



Donna Rae Pugh

October 24, 1926 - May 19, 2015

Donna Rae (Swanberg) Pugh, 88, died peacefully in her home on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 surrounded by her four children and her beloved dog, Kota. Donna Rae was born to Harris and Laura Swanberg on October 24, 1926 in Wadena, MN. She spent her childhood and early adult years living in various parts of the U.S., Sweden, Brussels and England. She attended Carleton College in Northfield, MN for a year before enrolling in a dog obedience training and grooming college in Sweden. Donna Rae's numerous hobbies included pistol and target shooting, deer, elk, and pheasant hunting, show jumping horses, bicycling, skiing, swimming, track and field events, and she was highly competitive in all. Always the athlete, she competed in her final triathlon at the age of 75. A professional dog breeder, groomer and trainer, she handled dogs in field trials and dog shows, and also fostered and adopted out hundreds of dogs throughout her life. There was not a time in the past 80 years that Donna Rae did not have at least one dog by her side. She also was an avid knitter and co-owned the Swedish Knit Shop in Golden, Colorado with her sister prior to moving to Alexandria in 1985.

Donna Rae was preceded in death by her husband of forty-five years, Charles (Chuck) E. Pugh. She managed to excel at all of these activities while being a great cook and wife to Chuck. The two inspired one another and became well known in the Alexandria community for their volunteerism and philanthropic support of many non-profit organizations. A wonderful match, Chuck had a

gentle, cerebral approach. Donna Rae had great zeal and Swedish tenacity and even taught her grandchildren to do cartwheels.

She is survived by her four children, Richard Beaumont, Christine Beaumont (Mike Paulick), Kendra Dane (Eric Zimmerman) and Laurie Bridwell, three grandchildren: Heather Schneider (Craig), Courtney Bondi (Jim) and Erik Zeceovich, four great-grandchildren: Cody and Halle Schneider and Mia and Sadie Bondi, and her loving and loyal friend, Jackson Berglund, who assisted her with her many hobbies and home projects during the past 15 years.

Honored with a "Woman of the Year" award and banquet by the Girl Scouts of America (Minnesota chapter) Donna Rae impacted people of all ages. Her passions included: Volunteer work with Listening Ear, Bethany Manor retirement home, the Literacy Project, arts organizations, Lakes Area Recreation Center, YMCA, Lakes Area Humane Society in Alexandria, and horse rescue in Colorado. As a "dog whisperer," she taught weekly obedience classes for over 15 years, to hundreds of attentive dogs and their owners, donating all registration fees to support the Humane Society and Lakes Area Recreation Center. In addition, she taught Swedish, and was an avid fitness advocate, competing in events well into her late 70's, including the Senior Olympics where she took a gold medal in the Women's Long Jump event.

Donna Rae was a loyal friend with a quick wit, relentless energy and tremendous physical stamina. She possessed strong convictions. She will be greatly missed by friends, family, neighbors and the Alexandria community she loved and served. A memorial service will be held for Donna Rae at Calvary Lutheran Church in Alexandria on Saturday, May 23, 2015, 11:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to Knute Nelson Hospice, 1910 Aga Drive, Suite 100, Alexandria, MN 56308.

Arrangements are with the Anderson Funeral Home in Alexandria, MN.

www.andersonfuneral.net

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **22**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Anderson Funeral Home and Crematory
659 Voyager Drive NW
Alexandria, MN 56308
(320) 763-5900
mail@andersonfuneral.net
<https://www.andersonfuneral.net/>

Visitation

MAY **23**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Calvary Lutheran Church
605 Douglas
Alexandria, MN 56308

Memorial Service

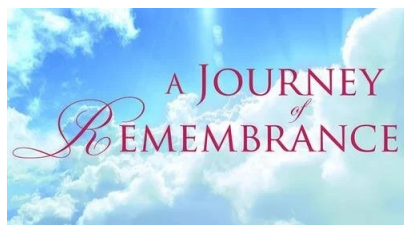
MAY **23**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Calvary Lutheran Church
605 Douglas
Alexandria, MN 56308

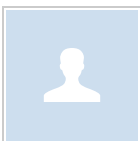
Tribute Wall



“ Anderson Funeral Home and Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Donna Rae Pugh



Anderson Funeral Home - May 21, 2015 at 10:26 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Donna Rae Pugh.



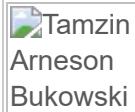
May 22, 2015 at 05:17 PM



“ Donna Rae was a unique and special friend who loved nature, life and following her beliefs. She never concerned herself with the things in life that did not matter but only with ways to make this a better world to live in. Donna Rae and Chuck contributed to our community with passion, dedication and tireless efforts. Her love of horses, dogs and anything Swedish will always bring smiles to so many of us. She raised four children with discipline and integrity and she was an inspiration to all who were fortunate to have called her friend. Run and be free Donna Rae. Your life on earth made a huge impact. You will be missed dear friend.

Mike and Barb Tripp

Barbara Tripp - May 22, 2015 at 10:09 AM



“ We wave a sad good-bye to a philanthropist, environmentalist, an athlete and a precious friend. She loved life and this earth and enjoyed all it had to offer. Never afraid to step outside of the box to do what was right. She knew who she was and what she stood for. Donna lived a good life greatly. My life is blessed to have known Donna. Run free into Chuck's arm, surrounded by your horses and many dogs. Your life was good!

Fritz and Tam Bukowski

Tamzin Arneson Bukowski - May 22, 2015 at 09:05 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Donna Rae Pugh.



May 21, 2015 at 05:34 PM



“ What a fabulous person Donna Rae was! We will miss her terribly! Our neighborhood will never be the same without this lovely woman and her very special dogs. She was a ray of sunshine to all who knew her! Sincere sympathy to her entire family.

John & Cindy Hughes

John & Cindy Hughes - May 20, 2015 at 03:10 PM

MA

I took her "Learn Swedish" class several years back and I had a great time getting to know her! She had such energy and enthusiasm for all that she did!

I am also a dog lover so we had that in common as well! I had been thinking of her in recent months and wondered how she was doing? I had wanted to reach out to her and visit, and I was saddened to know that she had passed away.

God has an angel in Heaven today and she is reunited with all the dogs and family that she loved so much!

God bless you and your family, Donna Rae!

Mark Anthony

Mark Anthony - May 23, 2015 at 09:26 AM

PA

“ *I met Donna Rae when we both took skating lessons in Alexandria years ago. She certainly had a zest for life. What an inspiration she was. A beautiful human being. Condolences to her family!!*

pam - May 20, 2015 at 12:35 PM