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By [Jessica Trufant](#)[Print Page](#)

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Hanover remembers a 'vibrant,' 'loving' boy

HANOVER - Echoing sentiments expressed to him by family and friends of Matthew Cox, the Rev. Christopher Hickey called the 10-year-old boy "very athletic, full of life and a great teammate."

"He was vibrant, very energetic and honestly had a special place in his heart for church, Mass and religion," said the Rev. Hickey of Saint Mary of the Sacred Heart Church in Hanover. "He really liked to pray, and that's very rare for a child."

Matthew, whose family had recently moved from Hanover to Maine, died Friday afternoon from injuries he sustained the day after Christmas in a zip-line accident in Easton.

Matthew was riding a zip-line in his uncle's backyard when a large tree anchoring one end of the line snapped and fell, striking him. Matthew underwent brain surgery the day of the accident at Boston Children's Hospital, where he remained in critical condition with a traumatic brain injury.

On Friday afternoon, Matthew's aunt, Kara Dupill, posted a message on the website Caring Bridge that said, "Matt flew into the arms of Jesus at 3:32 p.m. He is one of God's angels now." The site had more than 105,000 visits as of early this morning.

The Hanover community responded to the tragedy with an outpouring of support for the Cox family, turning out at Saint Mary's to light candles for Matthew. Boston Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley also visited Matthew before he died.

Hanover Town Clerk Catherine Harder-Bernier sent an email to the community Sunday regarding the death of Matthew, a boy she said she didn't know, but who drew support from all corners of town.

"Matt was a Hanover boy. Raised here until last summer by his kindhearted and loving parents Ann and Bill, he played sports here, went to church here, and he grew as old as he would become here," she wrote. "So, we got to know him, we prayed for him, we wept for him, and when it was announced Friday that he was gone, we wept some more."

During the month that Matthew was in the hospital, Harder-Bernier said she was struck by how the town rallied together, dedicating sports games to the boy, collecting donations for his family and gathering to pray and share stories.

"For four weeks, we were a little softer around each other, and perhaps a little more forgiving. Some of us played with a bit more intensity because we realized how fleeting play can be, and I am sure we were more loving when looking in the eyes of a child," she wrote. "From all I have heard about him, that sounds like who Matthew Cox was every day for his ten years: softer, forgiving, playful and loving."

Before moving out of town, Matt was a multi-sport athlete with the Hanover Youth Athletic Association, which posted a "Pray for Matt Cox" message on its website, along with a photo of Matt displayed on the centerfield scoreboard at Fenway Park during the Frozen Fenway hockey event at the park in 2012.

The Rev. Hickey said the tragedy is "profoundly affecting" his parish, which he said includes hundreds of children Matthew's age.

"He's become an angel in heaven, and it's hard to explain that to a young person," he said.

The Rev. Hickey said Matthew's funeral arrangements were still being finalized Sunday.

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PHOTO/ FAMILY PHOTO

Matthew Cox, a former Hanover resident, died Jan. 24, 2014, as the result of a zip-line accident that took place Dec. 26 in Easton.

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