



Rebecca Elisabeth Hranj

April 23, 1982 - April 15, 2026

Rebecca Elisabeth Hranj, aged 43, of Blaine, MN, died April 15, 2026, after a 2 year long battle with complications from beating pancreatic cancer. Born on April 23, 1983 to Albert Raymond Hranj and Ingeborg "Inge" Elisabeth (Ueckert) VanReenen at Carl Schurts-Kaserne Base in Bremerhaven, Germany. A child of an immigrant, her German heritage wound its quiet way through the rest of her life and she maintained connection with her family that still remain there.

Rebecca attained a Bachelor of Arts in English from Towson University and a Masters of Library Science with an emphasis in Rare Collections Archiving from the University of Maryland. She taught high school throughout her 20s and was so beloved by her students that she maintained contact with them and supported their dreams the rest of her life. Later, she worked at The Folger Shakespeare Library with the world's largest collection of the printed works of William Shakespeare and a rare collection repository. Ever the book lover, she worked at several different libraries after moving to Minnesota. In the last 5 years, she was able to fulfill her dream of combining her loves of teaching and archiving on staff with St. Olaf College.

She married Josh Udvig on November 22nd, 2023. Long before that, she took on his children as her "bonus" kids(her words), always feeling blessed to be in their lives. Her family was one of her fiercest loves. She graciously extended that love to her in-law Udvig and Vinson families.

She was an avid reader, theater enthusiast, gardener, and artist. After

attaining her Advanced Certificate in Book Arts from Minnesota Center for Book Arts, she could be seen marbling paper, creating books, or making boxes in her spare time. She was working on creating a class to teach at MCBA on the history of the book. Her passion for sharing her knowledge carried through all parts of her life.

Rebecca is survived by her husband Josh Udvig, three children Gavin, Gweneth "Gael", and Maegan "Maggie", and four siblings Bo Hranj, DJ VanReenen, Christine VanReenen, and Tina Sinyard.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Albert Raymond Hranj, Ingeborg "Inge" Elisabeth (Ueckert) VanReenen, and her step-father, Daniel "Van" Ray VanReenen though she never would have called him "step," just her Dad.

That may be the most defining feature of a life cut too short. From her students, to her theater friends, co-workers, besties, spouse, and children, all were welcomed as family.

Her Celebration of Life will be held Monday, April 27th at 11:00 am with visitation 1 hour before at Washburn - McReavy Funeral Chapel, 1827 Coon Rapids Blvd. NW, Coon Rapids.

In lieu of flowers we would like you to honor Rebecca with donations to Minnesota Center of Book Arts at www.mnbookarts.org/support

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 27. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

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

Celebration of Life

APR 27. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

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

Tribute Wall



“ Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels created a Memorial Service for Rebecca Elisabeth Hranj in memory of Rebecca Elisabeth Hranj



Washburn-McReavy - April 25 at 09:59 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Rebecca Elisabeth Hranj.



April 28 at 11:08 AM



“ I did not have the pleasure of knowing Rebecca, though I am a colleague of Josh's. Reading her obituary and the tributes listed here, she sounds like an incredible woman, talented artist, wife, mother and member of her community. My thoughts go out to all of her family and friends during this very difficult time.



Haley Shanley - April 27 at 03:32 PM

TE

“ Ms Hranj played such an important role in my life during my senior year of high school. She kept me grounded through some really tough times in my life and heavily influenced my love for reading. Ms Hranj, you impacted more lives than you know in your short time here. You will be missed.

Tyler Ehinger - April 26 at 08:52 PM

SU

“ It's incredible to read how Rebecca touched so many lives, it's clear her impact will have an exponential effect into infinity 💕 Josh and Rebecca's beloveds, seems like every life has an impossible portion, and I'm so beyond sorry for yours right now. So far this life-the impossible always seems connected to LOVE. Thank you Josh for risking and trusting and growing and evolving and loving Rebecca, such a beautiful thing you've shared with us. 🙏 I love you, I'm with you, I hold you in my heart. Cousin Sara

Sara K Udvig - April 24 at 11:39 AM

YF

“ Your CTN family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Rebecca Elisabeth Hranj.



Your CTN family - April 24 at 09:19 AM

CL

“ Rebecca studied bookbinding with my late wife, Jana Pullman. We met toward the end of Jana’s life and Rebecca was an enormous help and support to me when I was rehoming my wife’s studio. I really enjoyed the times that I got to hang out and chat with her and I’m so sorry that she’s gone. All my sympathies to all her loved ones.

Catherine Lundoff - April 24 at 09:10 AM

LE

“ I’m so sorry to hear about your wife’s passing, Josh. It sounds like she was a lovely person and a true blessing for you and your kids. I’m praying for you to be surrounded by love, peace, and strength during this difficult time, my friend.

Luke Erickson - April 22 at 03:56 PM

ZW

“ I remember working with her in several capacities at the Hennepin County Library and we attended archivist events together several times way back when. We bonded over our shared Deutsch nerdery and non-Minnesotan upbringing, and I always loved her deadpan and direct east coast attitude and humor. In the last couple of years I had talked to her about commissioning some marbled paper to refinish the countertops and table in my Winnebago, which had to be delayed as she focused on health stuff. Thank you to everyone who is remembering her sly smile and sharp wit and sharing all that she means in our lives.

Zee Warholm - April 22 at 01:55 PM

JG

“ Sorry for your loss Josh. I did not know your wife, but reading about her here shows the special and talented person she embodies. peace be with you and your family.
Jerry Grant



Jerry Grant - April 21 at 06:45 PM

CS

“ Craig and all MN Wild Staff planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rebecca Elisabeth Hranj.

Craig and all MN Wild Staff - April 21 at 01:26 PM

CS

“ Craig and all MN Wild Staff purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Rebecca Elisabeth Hranj.



Craig and all MN Wild Staff - April 21 at 01:26 PM