



Brenda Ryan

December 4, 1956 - April 18, 2025

Brenda Ryan, 68 of Milaca, MN, a compassionate and joyful soul, passed away on Friday April 18th, 2025. Known for her vibrant energy and love of life's simple pleasures, she took immense joy in spending her days with her beloved puppies, Tessa and L-E, who were always by her side.

Brenda was the cherished daughter of Norman Larson and Maxine Mattson, and the beloved stepdaughter of Ellsworth Nelson of Duluth, MN. She spent her formative years in Duluth attending grade school before graduating from Proctor High School in 1975. With a natural flair for creativity and beauty, Brenda furthered her education at Regis Cosmetology School, where she earned her cosmetology license. She went on to build a successful career as a skilled hair stylist in the Mound area, delighting her clients until she retired and moved to Milaca in 2018.

Brenda had a knack for challenging herself with a good hard sudoku and found peace in gardening, crocheting, and fishing. Watching the wildlife in her backyard, especially the hummingbirds, brought her endless delight. Holidays were always extra special, as Brenda baked delicious treats and cheered on her favorite team, the Minnesota Vikings.

Her happiest times were spent at the family cabin, which she treasured above all else. Whether hosting fishing contests, organizing Hooters Hook-Up

gatherings, or simply enjoying quiet moments with Mike, Brenda's warmth and spirit made every occasion unforgettable. She had a gift for bringing people together, and the memories created at the cabin will live on as a testament to her love for family and friends.

Brenda is survived by her husband of 20 years, Mike; her son, Eirik (Jen) of Eau Claire, WI; and her grandchildren, Michael and Kaylie; her sister-in-law, Liz (Tim) of Roseville, MN; her dear cousin, Bonnie (Carl) of Eau Claire, WI; and family friends, Cindy Neukircher, Lori Sherman, Debra Walker, and Linda Borman; and many other loving family members and friends, including her cousins Colleen and Julie.

Brenda was preceded in death by her father, Norman Larson; her mother, Maxine Mattson; her stepfather, Ellsworth Nelson; and her brother, Michael Larson; and her father-and-mother-in-law, Patrick and Irma Ryan

Brenda's life was one of laughter, love, and shared adventures. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

Memorial service will be held on Saturday, May 17 at 2 PM with a visitation at 1 PM at Washburn-McReavy Coon Rapids Chapel, 1827 Coon Rapids Blvd. NW, Coon Rapids MN.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 17. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Coon Rapids Chapel
1827 Coon Rapids Blvd.
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Memorial Service

MAY 17. 2:00 PM - 2:45 PM (CT)

Coon Rapids Chapel
1827 Coon Rapids Blvd.
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Tribute Wall

DW

“ Mike, I am sorry I won't be able to attend Brenda's celebration of life. I will always cherish the times we spent together. So many memories of the fishing contests and Hooters Hookup. I will always remember Brenda for her love and devotion to her family. Her many talents of crafts and she was an amazing cook. We spent many hours on the porch trying to solve world problems. I'm going to miss you my friend. Til we meet again. RIP Brenda.

Deb Walker - May 17, 2025 at 02:14 AM

MR

Thak you Deb. I miss you too.

Michael Ryan - May 17, 2025 at 10:58 AM

JT

Oh Mike, I am sorry to hear of Brenda's passing. My dear friend , May you find comfort in happy memories you two shared. Miss you.

Judy Tucknott - May 26, 2025 at 11:03 AM

BS

“ I remember when I first met Brenda, she was living with Carls mom and dad....
That was in 1974. I was just 18, married and pregnant with my baby Girl. AND Brenda was just 17 and still going to school... Anyway I went over to my new in-laws one day and behold — I met my best friend... She named me BonBon and I called her BB (for beautiful Brenda).
We did soooo many things together and made soooo many memories ... Life was incredible- we had so much fun..
Brenda, thank you for your friendship and life. I will cherish our memories forever and always...

Bonnie Sherman - May 13, 2025 at 10:17 AM

BR

We met Brenda a few years ago when they moved up north. She was always happy and smiling and fun to chat with. I'm thankful for the time we shared chatting about plants, flowers and our daily wildlife views and exchanging goodies at Christmas time. She is sadly missed as a neighbor and a sweet friend. Fly high.

Barb Ryan - May 15, 2025 at 06:24 PM

MR

“ Brenda. My best friend, and wife. I miss you so. All the fun we had. The leaning on each other. Talks and plans. We have the greatest of a couples situation with our love and honesty. I miss you and have hopes to see you again. XO my love.



Mike Ryan - April 27, 2025 at 08:31 PM

CC

“ My sweet cousin Brenda who pronounced my name "clean" with her Minnesota accent and also called me Boots because, well, "these boots are made for walking." My earliest memories of summer are filled with laughter at the cabin, the smell of kerosene, the outhouse and spiders, Aunt Mickey packing like a pro to get everything needed into one trunk, learning to boogie board behind the boat and finally making it over the wake without tipping over, laughter, sneaking over to some work farm and digging potatoes... (the statue of limitations is up right?), pumping water for inside the cabin sink, more laughter, sleeping in a double bed bunk bed that had privacy curtains, learning to play cribbage and then doing so for H. O. U. R. S., catching crawdads at night with a flashlight, laughter, driving down the washboard road to get to the landing, honking the correct code for someone to come get us, riding on the pontoon boat in the evening, sprinkling meat tenderizer on the blood suckers stuck to my legs, and of course laughter. So much of my childhood has memories from the cabin. Brenda was 5 years older than me and she was the most beautiful girl/bride/new mom/young woman I had ever seen. I am so happy we re-connected years ago when life and our own paths took us to different destinations earlier on. xoxoxo I will miss you my dear, sweet cousin. I hope you are enjoying re-uniting with Aunt Mickey and Uncle Norm, Grandma and Grandpa Mattson and of course your brother Mike!

Cousin Colleen - April 25, 2025 at 11:40 AM

MR

Thank you Colleen. You remind me of all the great times Brenda, myself, and others had at "The Cabin". Having company, girls weekend, fishing contests, or alone together. It was always exciting and special.
Mike

Mike Ryan - April 27, 2025 at 08:42 PM

MS

“ This may not have been the “fish” but it was one of many. Our happiest memories was on the boat fishing, dancing and singing at the cabin and let’s not forget the endless nights of conversations filled with so much laughter. You will always be in my thoughts and forever in my heart. My you be at peace Brenda 💕



Michele Sherman - April 23, 2025 at 05:58 PM

MR

Thank you Michelle.

Mike Ryan - April 27, 2025 at 08:45 PM

CN

“ Damn mom.. I just don't get it. WHY?? I'm having a real hard time with this.. I'm so going to miss our conversation and reminiscing about the past.. Whenever I hear the macarena I think of the cabin when the deck clasped.. I didn't spill my drink though cuz that's a no.. I wonder if a 12 pack is still out of the question?? Lol. I'm hurting mom and wish you were here..
Rest in paradise my friend.. RIP..
Cindy Neukircher aka daughter ..



Cindy Neukircher - April 23, 2025 at 04:57 PM

MR

Thank you Cindy, aka my daughter. For all you are. You are very special to me, as you are to Brenda.

Mike Ryan - April 27, 2025 at 08:44 PM

LB

“ *I will miss talking to you daily Brenda about what we both are making for dinner and life adventures. The times we shared playing card's in your porch, bouncing creative crafty ideas between us, sharing recipes, beers at the bar sharing stories of our pasts and futures.*

I'm sure going to miss you Brenda.

Love from your close friend!

Linda Borman



Linda Borman - April 23, 2025 at 02:45 PM

MR

Thank you Linda my friend.

Mike Ryan - April 27, 2025 at 08:45 PM