



Brenda Brown Fortunato

April 5, 1960 - October 6, 2022

Brenda Brown-Fortunato, 62, passed away peacefully on October 6, 2022. She was born at Mercy Hospital in Rockville Centre, NY, on April 5, 1960, the daughter of Thomas Brown and Sheelah Mackin Brown. She was the second of nine children.

Brenda is survived by daughters Erin, Kiera, and Caleigh Fortunato; brothers Brian and Patrick Brown, and sisters Cathleen Brown Cain, Deirdre Brown, Nadine Brown Tuccinardi, Moira Brown Matthews, and Ailis Brown Martin; more than two dozen nieces and nephews; and many other extended family. A sixth sister, Erin Elizabeth Brown, passed away in February 1965 at the age of one year.

Brenda was beloved by all, a nationally recognized creative professional who took much pride in her work.

As a child growing up in Middle Village, Queens, and Wyckoff, NJ, Brenda won numerous art awards at St. Elizabeth's School in Wyckoff and Paramus Catholic High School, where she also excelled in gymnastics and track and field. An accomplished musician, she studied Irish fiddle in the Bronx with the County Galway fiddler Pete Kelly, and toured Ireland in a ceili band at the age of 12.

In 1982, she graduated from the School of Visual Arts, New York City, earning a BFA in design with post-graduate work at NYU. Brenda was hired as an Art Director at Hearst, where she led the design department of Cosmopolitan magazine. Other career highlights included the role of Design Director at Eeboo, where she created branding, packaging, and award-winning designs of children's books, puzzles, maps, and toys.

For the past 13 years, Brenda served as Creative Director at Colony Grill, a special place in the hearts of many customers. After careful study, Brenda developed a deep understanding of the brand's history and its place in the community, drawing on this in her approach to all parts of the design, from the branding to the memorabilia behind the bars, the "wall of heroes" (featuring photographs of local veterans and first responders), the beautiful holiday decor, and of course the T-shirts for the annual "Hot Oil 5K" foot race.

She was a remarkable woman in so many ways. If you ask anyone they would tell you how talented she was, a brilliant, well-loved woman who lit up a room and was always ready to help.

Brenda brought so much joy into all of our lives and she will be dearly missed.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **10**. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Dwyer & Michael's Funeral Home

90 North Broadway

Tarrytown, NY 10591

(914) 631-0621

info@dwyerichaels.com

<https://www.dwyerichaelsfh.com>

Funeral Mass

OCT **11**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Church of the Transfiguration

268 S. Broadway

Tarrytown, NY

Tribute Wall



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 14, 2022 at 03:48 PM



“ *I am so, so sorry to just now hear the news of Brenda's passing. My prayers are with the Fortunato and Brown families. – Mike Delevante*

Mike Delevante - October 14, 2022 at 03:36 PM



“ *I met Brenda my freshman year at PC . She was an inspiration, and talented in so many ways. I really admired her for that. I have fond memories hanging out at the Brown house with all of her many siblings. It was a home full of love and laughter. That inspired me to have a large family of my own. Brenda left us way too soon but her brilliant light will always shine on. God bless you my beautiful friend.*



Joann Ruggiero - October 12, 2022 at 12:32 AM



“ I always admired Brenda's fierce dedication to learning about the communities and the history of the places we were building new restaurants- she was the reason new customers would walk into a restaurant they'd never dined at and immediately feel a sense of familiarity and ownership. Her talent was unparalleled and her humor was always so refreshing (and sometimes much needed). We will miss her more than words can say.

Alicia Pavel - October 10, 2022 at 08:35 PM

KH

“ Ken, Ailis and Kids - So sorry for your loss. You are all in our thoughts and prayers. Love, the Haverl family

karen haverl - October 10, 2022 at 04:00 PM

CZ

*Christine Pizzolato Zaccardi - my deepest sympathies and heartfelt prayers to all the Brown's and Fortunato families
Brenda was Glinda in the Wizard of Oz adding sparkle and goodness to everyone she knew. A beautiful soul and a ray of sunshine.....
Our friendship began in St E's elementary school with Brenda and Cathleen - to Paramus Catholic HS to SVA and the world of art - you were a great mentor to me and enjoyed every stage of growing up with Brenda and Cathleen- Truly a life time of crazy fun memories and loved being a part of your amazing family
I became Irish by default even learning some step dancing-followed you from DQ to Liberty Travel
A second generation of friendship began with Erin and Julia
I could write a great novel with all the memories
Brenda created the yellow brick road of friendship love and kindness to all
Your legacy lives on with your beautiful talented daughters
May you rest in peace in heavenly OZ*

Christine Zaccardi - October 10, 2022 at 10:48 PM

LS

“ My deepest condolences to the Brown and Fortunato Families. Brenda was an old art buddy from Paramus Catholic and the School of Visual Arts. I was a bit of a misfit, yet Brenda’s kindness always helped me feel somewhat cool. After SVA, Brenda when on to Cosmopolitan and me to The Limited. We would often meet up in our NJ/NY commutes and at the many industry parties. Brenda was always a bright, energetic, positive, inspiring light. Spirits like Brenda do not fade away, they live forever in our souls. Godspeed, girl, until we meet again.
~ Lorena (Van Inwegen) Shaw

Lorena Shaw - October 10, 2022 at 02:18 PM

LS

“ Lorena (Van Inwegen) Shaw purchased the Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.



Lorena (Van Inwegen) Shaw - October 10, 2022 at 01:52 PM



“ Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.



October 10, 2022 at 01:02 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 10, 2022 at 11:29 AM



“ *Pat and John Furrey purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



Pat and John Furrey - October 10, 2022 at 10:38 AM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 10, 2022 at 09:56 AM



“ *Andrea and Drew; Nick and Brenna purchased the Joyful Memory for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



Andrea and Drew; Nick and Brenna - October 10, 2022 at 09:42 AM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray* was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.



October 10, 2022 at 09:37 AM



“ *Uncle Gene* purchased the *Tender Tribute* for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.



Uncle Gene - October 10, 2022 at 09:31 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage* was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.



October 09, 2022 at 10:57 PM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray* was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.



October 09, 2022 at 10:20 PM



“ *Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 09, 2022 at 08:47 PM



“ *Rose Tribute was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 09, 2022 at 08:28 PM



“ *Sending condolences to the Family. Brenda was my close pal in High School. We were Art Class buds, and 2 "Wild and Crazy" in the school talent show at Paramus Catholic. Such an amazing spirit and someone who brought so much joy into my memories. Dearly loved. Deeply missed. Forever in my heart.*

Therese Bruck - October 09, 2022 at 08:01 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 09, 2022 at 06:09 PM



“ *Pink Potpourri Bouquet was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 09, 2022 at 05:37 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 09, 2022 at 05:23 PM



“ *Briana Dalessandro and Kim and Ed Fahey purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



Briana Dalessandro and Kim and Ed Fahey - October 09, 2022 at 04:25 PM



“ *Meg Long and Family purchased the Fairest of All for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



Meg Long and Family - October 09, 2022 at 02:02 PM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 09, 2022 at 12:53 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 09, 2022 at 11:04 AM



“ *Brenda inspired me to want to play fiddle, want to draw, want to run track, want to grab life with both hands and shake the joy from it. Our days at Paramus Catholic High School were amazing because of her and still now her spirit soars blessing us with her grace. ~ Trisha McCormick*

TMcCormick - October 09, 2022 at 10:29 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 09, 2022 at 06:59 AM

RS

“ *Brenda was in several of my classes at Paramus Catholic High School Class of '78. I fondly remember her dying her hair green for St. Patrick's Day. She was so proud of her Irish roots. My sincere condolences to the entire Brown-Fortunato Family. Robin A Scussel, Class of '78.*

Robin A Scussel - October 09, 2022 at 06:44 AM

JR

I have many, many fond memories of my beautiful friend Brenda. We first met freshman year at PC and I immediately fell in love with her and her very large family!! I enjoyed spending time at her house. It was full of life and love. Brenda had many talents and which I so admired! She once drew a beautiful picture of my favorite musician. It was the spitting image of the album cover. She had such a vivacious personality and everyone loved her. I was so proud of her accomplishments in life. I knew she'd be a shining star. My utmost condolences to the Brown-Fortunato family. I will keep Brenda in my prayers. God bless. ❤️

Jo Ann Palumbo Ruggiero - October 09, 2022 at 10:01 PM

TC

“ *So very sorry for your loss, my sincere condolences, I graduated with Brenda in '78*
Teresa Caratenuto, Class of '78

teresa caratenuto - October 08, 2022 at 08:32 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 08, 2022 at 07:52 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 08, 2022 at 05:57 PM



“ *Sincerely, Annette and Meredith McCabe purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



Sincerely, Annette and Meredith McCabe - October 08, 2022 at 05:12 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 08, 2022 at 04:03 PM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 08, 2022 at 01:52 PM



“ *Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



October 08, 2022 at 12:48 PM



“ *Favata Joseph purchased the Blessed Heart for the family of Brenda Brown Fortunato.*



Favata Joseph - October 07, 2022 at 02:32 PM