



Donna Metzler

May 20, 1937 - March 1, 2025

Donna Marie Metzler (nee Kaveny) passed away peacefully while surrounded by family on March 1, 2025, at the age of 87 in Chicago, Illinois.

Born May 20, 1937, in Chicago, Illinois, Donna infused her life with a love for her fellow travelers, a commitment to service of others, an unwavering belief in the power of education, and a special attention to women and children.

While we mourn her loss, we celebrate her life and contributions.

Donna was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Kurt W. Metzler and their cherished granddaughter Hannah Melissa Metzler. Together they leave a rich legacy expressed through their children: Kurt (Cathy) Metzler, Michael (Nancy) Metzler, Monica Metzler, Madeleine Metzler, and Christopher Metzler.

Donna's love and guidance extended to her grandchildren, who cherished their time with her: Luke Metzler, the late Hannah Metzler, Matthew Metzler, and Michael Metzler. From tender moments to boisterous laughter, from theater to travel, from sage guidance to compassionate listening, her grandchildren enjoyed the richness of her offerings.

Donna was the cherished sister of the late John (the late Jean) Kaveny, the late Madeleine (the late Robert) Maguire, and Maureen (the late Kevin)

McKeough. She was the beloved aunt to many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews, all of whom benefited from her nurturing presence and gentle wisdom. Donna, her brother, and two sisters, echoing their own mother's example, instilled in their children an enduring camaraderie that today draws almost one hundred of the "in-laws and out-laws" to an annual summer vacation on the shores of Lake Michigan. She cultivated deep friendships within her family and created a wide-ranging family of friends.

Donna's love of learning permeated her life, receiving her bachelor's from Marquette, her master's degree from Northern Illinois University while raising young children, and returning to law school in her 50s when her own children were in college. She earned her J.D. from the University of Illinois School of Law in 1992 and was even selected by her much younger classmates to deliver their commencement address. When a friend intimated that she didn't know Donna wanted to be a lawyer, Donna responded, "I'm not sure I want to be a lawyer, but I always wanted to study the law." And so she did.

Donna's professional life mirrored her personal life in one important aspect – service toward others. Her children recall all-too-well her household mantra of "anticipating the needs of others around you," which informed most of her interactions well beyond the walls of her home. After a full career as a speech pathologist and special education administrator, Donna's second act as an attorney combined this experience in service of families and school districts in the Chicagoland area.

If she wasn't busy enough, Donna also found time to serve others by tutoring at the Dominican Literacy Center in Aurora, IL, counseling inmates at Cook County Jail through Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers (CLAIM), serving on the Board of the Dorothy Stang Alternative High School, and filling myriad roles at Annunciation parish. She continually found ways to touch individual lives while strengthening communities. She always wanted to

see the world and while this was not possible in her youth, she made up for it as much as possible later in life. Traveling to her homeland of Ireland, through Europe, South Africa, South America and Alaska, she embraced the world and its peoples with curiosity and acceptance, making friends wherever she went. When not traveling she continued her exploration of the world through reading and sharing.

In life and in death, Donna was as concerned for our planet as she was for her fellow travelers. She has chosen a natural burial, so she can be gentle toward the earth and enrich it in the same way it has enriched her. She loved the eco-adage, "Take nothing but memories and leave nothing but footprints." Donna's footprints, though tender, are big footprints to fill. Her sense of service, her can-do spirit, and her care for our planet, provide an admirable legacy that lives on through her family and friends.

If you'd like to follow in Donna's footsteps, donations may be made to The Dominican Literacy Center, where she was honored for her 20+ years of volunteering service, or help our earth by planting a tree (her grand-daughter Hannah was partial to ginkgos).

Donna chose Green Burial at Casper Creek Cemetery in Galena.

CELEBRATION OF LIFE - MEMORIAL - "IRISH WAKE" FOR DONNA
METZLER^[1]_[SEP]

SUNDAY MARCH 9, 3:00 - 6:00 (Open Mic Remarks @ 4pm)

Chief O'Neill's Restaurant

3471 N. Elston Ave., Chicago, IL 60618

CHIEF O'NEILL'S LINK:

<https://www.chiefoneillspub.com>

Arrangements by Inclusive Funeral Care, 773-370-2959 or www.InclusiveFuneralCare.com.

Cemetery Details

Casper Creek Natural Cemetery

870 S. Pilot Knob Road
Galena, IL 61036
(815) 677-3411

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAR 9. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Chief O'Neill's Irish Pub
3471 N Elston Ave
Chicago, IL 60618
[http:// https://www.chiefoneillspub.com](https://www.chiefoneillspub.com)

4pm open mic/eulogies

Tribute Wall



“ *Inclusive Funeral Care created a Tribute Video in memory of Donna Metzler*



Team Inclusive Funeral Care - March 05, 2025 at 06:20 PM

KD

I had the pleasure of knowing and working with Donna through our work with the Kane County Regional Office of Education. Donna was such a supportive and encouraging individual. Whenever I shared a challenge with a professional situation or personal matter, she would intently listen. Then, she would share an experience that would somehow "magically" make everything seem less chaotic. She would say...it will work out and be ok. It always turned out OK! I will miss Donna and I applaud her family members for being so caring and supportive of her.

Kathleen DeTolve - March 08, 2025 at 01:16 PM

MM

Thank you, Kathleen! I think you're spot on with how she "magically" made things less chaotic.... and it WOULD be ok. Thanks for your kind reflections about our mom!

Michael Metzler - April 12, 2025 at 05:17 PM

SB

Donna was an amazing, intelligent woman, I loved working along side her! She was an inspiration. I wish I would have known about her passing,

Suzanne Bement - July 27, 2025 at 09:05 AM

RS

“ Donna Metzler and I worked together as part of the school improvement team of the Kane County Regional Office. During our various interactions, I was, and remain to be, enthralled with her quiet yet deep understanding of what was most needed to strengthen not only the knowledge but the spirit of the students we worked with. Donna did not respond often in conversations, but when she did, her response was always right on target. I will always treasure the quiet, positive nature of this lovely woman. I will miss her.

Roberta Sejnost

Roberta Sejnost - March 08, 2025 at 01:28 PM

MM

Thank you, Roberta! Yes, this woman sure had a knack for "what was most needed". Thanks for your kind words about our mom, and we'll miss her, too!

Michael Metzler - April 12, 2025 at 05:19 PM

SL

“ My deepest condolences to Donna’s family! I had the honor....yes honor in working with Donna at the ROE. She was an advocate for schools and the process’ to ensure all kids received an excellent education! She worked with Central Offices, Administrators , and teachers! She was highly regarded for her knowledge about school improvement practices and her skills to communicate and help schools to reflect and learn best practices ! She was frequently requested by schools to come and work with them! She was amazing ! I knew the ROE would be well represented by her! Her smile was infectious and her voice was calm, strong and purposeful! God Bless!

Shirley LeClere - March 08, 2025 at 01:23 PM

MM

Thank you, Shirley, for your kind thoughts about our mother! Yes, she was amazing!! ❤️

Michael Metzler - April 12, 2025 at 05:21 PM

CK

“ I had the pleasure of meeting and working with Donna through the Kane County Regional Office of Education, working with districts and schools to bolster and improve their work in educating students, I admired Donna’s depth of knowledge, her unwavering determination, and her belief in doing what is right and just. When Donna spoke, I paid attention because I knew I would hear something good.

Carolyn Kerkla - March 08, 2025 at 11:29 AM

KD

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Kathleen DeTolve - March 08, 2025 at 11:44 AM

KD

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Kathleen DeTolve - March 08, 2025 at 02:02 PM

MM

Thank you, Carolyn! I think you captured her spirit with "unwavering determination, and her belief in doing what is right and just." She kept her eye on that Northstar & never let up! Thanks again.

Michael Metzler - April 12, 2025 at 05:24 PM

LB

“ I had the distinct pleasure of working with Donna while she was practicing law. I considered her a dear friend and one who always put other's needs above her own. She was as funny as any three comedians I can name and one of the kindest and most compassionate people I have ever known. My sincere condolences to Kurt, Mike, Monica and Madeline, as well as their extended families. I will truly miss Nona Metz!

Lavonne Burkhart - March 06, 2025 at 03:40 PM

LP

Donna and I were colleagues working for the Kane County Regional Office of Education. I remember Donna as a kind, intelligent and compassionate woman with a big heart and a keen sense of humor. Her sole purpose was to serve others and for that, she engendered trust and respect. Thank you for making a difference in our lives ❤️

Lorraine Plum - March 08, 2025 at 07:23 PM

MM

Thanks Lavonne & Lorraine!! You truly captured her essence of serving others with compassion, but complementing that service with a warm sense of humor. It truly was a joy to be in her presence & we'll hold fast to those memories. Thanks again! ❤️

Michael Metzler - April 12, 2025 at 05:29 PM