



Ms. Donna Lee Shaw

April 3, 1944 - October 20, 2014

Donna Lee Shaw, 70, of Asheville died Monday October 20, 2014 at Brooks Howell Home.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Ms. Shaw was educated and worked in Chicago, IL for most of her life. She was a Vice President of Marketing for the City of Chicago for over 30 years.

Donna is survived by her Aunt Virginia who still resides in Pennsylvania. In keeping with Ms. Shaw's wishes, no local services are planned.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ms. Donna Lee Shaw*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *Marie Earley DiBello lit a candle in memory of Ms. Donna Lee Shaw*



Marie Earley DiBello - January 24, 2019 at 07:33 PM



“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



Jeffrey Schweig - May 05, 2017 at 03:22 PM

“*Donna Shaw had a long and impactful leadership career in the tourism industry. She worked as the Director of Tourism for the State of Illinois as well as the Vice President of Marketing for both Choose Chicago & the City of Miami Beach. Donna served on the White House Conference on Travel and Tourism, the National Tourism Organization’s Board of Directors and the Travel Industry Association of America’s Executive Committee.*

Donna was the kind of woman that could walk in and commanded a room. She was an inspirational leader with a bold personality and a sharp approach to her work. Donna was a creative visionary; she inspired her team and worked only with the best award-winning agencies. She valued quality marketing and wasn’t scared to take risks and push boundaries.

I had the pleasure of working under Donna at Choose Chicago in her marketing department. I remember my first interview with Donna, being so in awe of her. I walked out of that interview and sat in my car and told myself, “No matter what, you are going to get that job to work under that woman!” I had no tourism experience but a strong passion for marketing, and Donna saw something in me, and stuck her neck out for me to the job. She was the best boss in the whole world, and a true mentor that still to this day is impacting my ability to now lead my own tourism marketing department at VISIT Milwaukee.

Donna’s personality was unforgettable. For starters, she had short spiky silver white hair and was always stylishly dressed in edgy modern clothes and wearing some huge fabulous chunky one-of-a-kind piece of jewelry that she undoubtedly picked up at a local art fair.

She loved art and culture, and was an avid collector of paintings, vases, and jewelry. When I asked Donna about her passion for artistic pieces, she told me that you must cherish what you love in life. She would say, “who more deserving then I” which has stuck

with me all these years. It's a great reminder of the importance of loving oneself and enjoying life's pleasures; something that Donna was very good at.

I would be remiss to not include in my tribute Donna's beloved children - her dogs - Charlie, Max, and Lucy. Her dogs were her world, and she loved them with all of her heart. Lucy, the youngest puppy and only girl, was a princess. Charlie and Max were always up to something that had Donna laughing. Whether catching up with Donna at the office, or later on in our friendship over phone calls and emails, she always updated me on funny stories about the dogs. Donna's life was enriched by her dogs, and she was so grateful for their love and companionship.

My fondest memories with Donna are our brunches together at Ina's. We would sit at a 2 top table for hours talking. I cherished all of the moments I got to be around Donna. She was my friend, my mentor, my role model, and at times very motherly to me. She told me once that we were kindred spirits and creative types, and that if she had a daughter she'd want her to be my spitting image. That meant so much to me coming from a woman I admired so much.

Donna's life was spent in Chicago surrounded by close friends and coworkers. She grew up in Pennsylvania, raised by her mother, and talked lovingly about her Aunt Jenni and cousins who were like sisters to her. After Chicago, she moved to Asheville to retire. Although her time there was quick, I know that she loved the warm weather and the slower pace of southern life.

I know it has been a while since Donna's passing. It has taken me a very long time to come to terms that she's truly gone, and I long for one more time to talk with her. There is so much I want to share with her. My wedding day is quickly approaching, and it will be sad not to have her there in celebration. Donna believed in a larger universe, in fate, treating people with kindness, and karma. Her spirit lives on and I write this post in memory of her.

With love and admiration. You are deeply missed. ~ Megan Gaus



Megan Gaus - March 06, 2016 at 07:27 PM

PM

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



pmatsumoto - November 12, 2015 at 12:33 PM

PS

Pat, I love this picture of Donna , Charlie and Max, thanks for posting it. I am her cousin Pat from Ohio!

pat sigler - November 13, 2015 at 06:06 PM

JS

Donna--you were amazing. Loved by so many people. I will miss you tons and I pray that you are resting in peace. Much love to you, sweetness. Jfre Schweig

Jeffrey Schweig - November 16, 2015 at 09:02 AM

RP

I was Donna's veterinarian in Chicago. She was such a vibrant personality. I really enjoyed helping her and the flurry of dog energy that surrounded her. I will miss them all.

Rae Ann Van Pelt - November 16, 2015 at 01:06 PM

PM

Donna was Deputy Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Development in the 1990s. She was brilliant as the Director of Tourism for the State of Illinois. She masterminded a marketing program that launched Chicago as a global city and a worldwide tourism destination. She later became Tourism Director for the city of Miami Beach, Florida. She returned to Chicago for a few years before finding her dream home in Asheville, North Carolina. It was during those early retirement years when she found her loves, three gorgeous shih tzu puppies that she named Max, Charlie and Lucy, later to be known as Lucifer. I know Charlie has gone and was there at the Rainbow Bridge to welcome her to paradise. I hope Max and Lucy are being cared for and loved. My condolences to all who knew and loved Donna. She is missed.

Pat Matsumoto

Pat Matsumoto - November 16, 2015 at 04:18 PM

DB

This ALSO is NOT Donna Lee Shaw of Cypress, TX.

DBShaw - December 21, 2015 at 05:18 PM