

Hampden Youth Drowns In Abandoned Quarry

WEST SPRINGFIELD — Funeral arrangements are being made by Curran - Jones funeral home for an 18 - year - old Hampden youth who drowned Sunday while swimming with companions in a pool in an abandoned traprock quarry near the Westfield line.

The body of Donald J. Cuoco, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Donaldson of 138 Wilbraham Rd., was recovered from about 16 feet of water Monday afternoon, 10 minutes after scuba diver Michael Ligon of Ashley Avenue began diving.

Combined efforts by Westfield and West Springfield authorities were hampered by darkness Sunday night, although attempts were made to recover the body about 10:30 p.m., shortly after the incident was reported.

Cuoco, according to companions, joined them for a swim after a game of basketball in Springfield's Forest Park. Thomas Healey of 75 College St., said he heard Cuoco scream he had

a cramp, moments after both youths plunged into the pool.

Healey was unable to reach or locate Cuoco, who went down and was found approximately in the center of the 75-yard span.

Remnants of campfires and empty cans littered the area surrounding the site, testifying to the fact of its continued use despite constant warnings and police checks.

Owners of the quarry abandoned in 1902, John Lane and Son Inc., have posted "No Trespassing" signs only to have them torn down and tossed into the quarry, a spokesman told police.

The area is bounded by woods, rock and railroad tracks and is located about 100 yards off Route 20.

Cuoco, a Technical High School graduate, was born in Springfield on Sept. 26, 1951. He was employed by Art Cement Co. of North Wilbraham.

Besides his mother and stepfather, Cuoco is survived by a brother, Robert L. Cuoco, at home.