



Anita Joanne Carman

December 29, 1934 - January 19, 2022

Anita Joanne Carman, beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, died Tuesday, January 19, 2022 after a brief but courageous battle with cancer. She was 87 years old.

Preceded in death by her parents, Glen and Helen Heath. Anita is survived by children, Cindy (Mike) Shankin, Terri (Mike Pougnet) Carter, Jon (Cassie) Gruenberg, Janice Gruenberg and Jennifer Carman – as well as ten grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and siblings Glenda (Grant Cinder) Shell and Fred (Sherie) Heath.

Anita's humor was infectious, her humility inspiring and her heart always open. Blessed with both the "gift of gab" and the "art of listening," she never met a stranger. Her loss will be felt not only by her family and close friends, but by the staff, volunteers, guests (and animals) at the Detroit Zoo, where she was a dedicated volunteer for 12 years; by the Red Hat ladies with whom she lunched and laughed; by the float crew for America's Thanksgiving Day Parade, for which she was a Super Marshall; by the children passing through the Belle Isle Nature Center; and so many more. Oft described as living her life in grace, her legacy of kindness, acceptance and joy will continue on in more ways than she ever realized.

At Anita's request, there will be no funeral service. Instead, a private memorial

service for family and close friends will be held in summer 2022. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you make a donation to the Detroit Zoo.

Tribute Wall

CG

“ *I'm So sorry at the loss of an absolutely beautiful woman and friend. Nita will always find a home in my heart and memories.* Cam Geck

Camille Geck - January 28, 2022 at 09:42 AM

CD

“ *My deepest condolences to all family and friends. I loved talking and sharing her knowledge of the Outback at DZS when I first became a volunteer and then Docent. Anita always had a gentle but firm way of dealing with conflict and could use her infectious smile to put others at ease. She always had time to listen which is a real gift. I will miss her so much.*

Thank you for coming into my life with open arms for a hug every time we met up. You were a rare gem I called friend. Love to your family.



Cheryl - Docent DZS - January 27, 2022 at 03:27 PM

PT

“ *I worked with/for Nita for several years. She was great lady. Prayers and thoughts for family.*

Peggy Terrabassi - January 24, 2022 at 11:43 AM

GR

“ Nita,
You were kind, funny, firm, fair and more generous than any person I've ever met. I know you'd disagree but you've left us with a big, painful loss. No matter whether it was a kangaroo or penguin shift at the zoo, a special zoo event pouring wine or beer or having a group lunch at O'Mara's or Sinbad's, I looked forward to sharing it with you. You were a great, great friend and will be missed. Rest In Peace. Giff

Gifford Rogers - January 23, 2022 at 07:03 PM

GR

“ 2 files added to the album Detroit Zoo Friends.



Gifford Rogers - January 23, 2022 at 06:45 PM

DD

“ I had the pleasure and honor of volunteering with Anita or as alot of us knew her Nita. She was always someone that you could talk to, get advice from or just communicate with. She was also not afraid to be in the middle of things making sure that they were fare in her own way. I believe friendly, respected, trusted and knowledgeable are words that fit her well. Although she was not afraid to express her feelings she was also willing to listen. Which is a sign of a great communicator and leader. I will miss her dearly as we spent alot of time communicating about a great many things.
The Zoo won't be the same.
Rest in Peace Nita

Docent Dave - January 23, 2022 at 03:13 PM

KD

“ *Sympathy and prayers to the family. I worked with Anita at TACOM. She was a wealth of knowledge in personnel and human resource matters. May she RIP.*

Karen DeLange - January 23, 2022 at 01:03 PM

MP

“ *Nita was such a lovely person. I had the privilege of working with her for 10 years at the Detroit Zoo. She was always cheerful, kind and thoughtful. When she found out I was gluten free, she went to the trouble of making GF chocolate chip cookies just for me. She brought hand-warmers in the winter for volunteers who worked in the Outback. She kept track of her fellow Outback volunteers and was always sure to let me know if one of them needed something or was having a particularly hard time. As part of the self-described "A-Team" she was the glue that kept them together. I will miss her.*
--Melissa Pletcher, former Asst. Volunteer Services Manager, Detroit Zoo

Melissa Pletcher - January 23, 2022 at 11:53 AM

G(

“ Nita was my only sister and we were only 18 months apart in age. we became especially close when my first husband, Bob Shell, was diagnosed with cancer. During his 3 year battle, and after his death she was "The angel on my shoulder", there for me whenever I needed support, would come and stay overnight with me if I didn't feel well, took me for minor surgeries I had. We shared Detroit Symphony tickets, met regularly to go to the movies and out to dinner, and at her suggestion went to Florida together first for a week, then a month, and then 2 months during the winter, renting a condo together. Although I remarried, we continued our regular get togethers, and when my husband and I started spending the entire winters in Florida we texted back and forth every day. Although close in age, she was a mother figure to me, I felt protected and her unconditional love. She had an aura of calm and yet great inner strength that stabilized me. I will miss her tremendously, but am glad that she didn't linger in poor health and is in God's arms in perfect peace. She is now my angel in heaven. Glenda Shell

glenda shell (sister) - January 22, 2022 at 02:34 PM