



Rita M. Marnauzs

June 9, 1964 - April 24, 2010

Rita Maija Strautmanis Marnauzs left us all on April 11, 2010. Rita was born on June 9, 1964, child of Imants and Irena Strautmanis, who had emigrated from Latvia in 1950 with their respective families after World War II. Rita grew up in Fond du Lac, and graduated from L.P. Goodrich High School in 1982. Despite being born in Fond du Lac, Rita was always passionate about Latvian culture. Her ever-widening circle of friends began on Hillcrest Lane, where she grew up playing hide-and seek, inviting friends over to swim, and organizing elaborate birthday parties. Later, she was a student at Garezers Latvian Center, a youthsummer camp in Three Rivers, Michigan that emphasizes Latvian language and culture. There she made friends from around the world, and blossomed into a dynamic, conscientious young woman. Rita studied Art History at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and also completed a minor in Latvian at the Latvian Study Center, in Kalamazoo, Michigan. She traveled to Latvia during her studies, and after earning a Bachelor's Degree in 1988, settled in Boston. She lived and worked there, immersing herself in Boston's culture and a social life enriched by friends she knew from Garezers and elsewhere. In 1992 Rita embarked on an adventure, taking an internship with the National Art Museum in Riga, Latvia. She told friends and family about the chaotic energy of a country that had so recently gained its independence, and the sheer thrill of living in a place so exotic. It was in Riga that Rita met her future husband, Ainars Marnauzs, a native of Latvia. She returned to Wisconsin after a year, and soon, he traveled to the U.S. to join her. They

celebrated their wedding in 1993 in the backyard where she grew up, with hundreds of friends and family in attendance, sometimes crowding under awnings and the porch as a light summer rain fell. They had their first child, Helena, in 1994 while both of them worked and Ainars was studying computer technology. Their second child, Sven, was born in 1997. Rita and Ainars first settled in the Milwaukee area, and they both worked to help support their new family. In 1999, the family traveled to Latvia along with Rita's siblings and father. The whole family met Ainars' parents, and celebrated Midsummer's Night in the Latvian countryside. They moved to Madison that year, and Rita spent several years primarily raising Helena and Sven. She also held positions with the Public Library and Badger Graphic Systems in Sun Prairie. She showed her intense love for her children through her involvement in their school lives, the crafts they made together, and her support of their extracurricular activities. The entire family spent many weekends on the road to Sven's hockey tournaments, and Rita drove Helena to dance classes several nights a week. Rita radiated a wonderful light among all those who knew her. Her family's albums are full of pictures of her smiling with her brothers, sister, parents and friends. Her unexpected passing has left a wide, deep well of sadness, felt by all those who survive her, including her husband Ainars; children, Helena and Sven; father, Imants; her sister Rasma, and brothers Maris and Sigurds; their spouses Robert, Thomasin and Alisa; her parents-in-law Antons and Janina, her nieces, Uve and Anna, and nephews Henry, Max, and Lauris. Rita's funeral service will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 24, 2010, at Church of Our Saviour, 363 South Main Street, Fond du Lac, with Rev. Lauma Zusevics officiating. Burial will follow in the Latvian section of Rienzi Cemetery. The visitation will be from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. on Friday, April 23, 2010, at Mach Funeral Chapel & Crematory, 31 East Division Street, Fond du Lac, and on Saturday at church from 11:00 a.m. until the time of service. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Helena and Sven's Education Fund. Contact Maris Strautmanis for more information, at mstraout@spiritone.com.

Tribute Wall

JV

“ Thinking of you today, on this sad anniversary. God's blessings to your family.

Julie Vaughan - April 11, 2011 at 02:15 PM

JL

“ Thinking of you today, on this sad anniversary. God's blessings to your family.

Julie Vaughan of Fond du Lac - April 11, 2011 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ My sympathies to the family of Rita. A wonderful person has left us and we are all feeling this loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Shelley Mordini

Shelley Mordini - April 25, 2010 at 07:35 PM

SB

“ My sympathies to the family of Rita. A wonderful person has left us and we are all feeling this loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you all. Shelley Mordini

Shelley Mordini of Baraboo - April 25, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SL

“ Rita always had a smile for us - she will be missed in our neighborhood.

Sara Mayer & Bill Lawrence - April 24, 2010 at 09:26 PM

LM

“ My prayers for peaceful grieving for your family together. Rita was sure proud of her children.

Len Mormino - April 24, 2010 at 09:05 AM

CL

“ My deepest sympathies. I went to school with Rita from grade school on and what i'll remember most about Rita is our girl scout days. God bless.

cheryl [GRIFFIN] Lorenzen - April 23, 2010 at 09:11 PM

LN

“ My deepest sympathy for all of Rita's family. I too, know how dedicated a mother Rita was. She and I spent time together volunteering at our kids elementary school with the "art in the classroom" project. She had a passion for art and loved sharing it with children. I also spent many hours with her at the dance studio over the years, since our girls were often in the same classes. The love she had for her kids was abundant and although she has passed, I am confident she will watch over them forever. Many prayers will be said for your family!

Lisa Nelson - April 23, 2010 at 08:10 PM

AH

“ This is very tragic. I was just getting to know Rita. I am deeply saddened by this news. My heart goes out to her family and all who dearly loved her. May God rest her soul.
Kind Regards, Amy Head, Elijah Meeker and Adam Meeker

Amy Head - April 23, 2010 at 05:57 PM

HM

“ I had the privilege of working with Rita at the South Madison Branch of Madison Public Library. She was a delight to work with, and well-liked and respected by staff and the public. I am so sorry to hear of her passing, and so glad I had the chance to know her. My condolences to her family, especially Helena and Sven, who she was so devoted to.

Heidi Marzen - April 23, 2010 at 03:14 PM

AW

“ This is very tragic. I was just getting to know Rita. I am deeply saddened by this news. My heart goes out to her family and all who dearly loved her. May God rest her soul. Kind Regards, Amy Head, Elijah Meeker and Adam Meeker

Amy Head of New Glarus, WI - April 23, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CL

“ My deepest sympathies. I went to school with Rita from grade school on and what i'll remember most about Rita is our girl scout days. God bless.

cheryl [GRIFFIN] Lorenzen of Fond du Lac - April 23, 2010 at 12:00 AM

HW

“ Rita M. Marnauzs

Heidi Marzen of Madison, WI - April 23, 2010 at 12:00 AM

VD

“ Ainars, Helena, Sven, Imants, Rasma, Sig and Maris, You have my deepest sympathies on your loss. I will always remember, with fondness, having the honor of attending some of the family birthday parties at the Barbee home and how much fun we had together. Rita was a beautiful woman and a wonderful mother. She will be greatly missed.

Vickie Davis - April 22, 2010 at 09:05 PM

TS

“ I am so sad for her children. Helena and Sven should know though, that their Mom had a great sense of humor and such a pretty smile! Also, she adored her children. They meant EVERYTHING to her! She always had a story to tell me or some accomplishment that one of you her kids had mastered. Lean on your extended family, little ones.... she loved you so much and you have a loving group of relatives that love you and will somehow, help you get through this. Our prayers are with you....

Terrie Swick - April 22, 2010 at 05:54 PM

JF

“ With deepest sympathy, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

John & Renee Schmitt & family - April 22, 2010 at 01:21 PM

TR

“ My deepest sympathies in the loss of Rita. May she rest in peace and be a guardian angel for her children.

Teri Raffel - April 22, 2010 at 11:15 AM

TW

“ I wish to express my sympathy at the loss of Rita. I was also a graduate of Goodrich in 1982. I remember her smiling face and she was always so sweet to EVERYONE!
May God Bless her and her family!

Tess (Schwartz) Wagner - April 22, 2010 at 10:59 AM

RG

“ My thoughts and prayers are with you during this time. I pray you will cherish and rely on the support of your family and friends to help you at this difficult time.

Randy Gaber - April 22, 2010 at 08:42 AM

VW

“ Ainars, Helena, Sven, Imants, Rasma, Sig and Maris, You have my deepest sympathies on your loss. I will always remember, with fondness, having the honor of attending some of the family birthday parties at the Barbee home and how much fun we had together. Rita was a beautiful woman and a wonderful mother. She will be greatly missed.

Vickie Davis of Fond du Lac, WI - April 22, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TW

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Terrie Swick of Milton, WI - April 22, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TW

“ I wish to express my sympathy at the loss of Rita. I was also a graduate of Goodrich in 1982. I remember her smiling face and she was always so sweet to EVERYONE! May God Bless her and her family!

Tess (Schwartz) Wagner of Fond du Lac, WI - April 22, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CB

“ I met Rita (and Helena) through Helena exhibiting her art. I am so very sorry I knew Rita for such a short time, what an awesome person. My prayers and sympathies are with her children, family & friends.

Cheryl Breunig - April 21, 2010 at 08:38 PM

RF

“ Very sorry to hear of the loss of your sister. We were friends and Volleyball players with Rosma. God Bless her family. They will be in our prayers.

Robin and Terry Fink - April 20, 2010 at 06:05 PM

MF

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Rita was a wonderful person and will be deeply missed.

Martine Family - April 20, 2010 at 12:58 PM

TR

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with Helena and Sven and the entire family. Rita's smile and creative style will always be remembered in our hearts forever. Rita will be missed by all that she has touched. Anything we can do let us know. Love, Emily and Toni Rhodes

Toni Rhodes - April 20, 2010 at 12:40 PM

LF

“ Rita was a wonderful and warm woman and we loved having her as part of our family here at Badger Graphic Systems. We will miss her very much and our hearts and prayers are with of the family and especially, here children who she dearly loved.

Linda Fanta - April 20, 2010 at 08:08 AM

MW

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Rita was a wonderful person and will be deeply missed.

Martine Family of Madison, WI - April 20, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TW

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with Helena and Sven and the entire family. Rita's smile and creative style will always be remembered in our hearts forever. Rita will be missed by all that she has touched. Anything we can do let us know. Love, Emily and Toni Rhodes

Toni Rhodes of Madison wi - April 20, 2010 at 12:00 AM

LS

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Linda Fanta of United States - April 20, 2010 at 12:00 AM

ML

“ I am deeply saddened at Rita's untimely death. The family has my deepest sympathies. I met Rita last year when her daughter Helena entered a teen youth art show through the Wisconsin Regional Art Association (WRAA)in Madison. Rita was a wonderful person.

Mary Lou Lindroth - April 19, 2010 at 11:10 PM

TA

“ We are so saddened to learn of Rita's death. Our deep sympathy to all who hold her dear and will miss her greatly. Terry & Nancy Anderson

Terry & Nancy Anderson - April 19, 2010 at 11:55 AM

MI

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Mary Lou Lindroth of Rockton, Illinois - April 19, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TC

“ We are so saddened to learn of Rita's death. Our deep sympathy to all who hold her dear and will miss her greatly. Terry & Nancy Anderson

Terry & Nancy Anderson of Wisconsin & California - April 19, 2010 at 12:00 AM

ML

“ I am so so sad to hear that sweet Rita has passed. i remember her well from my childhood and spending time at the Buglass' house next door. She was truly a very special young lady, very kind and fun loving....good to the core.It was always very obvious that her innate goodness came from her close-knit, loving family. Please know that your family is in the thoughts and prayers of many people who were blessed to have known Rita.

Mindy Anderson Leitner - April 18, 2010 at 07:47 PM

CS

“ Rita and I shared a lot of laughs while in high school, though I left our junior year. Biology was fun because of her unique, and often kept undercover sense of humor. God Bless her and her family...she was truly a rare jewel on this Earth.

Cathy Irizarry Santana - April 18, 2010 at 06:55 PM

EP

“ Izsakam dzilako lidzjutibu visiem Strautmaniem. Paturesim atmina Ritas dzives prieku un smaidu.

Erik Petrovskis - April 18, 2010 at 06:28 PM

JS

“ To the Strautmanis and Marnauzs families. You have our deepest sympathy at this time of great sadness in your lives. You are in our prayers and thoughts to overcome your loss in a peaceful way. May God bless you all.

Joel Sommerfeldt - April 18, 2010 at 09:29 AM

MM

“ My heart goes out to Helena, Sven and to Rita's family. When I think of Rita, I think of the intense love she had for her children. There was nothing more important to Rita than her children and her family. The pride Rita had in them showed in everything Rita said and did. I will always remember with a smile the years our children were together in Latvian school. I loved Rita's enthusiasm, her warm smile and positive demeanor. Rita always had this enviable calmness about her. Rita's beautiful spirit and love will live on in Helena and Sven. Vieglas smiltis Rita!

Margita Ulmanis Meyers - April 18, 2010 at 09:06 AM

EM

“ Izsakam dzilako lidzjutibu visiem Strautmaniem. Paturesim atmina Ritas dzives prieku un smaidu.

Erik Petrovskis of Ann Arbor, Michigan - April 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM

DZ

“ Rasma, Keep all the wonderful memories you have of her close to your heart and may those memories help you through this difficult time.

Donna Ziegler - April 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MW

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Margita Ulmanis Meyers of Fox Point, WI - April 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM

ML

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Mindy Anderson Leitner of Fond du Lac - April 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM

VR

“ Bijam klases biedri LSC. Man ir bediga sirds dzirdot par "Tiras" aiziesanu. Viegļas smiltis vinai aizsaule.

Valdis Ronis - April 17, 2010 at 08:43 PM

RK

“ We will always remember Rita as one of the nicest friends that our daughter Caroline had from grade school to the present. Our sincere sympathy to the family.

Ron and Jeanette Koski - April 17, 2010 at 07:41 PM

RW

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Ron and Jeanette Koski of Madison, Wisconsin - April 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM

DZ

“ Rasma,
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DOнна Ziegler - January 01, 1753 at 12:32 PM