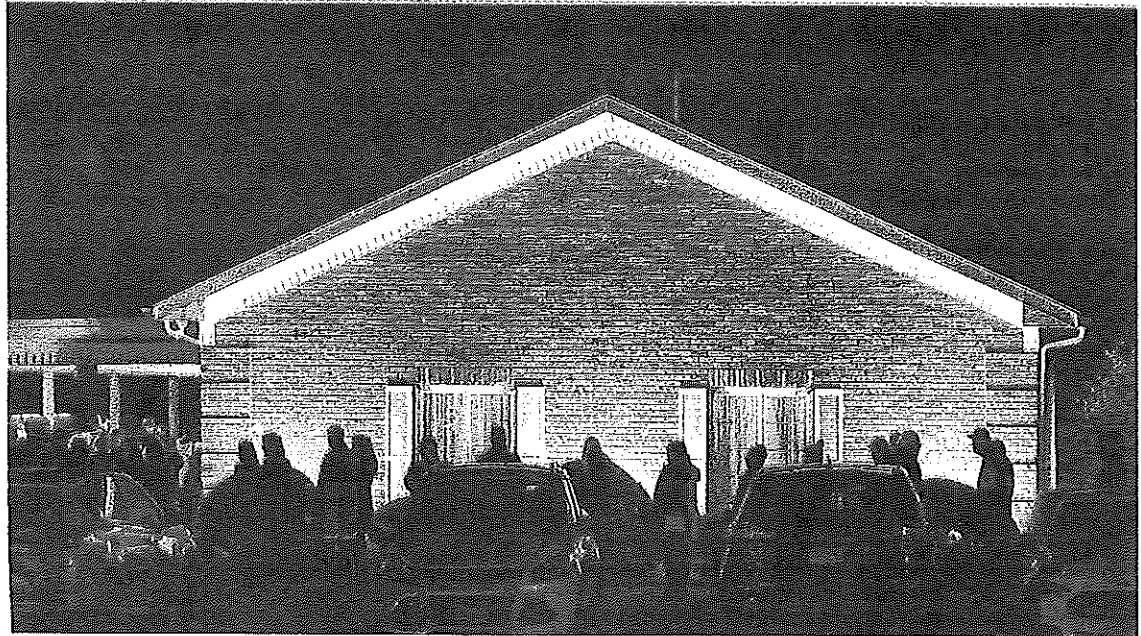
"The family was holding up pretty well," Keeney said. "It has been impressive how the community has come together and is continuing to do so after this tragic loss."

Somers Selectman William Meier III said the wake was a "very emotional tribute to four beautiful children." He also said the family appreciates the outpouring of support from the community, including the schools that have been impacted by the tragedy.

"It was a heart-wrenching," said Meier said, choking back the tears.

In the days following the house fire on Quality Avenue, people from Somers and surrounding communities said they would do anything to help the Koropatkin family, as well as a second family that lived next door in the two-family house and also lost their home and belongings. Town officials have lauded the generosity of those who donated clothing, furniture, and gift cards. A local bluegrass and country band turned its Jan. 5 performance at Joanna's Restaurant into a fundraiser and donated their fee and tips to the Somers Angel Fund set up to support the families. As of Thursday morning, the fund had collected more than \$200,000 in donations.

Somers schools are closed on Friday to give students and staff extra time to continue mourning the loss of Lukas, 11; Genevieve, 9; Benjamin, 7; and Archer, 5. The district's crisis team and counselors will continue providing support to students in the coming weeks, according to Superintendent Sam T. Galloway. "We are grateful for our public schools' staff as well as the thoughtful contributions we have re-

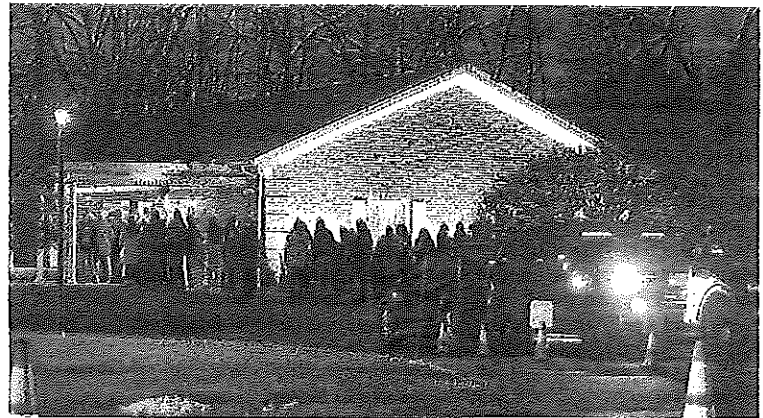


ceived from neighboring districts," he said in a statement last week. "We were fortunate enough to have the support of handlers and their therapy dogs across the state."

Galloway said the compassion shown to the Somers school community has helped both students and staff begin to process the tragic loss. "We have joined together to help one another and we will move forward thoughtfully, purposely, and with caring."

Enfield schools are showing support for their neighboring town on Friday by wearing red, like the Somers Strong signs, and each school will collect voluntary donations for the Angel Fund.

A private funeral and burial for the four children will take place at an undisclosed future date. For online condolences and memories, visit the Leete-Stevens website.



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