



Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell

November 6, 1952 - November 28, 2023

Gail O'Donnell passed away at the age of 71 on Tuesday, November 28th from complications of a severe and rare bacterial infection. Gail was born in Chicago, IL in 1952 to parents Lucille (1920-2006) and Joseph (1907-2002) and shared a rambunctious childhood with her older brother Joseph (1944-1992) and the other children of Polish, Croatian, and Lithuanian immigrants in her neighborhood.

She endured a fateful injury at the age of 16 when she was struck by a car and narrowly survived. Her time in the hospital and especially the poise and compassion of the nurses who treated her inspired her to become a nurse, forgoing her earlier ambition to become an artist.

In 1970 she moved far from her life in the Midwest to attend the University of Miami, becoming the first in her family to go to college. While playing (and arguably, hustling) in the school's pool hall, she met James O'Donnell working behind the counter. Despite some initial impatience waiting for him to acknowledge their obvious connection, they quickly fell in love and were married 1979.

Soon after graduating with her B.S.N., she found a position as a Registered Nurse at Miami Children's Hospital (now Nicklaus Children's Hospital) where she had begun as Student Nurse several years earlier. Over the course of nearly 50 years, she saved untold numbers of infants in the Neonatal

Intensive Care Unit. It is no exaggeration to say that entire schools' worth of Miami children across multiple generations were touched by her skillful and empathetic care, and it remained a great source of pride for her to continue her work well beyond the age of retirement.

In her time outside of the NICU, she was known for her boundless energy and enthusiasm for bringing family and friends together--almost always single-handedly organizing all the festivities for the occasion. She enjoyed sports, murder mysteries, culinary adventures, and the art she had put aside so many years earlier.

Gail is survived by family that loved her so much— her husband James (b.1953), and children Kathryn (b.1980), James (b.1986), and Patrick (b.1991) as well as son-in-law Eduardo (b.1980), grandson Julian (b.2016.), and cousins Kenneth (b.1950) and Donald (b.1943)

A funeral service is scheduled at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, December 4, 2023 at the Mausoleum Chapel at Forest Meadows Cemetery-Central, 4100 NW 39th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32606. The visitation is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Burial will follow the funeral service.

Cemetery Details

Forest Meadows Cemetery (Central)

4100 NW 39th Avenue
Gainesville, FL 32606
(352) 376-9552
<https://forestmeadowssf.com/>

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Chapel at Forest Meadows Cemetery
4100 NW 39th Ave
Gainesville, FL 32606-6120
(352) 376-9552

Funeral Service

DEC 4. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Chapel at Forest Meadows Cemetery
4100 NW 39th Ave
Gainesville, FL 32606-6120
(352) 376-9552

Interment

DEC 4. 12:00 PM (ET)

Forest Meadows Cemetery (Central)

4100 NW 39th Avenue

Gainesville, FL 32606

(352) 376-9552

<https://forestmeadowssf.com/>

Tribute Wall

LM

“ *Wish I had been fortunate enough to meet Gail. But, in her picture I can clearly see Katie's compassion, warmth and energy. It takes a special person to work NICU - and it is obvious she was one of those. Katie, I am thinking of you and your family at this time.*
Lonnie Mann

Lonnie Mann - December 04, 2023 at 07:28 AM

JO

“ *I worked side by side with Gail in the NICU for 30 years. Our friendship developed over the years and deepened as time went on. She was a supportive shoulder to cry on when my father passed away, and later my mother. Gail recognized early on that I was an introvert and encouraged me to come out of my shell. One of her last missions in life was to support me through my cancer treatment this year. She went with me to my chemotherapy treatments and was there when I rang the bell for my final treatment. We danced and celebrated. My dear friend you touched my life in so many ways, and remained full of life until the very end. Death cannot take away what love remains always in my heart for you. Godspeed on your journey.*

Joy Ortiz - December 03, 2023 at 10:31 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*



December 03, 2023 at 04:53 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*



December 03, 2023 at 10:18 AM



“ *Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*



December 03, 2023 at 01:12 AM



“ *Love, Angelina, Rina, Sohail purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*



Love, Angelina, Rina, Sohail - December 02, 2023 at 09:07 PM



“ *Love, Angelina, Rina, Sohail planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*

Love, Angelina, Rina, Sohail - December 02, 2023 at 09:07 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*



December 02, 2023 at 10:15 AM



“ *Lynda Hartley-Urban planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*

Lynda Hartley-Urban - December 02, 2023 at 10:15 AM



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*



December 01, 2023 at 08:16 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*



December 01, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.



December 01, 2023 at 06:19 PM



“ From the Herbe Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.

From the Herbe Family - December 01, 2023 at 06:19 PM



“ I met Gail in the NICU at what was then Variety Children's Hospital (later Miami Children's Hospital and now Nicklaus Children's Hospital.) She was a fantastic nurse, loved taking care of the babies and became very proficient in starting IV's in their tiny extremities. She had a lot of energy and a ready smile for anyone who she worked with her in the NICU. She eventually moved to Gainesville, where her family had a "cabin". I was able to go there once and stay with several NICU nurses and spend a weekend relaxing. She will be missed by many. Praying for comfort and peace for the whole family. So sorry for your loss. Sandy Stroberg Frank, RN, BSN

Sandra Frank - December 01, 2023 at 03:51 PM



“ Rose Remembrance was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.



December 01, 2023 at 03:47 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.



December 01, 2023 at 03:02 PM



“ Your DHR Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.

Your DHR Family - December 01, 2023 at 03:02 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



dayse delgado - December 01, 2023 at 02:29 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gail Ann Urban O'Donnell.*



December 01, 2023 at 02:28 PM