



Rita J. Burns

November 24, 1935 - May 5, 2019

Rita J. Burns of Becket, MA, died May 5, 2019 at the age of 83, after a brave fight against Progressive Supranuclear Palsy. She was the only child of Sinaldo and Agnes Christopher also of Pittsfield. She attended Pittsfield High School and then went onto The School of Fashion Design in Boston, Ma. Rita remained in the Boston area, working as a buyer for many years at Grover Cronin Department Store in Waltham., MA. She met her future husband, Frederick A. Burns, on a blind date arranged by his cousin, Rita's roommate. An evening of dinner and dancing in a fancy cocktail dress and heels, ended up being an unexpected Boston Bruins game. Rita continue to be a Bruins fan, up to the night of her passing. She spent many days and nights in cold ice rinks cheering for her son, Jim from peewee hockey, through college. Her own athletic accomplishments include winning a state bowling title in her youth and a team bowling trophy later in life.

Rita was employed with Elder Services for 11 years as a congregate meals site coordinator, upon her retirement she moved to Becket to be near her daughter, Karen and son-in-law Mark Karlberg.

Rita was predeceased by her husband Frederick Burns, She also leaves her beloved niece Jackie Duda Lemmerhirt (Wayne) and their twins Melissa and Ted, who she loved like they were her own grandchildren.

Rita was an avid animal lover, adopting many older unwanted dogs during her lifetime. She was a volunteer at Berkshire Humane Society for many years, including working at the front desk, selling shelter merchandise at events and

helping with the children's birthday parties held there. She proudly bragged about her furry Karlberg grandchildren; Blossom her grand-dog, Sherman her favorite grand-cat, and Scooby Doo & Shaggy Too, her two grand-llamas she kept supplied in Cheerios and helped round up by halting traffic on Rt. 20 when they got loose and ran down it in Becket.

Rita loved spending time having adventures with her daughter, including helping with their millinery Business, Hats & Jewels in Lee, MA and at craft shows throughout New England. She especially loved traveling to NYC to shop in the hat suppliers and accessories district; finding many treasures for herself to wear out and about in the Berkshire's cultural events she enjoyed attending. In recent years, Rita could be found at Jacob's Pillow enjoying the performances, especially the School Dancers on the Inside/Out Stage. Rita was always welcomed with smiles from the Pillow staff.

Rita was always willing to try something new; she took up birding late in life and accompanied her daughter on many field trips to Pleasant Valley Sanctuary and also volunteered for cleanup day at Canoe Meadows. She enthusiastically helped the Westfield Wild and Scenic organization with their annual Garlic Mustard eradication in the watershed areas of Becket, Chester and Huntington.

Rita enjoyed many trips to Los Angeles, CA to visit her son, James C. Burns, a resident there for many years. She also traveled to several Comic-Cons to support Jim's endeavors as Sargent Frank Woods of Call of Duty Black Ops fame. Rita was thrilled to be recognized as "Mama Woods" to his fans.

Rita loved her gardens and spent many hours cultivating beautiful flowers and shrubs. She was famous for her frog garden with over 150 frogs on display in her yard. She also collected an envious amount of cardinals and snowman over the years. Rita will be missed by the many friends she made over the years. Her family would like to thank Stacy and Tracy, her private aids, Hollie, Jasmyn and Tatiana from Wingate and all the compassionate caregivers from Hospice who helped her along her final journey to Heaven.

Funeral services for Mrs. Rita Burns will Thursday, May 9, 2019 at 12 noon

from the Dwyer Funeral Home with a liturgy of Christian Burial at 1pm at St. Joseph's Church, celebrated by Msgr. Michael Shershanovich, Pastor. Burial will follow in St. Joseph Cemetery. Calling hours at the funeral home will be held on Wednesday, May 8, 2019, from 4 to 7 pm. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her memory to the Berkshire Humane Society, Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, HospiceCare in the Berkshires, or Jacob's Pillow, in care of the Dwyer Funeral Home, 776 North St., Pittsfield, MA 01201. Donations CANNOT be made online, but may be made made through Dwyer Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

St. Joseph Cemetery

222 Peck's Rd.
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 8. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Dwyer Family Funeral Home
776 North Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 442-5094
info@dwyerfuneral.com
<https://www.dwyerfuneral.com/>

Service

MAY 9. 1:00 PM (ET)

St. Joseph Church
414 North St.
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Tribute Wall



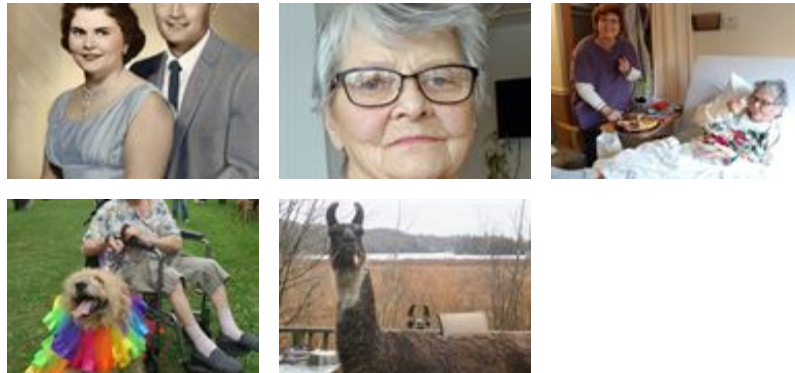
“ Dear Jim and Karen,
So very sorry to hear of the passing of your wonderful mom. Rita was one of a kind, for sure. I certainly enjoyed being her "personal banker" and hearing tales of the exploits of you two! Rita was always very kind to me and to so many others.
Not all that long ago I lost my mother, so I know the huge void it creates, but I believe that her love will always be there, in your hearts and in the sunshine. My thoughts and prayers are with you both at this difficult time.

Sincerely, Michael Nichols

michael nichols - May 10, 2019 at 06:04 PM



“ 43 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Dwyer Funeral Home Inc. - May 08, 2019 at 12:21 PM

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“ *Dear Karen,
I read your Mom's obituary this morning and my first thought was that I wanted to send condolences from Fred and myself. As I read more it struck me what an interesting life she led and how much your personality and interests reflect hers.
Thinking of you and how much this loss must mean to you and your family.
Best wishes,
Marilyn Moran*

Marilyn Moran - May 07, 2019 at 12:00 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Rita J. Burns.*



May 07, 2019 at 10:34 AM