



Monica Marie Kean

March 4, 2016

Monica Marie Kean, 59, of Oradell, passed away on March 4, 2016 in Killarney, Ireland. Beloved wife of Edward Van Houten.

Family and friends are welcome to visit on Tuesday March 15 from 1-4pm at Volk Leber Funeral Home, 268 Kinderkamack Rd. Oradell, NJ.

Funeral Mass will commence on Wednesday 10:45am in the Church of the Assumption, Emerson.

Private cremation will follow.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions can be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. 14 Pennsylvania Plaza #1615, New York, NY 10122. www.stjude.org

Cemetery Details

Cedar Lawn Crematory

Corner of Crooks Blvd & McClean Avenue
Paterson, NJ 07503

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR **15**. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Oradell
268 Kinderkamack Rd.
Oradell, NJ 07649
(201) 261-1088
info@volkleber.com
<https://www.volkleber.com>

Funeral Mass

MAR **16**. 10:45 AM - 11:45 AM (ET)

Assumption Parish
29 Jefferson Ave.
Emerson, NJ 07630

Tribute Wall



“ *Monica Marie Kean*

October 08, 2023 at 09:59 PM



“ *Monica Marie Kean*

October 08, 2023 at 06:27 PM



“ *Monica Marie Kean*

August 30, 2022 at 02:48 PM

JE

“ I met Monica and Ed working at a local restaurant. We became friends shortly thereafter and remained in touch for the last 4 years. Monica never forgot to call me on my birthday and never forgot to call me on a holiday.

When my grandmother was very ill, Monica had a mass said in her name while in Ireland and brought back the Mass card. I'll never forget how upset she was to learn my grandmother had passed while she was in Ireland. Shortly thereafter, I gave her one of my grandmothers many rosary beads. Monica made it a point to wear it and let me know she wore it frequently. I always thought that was kind.

Since about 2014, I've carried around a clover Monica brought me from a trip to Ireland for "good luck." Now it'll also be in her memory as a reminder of the kindness and compassion she always showed me.

I consider it an honor to say she was my friend.

-Jesse

Jesse - March 17, 2016 at 09:32 PM

ET

“ There are teachers and there are great teachers! Monica Keane was a great teacher and a great person. The lady who loved purple will never be forgotten. While I was president of the TZHS PTA I had the privilege of working with her. My son was blessed to be in her class. Condolences to her husband and family. She will be missed.
Elizabeth Tsougranis

Elizabeth Tsougranis - March 15, 2016 at 02:23 PM



“ I'm so sad to hear of Ms. Keane's passing. Ms. Keane was one of the most loving, caring, and enthusiastic educators that I've ever known. I'm a high school teacher myself now (I graduated from Tappan Zee High School in 1995) and she has proven to be one of my greatest role models. Her love and passion were infectious, and she genuinely cared for her students. I remember that she went out of her way to call my home and leave a message on my parents' answering machine to tell them (in Spanish, obviously) how well I did on the state exam. Because of that, I make sure to do the same at least once a year. Please know that her influence and positive spirit lives on. My deepest condolences to you, her family. Much love, Katherine Schoppel

Katherine Schoppel - March 15, 2016 at 01:29 PM



So beautiful to know. Thank you for sharing that.

Jude Kean - March 15, 2016 at 08:15 PM

GF

“ Dear Monica,

We will never forget your kind smile, wonderful attitude and sense of humor.

Thank you for being a beacon of hope in an otherwise dismal world. Your devotion to Christ was only surpassed by the mercy you constantly exhibited to others while with us.

While we mourn the loss of your cherished friendship here on earth, we also rejoice in the certitude that you are now enjoying eternal joy with Our Creator. So rather than praying for you we pray to you because, Monica, you are now a Saint.

"Vita mutatur, non tollitur".

Agape,

The Cannarozzi Family


GREGORY CANNAROZZI & FAMILY - March 15, 2016 at 01:01 PM

SU

“ My deepest condolences on your loss. May Ed and the Kean family find comfort in knowing she is resting in peace and smiling down upon you.

Susan Hoffman

Susan - March 14, 2016 at 12:35 PM

 Joanne
Monks
Morris

“ *Una persona hermosa y una maestra excelente. Que descanse en Paz.*

A beautiful person and a wonderful teacher. May she rest in peace.

*Our deepest condolences,
Joanne Monks Morris and Family.*

Joanne Monks Morris - March 13, 2016 at 03:14 PM

JS

“ *So sorry to hear of Monica's passing. We were friend's so long ago in grade school and I have many fond memories of her and our days at St Mary's school. She was a great person.*

Janet Shevlin - March 13, 2016 at 01:24 PM

VP

“ *I didn't know Monica very well. She was much older than I. We attended the same school. I knew her mom and dad through my parents and loved them both. My prayers are for comfort and peace for the families she has left behind.*

Virginia West Palmer

Virginia West Palmer - March 13, 2016 at 10:36 AM

TD

“ *Love u monica I never forget our friendship u were a good person I know u are in heaven fond memories Tom dipalma*

Tom dipalma - March 12, 2016 at 07:07 PM

PK

“ Love you Mom. I will catch up to you later.

paul kean - March 11, 2016 at 11:38 AM

PK

love you Mon not Mom.

paul kean - March 12, 2016 at 07:19 PM

KC

“ I remember having Ms. Kean for Spanish at Tappan Zee High School. She was an amazing teacher and loved the color purple. She will be missed. My thoughts and prayers are with the Kean and Van Houten family.... may she rest in peace-

Karen Candanedo-Torres RN

Karen Candanedo-Torres - March 11, 2016 at 03:32 AM

AN

“ Farewell, Monica. You always had a smile for me and a laugh or two or three.....a light heart and a beguiling energy that touched many. You've left us too soon and my mind will miss you. Happy Trails on the other side. With love from an old friend. Tony Werneke

anthonywerneke - March 11, 2016 at 12:42 AM

MH

“ Prayers to the family, sorry for your loss. She was the Ali McGraw look alike. Sweet girl.

Michelle Hotzler

Michelle Hotzler - March 10, 2016 at 09:18 PM

DG

I was so very sad to hear of Monica's passing. She was a wonderful teacher, friend and colleague. Her and Ed had a storybook friendship and marriage! Rip dear Monica! 🍀🍀

Dara Goldrick - March 14, 2016 at 09:20 PM

“ *Monica Marie Paula Kean, MMPK for short, was so many things to so many people. She embodied love and embraced life to it's fullest. Monica was a loving and devoted wife, daughter, sister, aunt, godmother, cousin...an amazing teacher, colleague and friend.*

I am so lucky to have had more than 51 years on this earth, calling her my big sister. I also got to call her teacher. And friend. So many people know Monica as a gifted teacher. I know firsthand about her talents as a teacher. You see, I was her first student. 8 years separated Monica and me. By the time I was 3, Monica already had a classroom set up in our attic. There she patiently taught me how to count and the alphabet. Later, she taught me how to read and write, and more so, she passed on her love of reading, and so many wonderful books. I learned to count in English and Spanish, a passion that followed Monica throughout the rest of her life. I don't remember much Spanish at all any more, except this:

Mi hermana es la mejor hermana del mundo. That translates into - My sister is the best sister in the world. Monica made sure that I would never forget that phrase! And it ended with - es verdad...which means "it is true." Monica would correct me if I didn't get the pronunciation quite right. Es verdath she would say - remember to soften the final d, make it almost sound like a th...es verdath.

Since Monica was older than me, I was still in school when she began teaching. In the beginning, Mon was a substitute teacher at Eldred Central, our alma mater. She took great pleasure in subbing in any of my classes. It wasn't just that she loved her job. She loved the fact that I had to address her as Ms Kean. So did everyone else. Lots of giggles on the days that Monica subbed.

On the subject of love, Monica loved many people, places and things with a passion. Like her love for the color purple, everything about her was larger than life.

*Mon loved her husband, family and friends.
Her cars and her sports teams.
Mongaup, our family homestead on the Delaware River.
Her Irish heritage, and her time in Ireland.
Her music. The Beatles. In My Life.
Her politics.
And her faith.*

Monica had an incredible memory. She was an amazing listener. She knew, and celebrated birthdays, anniversaries, significant life events, anniversaries of deaths. And this wasn't just for close friends and family. Mon worked as a waitress in high school and college and she never forgot how hard that job was. She knew the names of anyone who ever served her. More than names, she often knew their stories. She celebrated births in their families. She mourned their losses. She was incredibly generous and acknowledging.

Monica did not have any children of her own. But she had hundreds of children she cared about deeply. From the first graders at St Gregory's, where she wrote and directed a musical called "Reading Jogs Your Mind", to her Regents students at TZ, who always knew that Ms. Kean's secret to their success was simple, summed up in her cheer:

*"You just can't hack it without your Regents packet", one of her creative ways to get her students excited about learning and being successful. After all, Monti would tell her students - "it's easier to mingle when you are bilingual."
Her cheerleading also helped her students gear up on Regents day.
"Confianza, confianza, confianza si!"*

Here are a few stories about Monica that you may not know. She was a pistol packin mama before becoming a teacher, as a security guard in the local county airport. While working at the airport, ever the fun older sister, she arranged for my first ride in an airplane, a 4 seater Cessna. I was so excited, until we got up in the air and I

looked out and down. Monica was great, and it became a story for the ages, my sister getting me through.

Once Mon and Ed were married and she was a blossoming professional, she made sure that she could still offer me opportunities for learning and growth. In the summers of my early twenties, Mon and Ed took me out West - Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico and Mexico, South Dakota, Wyoming...Denver, The Rockies, The Grand Canyon, Flagstaff, Sedona, Mount Rushmore, the Black Hills and the Badlands, Crazy Horse, the wagon wheels etched in the earth at the Continental Divide, Nogales...We visited friends and family while traveling, Monica always seeking connections with people to honor their presence in her life. Traveling with Monica was a blast. She was so very generous to make it happen. And, not just for me. My parents were able to see Ireland, thanks to Mon and Ed. And what a way to see Ireland! Talk about personal tour guides! They took my mom on her only cruise ship adventure, to Bermuda. They took my folks to Florida, to Disney World and to visit with our cousins. And, but for God's will, Monica tried to make my mother's dream of seeing Alaska come true. Fate did not allow that trip to happen for my parents, but my sister's generous heart was in the right place, and she flew them back from Seattle so that my mother could mourn the unexpected loss of her beloved sister.

Another thing I remember about Monica is that she was incredibly brave. When she was 11, and I was 3, we shared a bedroom - because I was scared in our rambling home on the Delaware River. One night, a bat flew in the tiny crack between the screen and windowsill of our bedroom window. The bat got caught in the sheets of Monica's bed, and she was bitten on her arm. As luck would have it, the bat had rabies. Monica went through the rabies treatment in 1967, when it was still a series of long needles in the stomach. Whenever she would talk about it, she always said these things:

She was so grateful that it was her, and not her baby sister, that was bitten.

Her dad saved her life by capturing the bat and insisting it was tested for rabies.

Doctor Petkus, who treated her, was an amazing doctor for whom she maintained respect and admiration.

Monica never forgot Doc Petkus. And when he passed a few years ago, Monica made the trek back upstate to attend his funeral, to honor the man who helped her all those years ago. That was the kind of person she was.

Needless to say, Monica didn't like bats after that. But, when we traveled together out west, we went to Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota, known for its incredible bat population that would swarm out at dusk. Monica knew I wanted to see the bats fly out of the cave. She couldn't get out of the car that time. Ed and I went to watch, while Monica read a book, waiting for us to return. But many years later, Mon and Ed went back to Wind Cave. And she was so proud to tell me how she faced and conquered her fears. Tears streaming down her face, Monti stood at the mouth of that cave and watched the bats come out. My sister had tremendous courage.

The last time I saw Monica was at our father's bedside recently. We were all gathered to rally around our dad, who had been seriously ill and was being taken off a respirator. None of us had any idea where life would take us from there. So we stood together, we held hands, and we prayed. Then Monica and I sang the 70s version of The Lord's Prayer together, and a few other hymns that we hoped would bring our father comfort and strength. When we parted ways that day, we never thought for a moment that would be our last time together.

Monica Marie Paula Kean "dash" Van Houten...lived her life. She laughed, she cried. She celebrated and she grieved. And while we grieve her loss today, she is celebrating with the angels, and with family and friends who have gone before her. I can almost hear Mon and our cousin Carla, shouting out to the rest of us their signature goodbye, which always included the good advice - Read the back

label!

Mi hermana es la mejor hermana del mundo. Es verdad.

Jude Kean - March 10, 2016 at 05:29 PM

PP

Jude, What a beautiful eulogy to your sister. Love never dies.

Pattie Petkus - March 16, 2016 at 05:36 PM

AS

“ *To Ed and family; Robin and I were so sad to hear of Monicas passing and wanted you to know that we both felt honored to have called her not only a colleague of ours but a friend. She was the consummate professional and a truly unique lady. May her life and those she touched always be for a blessing. To have known her was truly to love her. May she rest in peace and may you and your family always think of her smiling and laughing. In friendship, Robin & Alvin Schwartz*

alvin & robin schwartz - March 09, 2016 at 03:02 PM