



## Heidi Victoria Wester

August 19, 1962 - August 19, 2009

The life journey of our beloved daughter, Heidi Victoria Wester, age 47, ended on her birthday, August 19, 2009. She was born on August 19, 1962.

Our tears well up with pride at all of her accomplishments. Heidi graduated from Notre Dame High School, Barbizon School of Modeling and SUNY Delhi. She devoted her life to the care of animals, starting her career as a volunteer at the Utica Zoo while still in high school. As an employee there, she tended to the needs of animals, trained Sea Lions, and presented Sea Lion shows daily. In 1990 she accepted a position at the Dallas Texas Zoo as an Elephant keeper and trainer. Presently she was a keeper of the Great Apes, Chimps, and Mandrills. The Dallas Zoo staff and friends became her extended family. She shared her knowledge when training new staff.

Heidi was a kind person and a true friend to many. Her sense of humor brought laughter to everyone's life. She touched many lives and will be greatly missed by her family, zoo family, friends, and by her animals that she loved and cared for. She had a beautiful rapport with the animals, her peers, and beyond. When transporting an animal, to ensure they felt safe and comfortable, she would often ride in the cargo plane with them. Heidi dedicated her life to caring for animals regardless of their size; from the tiny meerkat, to the massive gorillas and elephants. She was compassionate about helping the lost, sick, or injured animals that found their way into her life. She sought medical care for some, would keep many of them, and found

homes for the rest.

Heidi is survived by her parents, M. Richard and Marilyn D. Wester; her brother, Donald Brett Wester and his wife Tonya; nieces and nephews, Kirstie Ann Wester, Timothy Brett Wester, Erica, and Meghan; her uncle, William W. Wester; aunts, Sally Wester, and Martha Diliberto; cousins; her godmother, Elinor Curri; and godchildren. She also leaves a host of other relatives and friends. Heidi was predeceased by her grandparents, Philip A. and Theresa R. Puleo and Donald C. and Gertrude M. Wester.

In Heidi's honor a Memorial Tribute was held Friday evening, August 21, 2009 at the Dallas Zoo outside the exhibit that she loved so dearly. Many people attended and shared stories of good deeds and fond memories that will never be forgotten. It was said that Heidi is now taking care of all "God's animals". All creatures great and small, Heidi loved them all. She will be missed by many and she was loved by all.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend a Memorial Service for Heidi on Saturday morning at 11:00 at St. Anthony and St. Agnes Church with Rev. Anthony LaFache officiating. The family will receive visitors at the conclusion of the service. Arrangements have been entrusted to the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Brett,  
I am deeply sorry for you and your families loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you.##imported-begin##Patti Hogan Maxam##imported-end##*

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September 03, 2009 at 02:24 PM



“ *All my thoughts and prayers go out to you on this very sad time.##imported-begin##Donna Evans Yando##imported-end##*

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September 02, 2009 at 07:34 PM



“ *My Dearest Cousins,  
We am so sorry we were not able to be with you on this so special day - words just fail us at this time - we do feel your grief and just don't know what to say - except we love you all so dearly and our thoughts and prayers are with you always - will call you as soon as we return.....  
Lots of Love,  
Harriet and Sonny##imported-begin##Harriet & Sonny DeLuisi##imported-end##*

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August 30, 2009 at 04:43 PM



“ *What can I say about Heidi- she always took the time to see me when she was in the area. Her vibrant smile and her blue eyes lit up the whole room.*

*How we had such fun at the birthday parties for MiaMa, Elinor and Rosie - we would laugh hysterically during those times.*

*The time at the zoo where we were stuck on the hill - she was visiting her friends and didn't even know it. We were lucky to get out of there.*

*In times of this terrible sadness, my prayers and thoughts are with you, Marilyn and Dick. Just know that she was a wonderful, loving person and will always be remembered.*

*Annette###imported-begin##annette wilcox###imported-end##*

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August 28, 2009 at 02:11 PM



“ *I was so saddened to read of Heidi's passing. I will keep Heidi and her family in my prayers.###imported-begin##Beth Frank Roberts###imported-end##*

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August 28, 2009 at 01:43 PM



“ *Dick & Marilyn: We are very sorry to hear about the loss of your daughter, you have our deepest sympathy. Our prayers and thoughts are with you during this most difficult time.###imported-begin##Patricia & Walt Tyson###imported-end##*

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August 28, 2009 at 10:13 AM



“ *Dick and Marilyn-*  
*I am so sorry for your loss of your beautiful daughter, Heidi. My thoughts and prayers are with you.*  
*"Perhaps they are not the stars in the sky but rather openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy."*###imported-begin###*Dee-Dee Spellman Snyder*###imported-end##

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August 28, 2009 at 07:19 AM



“ *Marilyn, Dick and family,*  
*Words cannot express the sadness we feel in hearing about Heidi. I will always remember her beautiful bright eyes, and vibrant smile that would light up the room. Our thoughts and prayers are with you always, but especially during this very difficult time. Please know we are here for you. She is at peace now and watching over all of us from above.*  
*Love, Flo, Tom and Amanda*###imported-begin###*Flo DeSimone*###imported-end##

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August 27, 2009 at 04:54 PM