



Gwendolyn F. Olson

December 8, 2012

Olson, Gwendolyn 'Gwen' Felicia Olson, 41, of Minneapolis, passed away at her home on Saturday, December 8, 2012. Gwen was born April 27, 1971, in Fargo, North Dakota, and she spent most of her adult life in the Twin Cities area where she worked as a police dispatcher and in many human service positions. Most recently, she worked for Clare Housing, where she provided compassionate support to those living with HIV/AIDS. Gwen had a huge personality, and the best memories of her are recalled with smiles. She had a quick wit, she loved to find the humor in life's absurdities, and she lived to make people laugh. But she also had a tender, sensitive nature, and Gwen's empathy and affection have been appreciated by all who had the good fortune to know her; she will be remembered most of all for her love and loyalty to family, friends, and pets. Finally, Gwen proved courageous in confronting a life that was not always easy. Her bravery and personal strength carried her over obstacles, and for that, she deserves continued admiration and respect.

Gwen's absence will leave a hole in many lives. She is survived by her mother Karen Rustin; her father, Gary Olson; her step-parents, Gary Rustin and Carol Olson-Rethwisch; and her grandmother, Connie Ferber. Her passing is also mourned by her siblings, Dawn Skelly (Joe), Debbie Johnson-Ansari (Arif), Phillip Olson (Nora), Nicole Olson (Mike), and Jordan Olson (Shelby).

Additionally, Gwen will be fondly remembered by her nieces and nephews, Wade, Paige, Sammy, Jayden, Summer, William, and Maleea. Gwen is preceded in death by her grandparents, Don and Geraldine Olson and Erwin

Ferber. A memorial service will be held at 5 P.M. on Thursday, December 13, with Nancy Smith officiating, but all family and friends are encouraged to come at 4 P.M. to share memories before the service at: www.Washburn-McReavy.com Davies Chapel 612-377-2203 2301 Dupont Ave. S. Mpls

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 13. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Davies Chapel (Uptown)
2301 Dupont Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55405
(612) 377-2203
info@washburn-mcreavy.com

Service

DEC 13. 5:00 PM (CT)

Davies Chapel (Uptown)
2301 Dupont Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55405
(612) 377-2203
info@washburn-mcreavy.com

Tribute Wall

TW

“ I am so sad to hear about Gwen. I have not seen her for so many years but hearing about her being gone shakes me up. She sat behind me in 10th Grade Biology class at Moorhead High School and I could not have dreamt of a better person to help me survive a whole year of bio terms and experiments. Not only would we make wise cracks (her wit was one of the best I have ever encountered), but we could also talk about real and genuine things that mattered. I adored her truly. Now we can imagine her making everyone laugh from above--Twana Zimmerman Weiler

Twana Zimmerman Weiler - December 15, 2012 at 01:10 PM



“ My sharpest memories of Gwen are from childhood, especially the year I went to school with her and Phil. She was fearless, funny, tough and never let anyone take themselves too seriously. I'm sending my love to all of you missing her now.

Jeff Sternal, Gwen's cousin

Jeff Sternal - December 13, 2012 at 08:45 PM

NE

“ 1 file added to the album photos & videos



Nancy Starr Emery - December 13, 2012 at 02:16 PM

RS

“ Dear Karen & Gary, Phil & Nora, Wade & Paige and Gary Olson's family,
Our hearts will be with you tomorrow as you say goodbye to larger than life, wonderful Gwen. It is so telling that all of these messages talk about her strength, compassion, loyalty and mostly her nonstop wit & humor! Katy described so much of what I would like to have said. Gwen will be greatly missed by all who knew her and who saw that her heart was as big as any could be and she truly lit up a room by her presence.

I am so glad to have enjoyed her company after Carl's funeral...I still laugh when I think of her sense of the absurd and how her eyes twinkled with each new thought.

Sending wishes to you that your memories of her will give you strength and help you begin to heal. Much Love, Becki & Guy

Rebecca Ferber Sternal - December 12, 2012 at 10:09 PM



“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Gwendolyn F. Olson.



December 12, 2012 at 10:00 PM

CH

“ Carol Hammer lit a candle in memory of Gwendolyn F. Olson



Carol Hammer - December 12, 2012 at 03:36 PM



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gwendolyn F. Olson.*



December 12, 2012 at 01:00 PM



“ *The (Rick) Trosvig family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Gwendolyn F. Olson.*



The (Rick) Trosvig family - December 12, 2012 at 09:38 AM



“ *I can't thank Gwen enough for the strength, humor and reality she offered to me when I needed it most. She gave me a few brilliant moments of joy at just the right times. With complete honesty I can say she took me to a higher level of strength and self-assurance than I'd ever known. This morning, when I learned she had passed on, I went into a state of denial that I'm still experiencing and probably will for a long time. Condensing this into words is very frustrating. Her example will be difficult for me to process for some time to come. Again, thank you Gwen.*

William Powers - December 11, 2012 at 08:36 PM



“ *Imagination Blooms* was purchased for the family of Gwendolyn F. Olson.



December 11, 2012 at 06:46 PM

“*My cousin Gwen was beautiful inside and out... Beautiful. I always believed that she looked like a Calvin Klein model. With that perfectly structured face, high cheekbones, tiny little nose, flawless, milky skin and those striking, light green eyes. As a little girl anytime I'd see my older cousin Gwen I remember just staring at her thinking she was so cool and so pretty. But nothing about her outward appearance compared to the beauty she possessed inside.*

Gwen was Strong. She was someone who took difficult circumstances and turned them around. She had a compassion for people that ran deeper than most probably even understand which is why she could always make anyone feel good. How she could so easily give of herself and why she always chose to work in fields that were helping others. Gwen had an ability to face anything with comedic flair and make others feel comfortable and even laugh in difficult times.

Gwen was Hilarious! She may have been the funniest person I've ever known. Sometimes I felt like she missed her calling in stand up comedy! Anytime Gwen was around, we were sure to laugh so hard we were crying! Her Christmas commentary was always one of my favorite things. The best seat in the house was never near the Christmas tree, it was by Gwen so you could hear her quick wit and dry commentary that had everyone in stitches!

Gwen was Compassionate. She had a heart for people and went out of her way to help others. She was never one to judge and always accepted people right where they were at. She loved you and made you feel comfortable. Acceptance was one of her gifts.

Gwen was Loyal. Loyal to her work, friends, family. You could trust her with anything and she was the type to have your back. In any given circumstance, it didn't matter, Gwen could be counted on.

Gwen was a great gift giver. Let's face it, every year that we would draw names at Christmas, I secretly hoped Gwen would get my

name, because she always bought the coolest, funkiest gifts and they were just the best!

Gwen was a GIFT!

Gwen was so incredibly LOVED. Words are just not enough... I cry even as I write this because I can't believe that Gwen is no longer here with us. We have lost someone so special, so significant and so dear to our family. There is a huge void in all of our hearts.

My heart hurts for our family. It Breaks for Karen and Gary, Phil, Nora, Paige, Wade, and Gary Olson and his family. I am so, incredibly sorry for your pain and for the loss of your precious daughter, sister and auntie. I know how close you all were and how much you loved each other. I feel so lucky to be part of this family to be a witness to the bond that you all share.

Please know today that I am praying for you all. God loves Gwen so much and he sees all of our hurt, grief, sorrow and pain. He Loves us unconditionally and promises to be our comfort and peace even in our darkest days. So I'm praying that we all may feel His love wrapping us, drawing us closer to him. That he gives us strength to get through these days of sorrow and most importantly that we may find Peace in the midst of all of this.

I love you my family.... You are all so precious to me.

Love you Gwen....

Katie Johns

Katie Johns - December 11, 2012 at 06:26 PM

DH

Dear Katie - you have captured Gwen's essence with your beautifully written tribute. She was all of that and so much more. There just aren't words to adequately describe the huge impact that she has had on our lives and the lives of so many. I agree with every word that you wrote. You have an innate ability to express how you are feeling. Thank you for saying so beautifully what so many of us are feeling in the depths of our hearts. I too pray that God will bring comfort and peace to our family, and especially to Karen & Gary & Phil, Nora, Wade & Paige. I am so so very sorry for your sorrow & loss. I am praying for you. I love you! - Debbie

Deb Hoversten - December 12, 2012 at 12:42 AM

MB

“ I worked with Gwen. She was one of my favorite co-workers. She'd often call me when we worked the same shift & we'd laugh together during the slow moments. I don't think this is yet real for me. I'm still so shocked by it. She will be sorely missed. She already is.



Melissae Bletsian - December 11, 2012 at 05:07 PM

AL

“ I had the great pleasure of working with Gwen at St Paul Police Dispatch. She was amazing to work with & always made my days better. She was not only a co-worker she was a friend. I'm saddened to hear of her passing. Too young & too soon. I love you Gwen. You're going to make an amazing Angel in Heaven.

Amy Leuck-Mullins - December 11, 2012 at 04:41 PM

DH

“ 1 file added to the album photos & videos



Deb Hoversten - December 11, 2012 at 04:12 PM

SH

“ Gwen was my cousin and a wonderful friend. I will miss her laughter, quick wit, our conversations and our on-going Scrabble games - she was ahead in our last game :) My family and I will always remember our most recent night out for Chinese and the sculpture garden - Rachel still laughs about the prom fiasco! Our family gatherings will never be the same...I love you and miss you, Gwen.



Sherry Happe - December 11, 2012 at 11:13 AM

JO

“ I love you Gwen. I remember when I was really little and you were flying back from England, and I laid awake in my room just waiting for you to come and say hi. I don't know what to think Gwen. I just saw you a couple of months ago, we ate at Rainbow Chinese, talked about life, and I didn't see this coming, I don't think anyone did. I miss you already, and I always will. I love you Gwen.



Jordan Alexander Olson - December 11, 2012 at 09:39 AM

NO

“Gwen was a sister to me. She and I spent our time together laughing and being silly. She was the only person I know who could get me to sing out loud, and no one could make me laugh like Gwen. We went to a David Sedaris show together. He was funny, but I know I laughed harder than anyone in the theater because I sat next to Gwen. She also taught me much about accepting others despite, and because of, their differences. Our family gatherings never felt complete until Gwen arrived. She brought a presence that officially made it Christmas, or someones' birthday, or a family reunion. Until she walked in the door, something was missing. Nothing will not be the same without her.
I love you and miss you, Gwen.



Nora Olson - December 11, 2012 at 08:55 AM

DH

“Deb & Roger Hoversten lit a candle in memory of Gwendolyn F. Olson



Deb & Roger Hoversten - December 11, 2012 at 01:39 AM

KC

“ We will miss Gwen terribly. She brought such wit, charm, and love to our entire family. No one could make us laugh like Gwen could. Just the last time we were together, after Carl's funeral, as we were getting ready to part, Gwen busted out singing a song that I had taught her when she was a child and I made her audition for one of the children's roles in *The Sound of Music*. In her now-low voice, she belted out, "So long, farewell, auf wiedersehen, goodbye . . ." complete with all the choreographed actions. There is no one like her. We loved her deeply. The memories she leaves will continue to bless us.



Keith and Ruth Christensen - December 10, 2012 at 07:43 PM

DE

“ I had the honor of being Gwen's partner/companion/girlfriend (we could never find a term that set right for both of us so we settled for "woman") for such a short period of time but what an enormous gift she was. She was so sweet and giving and always concerned for others happiness over her own. We would sit around for hours, sometimes days, telling stories and laughing til we couldn't stand it any more. She was beautiful inside and out and I am truly blessed that she allowed me to know her in such an intimate way. She was absolutely brilliant and I am forever thankful my life was blessed with her beauty.

Dawn Essen - December 10, 2012 at 06:05 PM

AJ

“ I had the pleasure of being Gwen's boss lady. She meant soooo much to our residents at Clare Housing and her co-workers. Gwen was our right hand man, she was so willing to do whatever needed and with that smile on her face and twinkle in her eye. Our residents loved and trusted her and were always soooo glad when I told them she was coming on next. I have soo many fond memories it's hard to pick just one. But something I'll never forget is the way she would mockingly "serve" me. She would bring me coffee and call me Master, sometimes she would kneel down delivering my lunch that she secretly prepared knowing I had a full day ahead of me. I always knew when she was working that my day would be exceedingly more joyful. I will miss our banter sooo much. I will miss her even more.



Angela Maki Jones - December 10, 2012 at 05:19 PM

LT

“ We are so sorry to hear about Gwen. Please know that our thoughts are with you in this tragic time. All our love and God bless.

Rick & Linda

Linda and Rick Trosvig - December 10, 2012 at 03:51 PM

DW

“ Family and friends...I am so sorry for the loss of Gwen. I did not have the good fortune to see her very often, but I know she was a treasure to our family. I know so many of us have heavy hearts during this difficult time. May peace be with Gwen and all of us.

Dani (Trosvig) Witzigreuter - December 10, 2012 at 09:10 AM



“ *Holiday Homecoming Basket was purchased for the family of Gwendolyn F. Olson.*



December 09, 2012 at 05:33 PM