



Donna Marie "MiMi" (Alam) Zegarelli

April 28, 1948 - December 22, 2020

UTICA - Donna Marie "MiMi" (Alam) Zegarelli, age 72, passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, December 22, 2020 with her loving family by her side.

Born in Utica on April 28, 1948, Donna was the daughter of the late Thomas and Helen (Yahoudy) Alam. A Mt. Carmel girl, she was proud of her Catholic grammar school education. She was a graduate of Utica Free Academy/Class of 1966. On November 16, 1968 she wed James Zegarelli with whom she shared a loving marriage of 25 years blessed with two children. Donna continued to be 'best of friends' with "Ziggy" which made for a happy group that shared life with a rare blending. Donna was graced with happiness again in her 25 year relationship with Philip "Phil" Bowser, "a second chapter of life in which she found her soul mate".

Donna's employment varied in jobs and titles during her working career, including her positions as Assistant to the Dean at MVCC and owner and operator of Ziggy's Exercise Salon. The hallmark of her career was becoming a franchise owner of Cruise Planners where she was passionate about creating a picturesque vacation for her patrons, many of whom she escorted personally on the seas. Her title also included being a Travel Agent Specialist and she was often called on to be the coordinator of National Sales Meetings. She took pride in all her endeavors and throughout her working years she made many long lasting friends through her adventurous heart and affinity for interacting with people, attributes that garnered her success.

A wonderful, kind woman, Donna was generous to a fault, especially to her loved ones, who meant everything to her. She was prim and proper, well attired, and blessed with intelligence. Her life experiences granted her wisdom, an open ear, a keen eye, and a mind that absorbed things with great intensity. She centered her life around her children, Phil's family, and her grandchildren who brought her so much joy whenever she was able to be with them. She was their "MiMi" and she loved them selflessly. Donna's daughter aspires to totally emulate her mom's maternal finesse in raising her own children. Donna had guidelines for her kids, and not much got by her! As her children entered adulthood, they became best friends with their mom.

Donna had the pleasure of traveling and sightseeing aboard a total of 52 Cruises, those were the best of times! She took pride in cooking, baking and watching her family enjoy her many specialties. When it came to music, she loved the 1960's songs and style of Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons so much that she saw the Tony Award-winning jukebox musical, Jersey Boys, three times! She was also fond of tunes by the Beach Boys! Like many of her era, she never outgrew the smooth Motown sounds of 60 years ago! She was also an aficionado of the Jitter Bug, and on the dance floor Donna was admired for her rhythm, grace, and style.

She moved to the Dover/Randolph area of New Jersey, a residence with proximity to the hustle and bustle of the Big Apple and the beauty and charm of New Jersey where she resided for over 25 years. She had a wonderful time during her stay there. As her retirement years approached, they decided to relocate back to Utica to be closer to family and the familiarity of 'home'. She listened to all of life's lessons and learned that being with family is everything. She loved canines, and last January a beagle named Abby became the love of her life, and now Phil will carry on the love the two of them shared. Donna practiced her Catholic faith as a communicant of St. Mary of Mt.

Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish. She had a prayer list that was a mile long, found peace in attending Mass, and did good deeds for anyone in need.

Donna is survived by her husband, Phil; her son, James Zegarelli, Jr. and

fiancée Katrina Jones; her daughter and son-in-law, Ginamarie and Patrick Corridori; Phil's children, Bryan and Caytie Bowser, and Michael and Meghan Bowser; and her grandchildren, Julianna Zegarelli, Thomas Zegarelli; Patrick Corridori, Gino Corridori; and Kendyl, and Tyler Bowser. She also leaves numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins; Kerry Cichon who was like a daughter to her and her childhood friends with whom she held a sisterhood bond, Vicki Myers, Janet Streeper, Geri Abruzzo. She always held close those who preceded her including her aunt, Sally Polizzi; her nephew, Michael J. Zegarelli III; her niece and goddaughter, Maria Zegarelli Rolchigo; her special cousin Tony Summa, her lifelong friend Virginia Camanjani, and her brother-in-law, Patrick Zegarelli.

The family extends sincere thanks to the MVHS at St. Elizabeth Medical Center, especially ER Charge Nurse, Stacy Walton; ICU staff especially nurses Jackie Madia and Dan Freedman. Donna's family will never forget these outstanding and compassionate people during such a difficult time of need.

The family will honor and commemorate Donna's life at a private time.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Donna's Memorial Mass of Christian Burial which will commence on Saturday morning, January 2, 2021 at 10:00 at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish. Social distancing, registration for contact tracing, and a mask covering your nose and mouth will be required. In lieu of flowers, please send donations in Donna's memory to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital online at <https://www.stjude.org> or the Saint Agatha Foundation online at <https://www.saintagathafoundation.org>. Envelopes will be available at the service.

During this time of social distancing that we are all experiencing, please take a moment to connect with Donna's family through the "Memories" section of her obituary. Our prayers go out to all as a sign of our continued support.

Tribute Wall



Jessica Chicas

“ I’m still at a loss for words. Growing up I never really had a grandfather, and I’ll never forget when I asked Phil if I could “adopt him” as my grandpa. His response was that you and him were a package deal, and just like that I gained a grandma also. My heart hurts for your family and loved ones and of course my good friend Phil. Donna, you were always so kind, loving, and had me laughing at your responses to Phil. I remember walking into Charmant daily and having Phil tell me stories of what you two argued or laughed about the night before. I still can’t believe we just spoke right before thanksgiving to talk about, tomato pie, Abby and life. You will be missed and I promise to check in on Phil and Abby.



Jessica Chicas - January 02, 2021 at 09:19 AM

GC



Gina Zegarelli Corridori - January 02, 2021 at 10:47 PM

DF

“ *The most sincere condolences to the family & Phil. Seems so strange to write just "Phil" because forever they were linked. It was never just Phil and never just Donna. It was Phil & Donna or Donna & Phil. Kind of a Charmant Everly Brothers...Phil and Don... Her memory will live forever as any time a National Sales Meeting takes place, she won't be there and her absence will be huge.*

Please take care of my great friend Phil in this time of grieving and beyond.

Doug Fryer - December 31, 2020 at 01:38 PM

SJ

“ *I send my deepest condolences to Ziggy & to Donna's family.*

Sandy Johnson - December 29, 2020 at 06:45 PM

LV

Ya grew up st aunt Helen's house on Lansing st. Donna and she does have a sister were my family until life came along. I'm out living all of them.

Lee Vitalone - February 03, 2025 at 12:49 PM

LS

“ *Love Jean Simone purchased the Guiding Light Bouquet for the family of Donna Marie "MiMi" (Alam) Zegarelli.*



Love Jean Simone - December 29, 2020 at 12:34 PM

SD

“ to Ziggy, and Phil, my deepest condolences on your loss of Donna. I always remember the many, many times she was at Masoud's Lounge, dancing to our music, and having a wonderful time. She sometimes wore Jimmy out, but she loved her Saturday night out. She was a very energetic person, and was always willing to do something for someone. She was a true woman who held onto her values, and passed them on to her children, and they in turn to their children. Again, my sincerest condolences on your loss.

Sonny Dee

sonny dee - December 28, 2020 at 03:11 PM

KC

“ Jim and Gina:

So, so sorry to hear of your loss. I have so many great memories of growing up in North Utica and spending time at the Zegarelli home: swimming, Kirby, bikes, so much laughter, guitars way too loud and food, food, food! This skinny "mayonnaise face" got my formal Italian food education there on Sunday afternoons ("You want more???? Where are you putting it!!!) and never forget my introduction to clams at Spilka's: "I'll stick with the steamers!". Good, good times, your mom was always so warm and welcoming. I ran into her at Staples several years ago and had a great chat with her.

Without a doubt she'll be very much missed, but also well remembered.

Ken Colerick - December 27, 2020 at 08:07 PM

GC

You brought a big much needed smile to our face tonight. Thank you such wonderful times for sure!

Gina Zegarelli Corridori - December 27, 2020 at 08:24 PM

CE

“ I had the pleasure of running into Ziggy at Turningstone Resort in Verona NY in 2018. We were both shocked since we hadn't seen each other for years! And to see each other there was surreal! Phil was oblivious to our reunion since he was hard at work beating up a slot machine! Sadly now since we never followed through, we were planning to meet up there again since she lives so close. For me, its a 4 hour ride. Rest in peace Ziggy until we truly meet again 🙏


Cathy Edwards - December 27, 2020 at 07:00 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donna Marie "MiMi" (Alam) Zegarelli.



December 27, 2020 at 05:04 PM

 Susan
Barry

“ I have so many wonderful memories of your mom, Gina and Jim. Our family sends our sincerest condolences to your family. We hope that you find comfort in the beautiful memories that you have with your mom.
~Susan Russo Barry and family

Susan Barry - December 27, 2020 at 03:51 PM

JC

“ I had the pleasure of working with Ziggy at Charmant Group we planned sales meeting trips for all of our sales reps I enjoyed her meetings and luncheons very much she will be missed She also planned my California trip for me and Hank which we enjoyed emensly!! she was a wonderful person
JoAnn Carrara

JoAnn Carrara - December 27, 2020 at 02:02 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Donna Marie "MiMi" (Alam) Zegarelli.



December 27, 2020 at 08:44 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Donna Marie "MiMi" (Alam) Zegarelli.



December 25, 2020 at 08:52 PM

AC

“ We Are So Sorry for Your Loss, Our Thoughts and Prayers are with the Family! Andy & Linda Convertino

Andy & Linda Convertino - December 25, 2020 at 09:35 AM

J(

“ I’ve know Donna for many man6 years. She was always fun to be around. I went to her workout place in North Utica after work everyday and walked in the heart walk for her business, I’m so sad and confused to learn of her unexpected death. I feel so sad for her entire family. She will be sadly missed by anyone who knew her.R.I.P. Donna. Sending prayers for her entire family.

jeannie Collea (Wafer-Yaghy) - December 24, 2020 at 10:13 PM