



Donna Jean Hartman

SEP 17, 1948 - JAN 30, 2023



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Donna Jean Hartman (Karnaz) – 74 - September 17, 1948 – January 30, 2023
A Proud Catholic Polish Ukrainian American

A Letter Dated October 17, 1979, to her 9-year-old daughter Dawn.

Dear Dawn,

I am sitting here at work thinking about you and missing you so I thought that I would write you a letter and tell you my feelings. You know that I love you, at least I hope that you know that. There is so much that I would like to be able to do for you, but I am only one person and I can only do so much. I would love to be able to buy you a lot of nice clothes for school, but it seems at this time I can just put food on our table and try to keep a roof over our head. Your gymnastics are very important to me and I hope that you try very hard and keep up your practice because you are good and I know that you will get even better. You mean so much to me Dawn and maybe I don't tell you enough how much I need you. When things get bad you're always there to tell me things will get better. When I feel sad, so do you. When I cry, you ask me why and want to help me. I am so glad I had you, for I'd be lost if you were never born. Remember Nins, it has always been you and me against the world and that's the way it will always be.

With all my love,

Mom

On January 30, 2023, Donna fought her final battle with her daughter Dawn "Nins" against this physical world and left to start her next journey where she will be reunited with her best friend, her mother Annette Clara Karnaz (Leszczynski). There, she will once again be joined with her father Joseph Karnaz, grandparents Joseph 'Jadik' and Eva 'Busia' Leszczynski; brother James Karnaz; husband Mike Hartman; aunts 'ciocia's' Cel and Genia; and many beloved pets, including (but not limited to) Maggie Mae, Gizmo, Bad Puppy, Bear and her sheepdog Sam.



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Donna hailed from Wyandotte Michigan, graduating from Our Lady of Mount Carmel. There she would start as a freshman for the Varsity Women's Basketball team at the Center position. She would go on to love working for the Secretary of State, where she was leaned on for her knowledge from branches across Michigan and conducted driving exams both in office and on the road.

On September 5, 1994, her daughter Dawn was involved in a life changing car accident leaving her in a coma for nearly three months. In 1995, Donna would become legal guardian to both her then 24-year-old daughter Dawn, and then 5-year-old grandson Zachery, assuming full time caretaking responsibilities of each. Both of whom she would go on to care for, love, protect, advocate for, and live with her entire life until her final days.

Donna will be remembered for her love, compassion, and empathy for others; for her deep love of family and community; as a beautiful writer of poetry and a truly talented creative writer, gifted with a quick wit and sense of humor. However, she will most be remembered for her selflessness, as someone willing to sacrifice her own ambitions and career when her family needed her the most.

Donna will be missed dearly by her daughter Dawn Jean Karnaz; grandson Zachery (Jennifer) Karnaz; brothers Joseph (Lisé) Karnaz and William (Denise) Karnaz; cousin Barb (Jeff) Reynolds; sister-in-law Rosemary Karnaz; many nephews and nieces; her sheepdog Cooper; and all of her friends in the community from the Village of Cement City, a little place she was proud to call home and serve as First Lady from 2018-2022.

No memorial service is immediately planned. The family is asking that in lieu of flowers, that monetary donations in Donna's memory be made to either St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (<https://www.stjude.org/donate/donate-to-st-jude.html>), or to Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Founded by Saint Katharine Drexel (<https://www.katharinedrexel.org/donate/>).



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Donna by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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