



The Bolton Scholarship Fund

Investing in the future...

Antonio and Elizabeth Fiano Families Scholarship in memory of Antonio, Elizabeth, Joan, Valerie, Enrico and Rocco Fiano

Original Fund Established 1996

This scholarship was established in 1988 by the Fiano family in memory of their father, Antonio Fiano. Members of the family who have since passed on have been added. The family would like to keep the memory of Antonio, Elizabeth, Joan, Valerie, Enrico and Rocco alive through those who benefit from this scholarship. It is awarded to a graduating BHS senior and a resident of Bolton who has demonstrated need as well as a desire to work to help him or herself.

Antonio and Elizabeth were both born in Italy, Antonio in Foggia on the Adriatic and Elizabeth in the Tuscany region. They came to the U.S. to start their family and settled in Bolton. They raised their seven sons in a 1720 cape home with no electricity or central heat, light from a gas lantern and water from a pump connected to a spring. There was no phone, no paved roads and no indoor plumbing. Their home was on a vegetable farm on Birch Mountain and the boys all shared in the responsibilities. Despite being poor, the family always had plenty to eat with the necessities harvested on the farm, even in the winter. Antonio and Elizabeth raised their children with love, discipline, respect, religion, music and the ability to survive which is summed up in two words: Hard Work!

When truck farming was becoming unprofitable Antonio purchased the Rainbow Club Restaurant on Rt. 6 and 44 in Bolton. In 1957-58 the family tore down most of the original building, added a new addition and named it Fiano's Restaurant. Many members of the family worked at the restaurant until it was sold in 1986.

Joan and Enrico Fiano lived all of their 48 years of married life in Bolton. Joan died on October 14, 1998. She was a devoted mother and grandmother and rarely missed a concert or athletic activity in which her children or grandchildren were engaged. She was the Fiano's Restaurant hostess for many years and was a devoted member of the Bolton Congregational Church and dedicated Sunday school teacher.

This scholarship is a fitting memorial for Joan, a woman who loved life and learning. She spent many hours reading, gardening, and preparing wonderful holiday feasts for a large and loving family. She loved boating and fishing and was blessed with a variety of artistic abilities. She was talented at decorating and flower arranging. She was never too busy or too tired to enjoy children. Joan liked nothing better than to sit with a child and teach him or her to make something out of found items, or to play games, or let them help her cook or bake. Her patience and kindness extended to many in the community as well as to her large, extended family. Joan is sorely missed by her family and friends.

Enrico Fiano was born June 28, 1927 and died June 26, 2009, 2 days shy of his 82nd birthday. Ric, as Enrico was known, was a very quiet and private person who always thought before he spoke or acted. He was sensitive to farming animals and plants. In 1948 Ric and four of his brothers, Rocco, Larry, Francis and Valentino, all joined the National Guard's Co A 169th Infantry – 43rd Division. When the unit was activated in 1950, Rocco and Larry were allowed to remain on the farm to harvest the crops and the other three brothers went to Germany. On his return, Ric worked at the family restaurant alongside his parents and brothers. Ric, with the assistance of his beloved wife Joan, was also involved in building quality custom homes for most of his adult life. Ric was an articulate machine operator and could accomplish more at half throttle than most operators at full throttle. He and his brother Larry worked on many subdivisions together.

Valerie G. Fiano was the wife of Paul Fiano. She was born in Hartford in February 1938 and lived in Manchester before moving to Bolton in 1980. For 20 years she was a gracious hostess at the former Fiano Family Restaurant. She died in July of 2000 after a graceful and dignified fight against breast cancer.

Rocco Fiano lived most of his life in Bolton until his passing on December 14, 2017. He was an altar boy in Bolton's first church which was in Bernard McKirk's garage and also served when St. Maurice Church was first built. Rocco graduated from Manchester High School in 1942. While working the family farm on Birch Mountain, he attended night school and graduated from Hillyer College in Hartford. Extremely talented in machine repair Rocco helped many local farmers maintain their equipment. During the war he assumed domestic security duties i.e. plane spotting, fire dept., etc. After the war, he learned to fly and owned a light plane. In 1952 after a forced landing in the brush, he delved into the used plane parts business. In 1954 he married the love of his life, Helen.

For close to 30 years, Rocco managed Fiano's Restaurant. From then on he worked with his brothers in building, housing, and subdivision. He also enjoyed rehabbing old motorcycles and cars; he could fix anything. Rocco enjoyed having his grand-nephews and grand-nieces at his cottage in Rhode Island and loved salt water fishing, especially with his brother Ric. Rocco and Ric were similar in nature, two most beautiful people.