



## Donna Gutknecht

August 25, 1931 - November 27, 2020

After 36 years Donna Lou Gutknecht was reunited with her husband Gene. She was a devoted daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, aunt and friend to many. Following a short illness, she passed away Friday, November 27th with family by her side. Donna was born and raised in Fort Dodge, dedicating her life to making her community a better place. On August 25th, 1931 she was born to Cyril (Cy) and Beulah (Holleschau) Guenther; she graduated from Fort Dodge Senior High in 1949 and attended Iowa State before returning home and doing accounting books which led her to meet her husband.

Trinity United Methodist Church has been where her family has served and worshiped for decades. In 1970 she became the first woman to serve on the Fort Dodge School Board, serving until 1976. For 21 years she worked in the treasurer's office, the final two as County Treasurer in 1993/94. Among the many organizations she was proud to be a part of were American Cancer Society (Chairman), American Legion Auxiliary (Treasurer), DOES, Fort Dodge, Women's Club (Treasurer), Red Hats, 100 Women Who Care and Treasurer for the Coachlight Condominiums for 40 years. Playing bridge, 500 & especially pitch were something she enjoyed doing with her regular card club. For decades she read to the blind every Tuesday through IRIS. In 1994 Dean Ankrum came back into her life for a wonderful 12 years, Donna enjoyed connecting with his children and traveling the world with him.

Survived by her sister Audrey Ercolini of Sioux City, children: Kris (Tom) England of Universal City, TX, Lori (Bob Randall) Hansen of Rockwell City, and Kirk Gutknecht of Fort Dodge, grandchildren: Sandra Hildreth, Shane Hansen, Summer Bawden, Lindsay England, Ryan England and Seth Hansen as well as 14 great-grandchildren with many others who love to call her grandma. Donna was preceded in death by her husband, Gene and her parents Cy and Beulah.

Following her wishes, Donna was cremated, a headstone next to Gene at Zion Lutheran Church in Hudson, IA offers an opportunity to visit and honor her memory. A celebration of life will be held at a later time. Arrangements have been entrusted to Gunderson Funeral

Home and Cremation Services. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to organizations that were near and dear to her heart such as American Cancer Society or your local Domestic Violence Outreach Center.

# Cemetery

---

## Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery

Hudson, IA,

# Comments

---



“ The Gutknecht's and the Glaser's have a long history. Kris and I were the same age, Lori and Bill, and Kirk and Donna. Our Dad's were best friends until Gene's death which was a huge blow to our dad and family.

We spent time together as neighbors and friends in Fort Dodge as well as at Mud Lake. I remember riding out tornado warnings in the basement of the Gutknecht house. Back in the day no one locked their doors and we would all come and go freely from house to house. There are so many memories I could probably fill a book.

Donna Gutknecht was a straight shooter, you never wondered where she stood on any topic. Her mother, Mrs. Guenther, babysat for us at times, she was also an amazing woman. Vibrant and active and living with Donna until the end. I still have tables I bought way back in the day that they all grew up with.

Kris moved away, but Lori and I have remained friends. Donna and my mom have been close since they first met so many decades ago. It is hard to believe she is gone and she will be truly missed.

My thoughts and prayers are with your family through this difficult time.

**Karen Glaser** - December 26, 2020 at 09:07 AM

---



“ I am Donna's cousin and have known her well all of my life. I enjoyed our telephone conversations. I am sorry for your loss. My condolences to Audrey and your entire family. She will be missed.

Lola Eastlund

**Mary Jones** - December 04, 2020 at 09:04 PM



“ I just read inches Messenger that Donna found a class ring by Fair Oaks Middle School and that she had passed away. I'm a member of Trinity United Methodist Church and will miss her smile and great outlook on life! I miss her already.

**Michael Shelton** - March 07, 2021 at 11:26 PM

---



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. Donna and I were in Red Hats together and had many fun times at the lunches.  
God be with you all,  
Linda George



**James George** - December 01, 2020 at 12:15 PM

---



“ Sending you sympathy in the loss of Donna. When I began working at the County Treasurer's office in 1977, Donna was there and took me under her wing. She was a caring person who always thought of and did for others. Rest in peace Donna.

**Bev Davis** - December 01, 2020 at 10:57 AM

---



“ I'm sorry for your loss. Thoughts and prayers are with you. Donna was a great lady. She was a friend of my mother, Dorothy Janvrin, also a member of Trinity United Methodist Church. My parents started the IRIS program in Fort Dodge, and Donna was a faithful reader. She volunteered and gave of herself.  
She will be missed.  
Karrey Lindeberg

**karrey Lindeberg** - December 01, 2020 at 08:19 AM

---



“ Donna will always be remembered as one of my dearest friends and one of my favorite travel buddies. God blessed my life the day he brought her into it. I will miss her dearly and look forward to the day we are reunited in heaven. My sincerest sympathies to her children and grandchildren!

**Jeanette Thanupakorn** - November 29, 2020 at 09:31 PM