



## Joanne "Pinkee" Lauridsen

September 27, 1964 - October 21, 2022

Joanne "Pinkee" Chain Lauridsen passed away on October 21, at the age of 58 after a multi-year battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Born September 27th, 1964 in Perry, Iowa, Pinkee was the youngest of Walter 'E' and Frances Lauridsen's four children. Shortly after birth, she was diagnosed with Down syndrome and given a life expectancy of 10 years, which was typical for a Downs child at that time. Her parents resolved to raise her no differently than their other three children, however, and worked tirelessly to see that she received the best education possible. "Education is the one thing they can never take away from you" was her father's lifelong motto.

She traveled with her parents to San Diego, where she graduated in 1983 from Claremont High School. She defied expectations not only in life expectancy, but also in academic prowess, and graduated 94th out of a class of 656. Claremont was not a special needs school, and Pinkee received a full diploma. She spent many semesters on the honor roll, and her nieces and nephews found it challenging at times to go toe to toe with her in a recitation of the multiplication tables.

During the summertime, Pinkee returned to Okoboji, Iowa with her parents, and spent her early years working at the Echo Plus in Spirit Lake. Just as her parents did not lower the bar for her education, they also expected her to contribute to society. During the balance of the year in San Diego, she worked as a Sharp Hospital volunteer, and logged 15,000 hours of work over three

decades. She spent the majority of her time in the Thrift Korral at Sharp Grossmont Hospital, where she costumed as Mrs. Claus during the Holiday Boutique, and donned various other costumes when visiting hospital rooms to distribute toiletries.

A regular patron of the Okoboji Summer Theatre (OST), Pinkee attended over 300 performances and could be found nightly in the third row of any musical. She received her own star on the OST Walk of Fame, and loved meeting with the many gifted students who received the annual Pinkee Lauridsen Spotlight Scholarship. She also enjoyed many wonderful performances at the nearby Lauridsen Performing Arts Theater, and was fond of the raku pottery classes offered by the Pearson Lakes Art Center. In San Diego, she presented the annual Pinkee Lauridsen Educational Scholarships to the highest achieving high school seniors in the Sharp Experience program to assist them with their pursuit of a medical career. The humor and charm she employed in her award speeches never failed to bring the entire auditorium of the Sharp Auxiliary to a standing ovation.

The great love of Pinkee's life was her schnauzer Max, who she walked daily on the beaches of San Diego. She also enjoyed playing the piano, and performed annually at both the Point Loma Library and Noah Homes, where she resided for the last decade of her life. Pinkee worked through the attendant anxiety of recitals because she loved the applause she received at the end, and the ham in her was on full display as she toyed with the audience while entering and exiting the stage. Her most recent piano piece was Johann Sebastian Bach's "Harpsichord Concerto in D Minor". Pinkee was an avid crafter, with a particular fondness for latch hook, and enjoyed reading, word searches, swimming and cooking eggplant parmigiana. She did not, however, like to pull weeds.

All who knew her were blessed.

At the family's request the services will be private. Funeral arrangements are under the guidance of the Sharp Funeral Home in Carroll.



# Tribute Wall



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Joanne "Pinkee" Lauridsen.*



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November 01, 2022 at 11:37 PM



“ *I am incredibly grateful to have been given the opportunity to know Pinkee during my summer's in Okoboji. There is no one on this planet with a bigger heart, an even bigger smile, and beautiful personality than Pink's.*



*She was truly an angel here on Earth and will be so greatly missed by her family, friends and those lucky enough to have been in her presence. I guarantee she is hosting an arts and crafts session up in Heaven, in between her piano concerts for all the other angels. Rest in Peace sweet girl. You are so loved and will be so missed. Until we meet again....*

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**Kirstin Racicot** - October 26, 2022 at 08:56 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Joanne "Pinkee" Lauridsen.*



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October 25, 2022 at 06:32 PM