



## Donna Sandra Lee Howland

February 26, 1939 - November 15, 2020

Donna Sandra Lee Howland, 81, of Traverse City passed away on Sunday, November 15, 2020 at Munson Medical Center. Donna Caswell was born on February 26, 1939 in Greenville, Michigan to the late Ray and Violet (Shoemaker) Caswell.

Growing up on her grand-parents farm in Greenville, Donna developed a love for the outdoors; spending time with her brothers playing in the woods and along the riverbank of the farm. Caring for the horses, chickens and animals on the farm led to a life-long love of many pets.

She married the love of her life, Donald Howland, on October 24, 1959 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Together they raised their son Don, Jr.

Donna was the loveable “Lunch Lady” to many kids of Northview School District in Grand Rapids. Moving to Traverse City in 1984, her career in food service continued. She became a manager of the deli counter for Oleson’s Food Stores.

Though she did not like to travel she would follow Don anywhere. For many years they would travel to Toronto to attend the theater, at one point, seeing The Phantom of the Opera ten years in a row. She enjoyed being beside the water, it could be an ocean, lake or river. She collected stones from countless locations.

Donna is survived by her loving husband of 61 years, Don, her son Donald (Shelly) Howland, Jr., two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Also surviving are a brother, Mike (Betty) Caswell, a sister-in-law, Toni Hanlon, a brother-in-law, David (Nancy) Howland, a sister-in-law, Marilyn Howland as well as her beloved cat, Mandy.

She was preceded in death by a brother, Richard Hanlon and a brother-in-law, Robert Howland.

In lieu of flowers, those wishing, may carry on Donna’s love for animals by donating to the

Cherryland Humane Society, 1750 Ahlberg Rd. Traverse City, Michigan 49686.

Please feel free to share your thoughts and memories with Donna's family at her tribute page at [www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com](http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com).

The family is being cared for by the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

# Comments

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“ It was a delight to meet Donna 30 years ago, when we were part of the "Oleson's for lunch bunch". Always so positive and cheerful. We became Don and Donna's neighbors on Ninth Street back then. As regular walkers in Central Neighborhood, Don and Donna were always a pleasure to chat with. Over the years, we have admired the two of them as they meticulously maintained their lovely home and flowers down the block. Our sincere condolences to Don and family. May many happy memories of Donna carry you forward in this time of loss. Sincerely, Tom & Connie O'Rourke

**Thomas O'Rourke** - November 24, 2020 at 10:07 AM

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“ Donna was such an awesome person. I knew her from Oleson's and from somewhere else I had worked. She and Don made such a wonderful couple. So sorry for your Loss, Don.

**linda gokey** - November 23, 2020 at 11:07 AM

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“ We were blessed to have moved next door to Donna and her husband Don recently and to get to know her. How fortunate we feel to know such lovely people. Donna made us laugh almost every time we chatted with her. She enjoyed an occasional banter back and forth. She loved being outdoors taking care of her home and wild critters. She also delighted in our tiny dog visiting her. She would also jump right in and lend a hand to a stranger if they had car trouble or accident nearby. She has a wonderful soul and is being missed here greatly. Hugs to her family.  
John and Janet Auker



**John and Janet Auker** - November 21, 2020 at 02:53 PM