



## Rita J. Greene

April 20, 1948 - January 20, 2023

Rita Greene-Blardo (nee Banks), left us far too early on January 20, 2023 at the age of 74. She passed away peacefully at the Pathways Inpatient Hospice Care Center after a long battle with cancer.

Rita was born April 20, 1948, in Gary, IN to Denver and Margaret Banks. The eldest of three girls, Rita was a role model for her sisters throughout their childhood. She graduated from Lew Wallace High School in 1966. Following high school, Rita married and moved to Chicago. Ever a supporter of equality, Rita marched with Martin Luther King Jr. during the volatile civil rights movement in Chicago. After moving to Nederland, CO, at the age of 22 she adopted a baby girl. Rita relocated to Wisconsin where she received an Associate Degree in Veterinary Technology from the University of Wisconsin subsequently working in the dairy herd business.

Rita moved from Wisconsin to Fort Collins, CO with her daughter in 1984 and lived there for the remainder of her 39 years. It was in Fort Collins where she changed her career by entering the tourism industry with Centennial Tours and then was hired at the Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau where she became Executive Director. She ended her career as the Manager of Travel Trade Marketing at the Wyoming Office of Tourism. Rita traveled extensively throughout Europe promoting Wyoming and made many friends around the world through her work. She also dedicated herself to organizing

the “Go for the Greene” golf tournament to raise money for Hospice in memory of her late husband Robert Greene.

She married her husband Doug Blardo in 2001, and was very proud of her husband’s pizzeria, Positano’s in mid Fort Collins. In retirement, she spent a quiet life with her husband enjoying the beauty of North Fort Collins, traveling for pleasure, and spending time with her friends and family. Rita was preceded in death by her parents, brother Denver C. Banks, and sister Billie Joyce Myers Whitmer. Rita is survived by her husband Douglas Blardo, daughter Leah (James) Greer, and sisters Candis Gerfin (Thomas) of Grayslake, IL, Della Hutton of Valparaiso, IN, many nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews. A celebration of her life will be held for Rita May 20, 2023. Please see details and RSVP here: <https://www.eventcreate.com/e/ritagreenememorial>. In memory of Rita, her family requests in lieu of flowers, please donate to one of the following:

- Pathways (<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=pathhosp&id=98>; Recommended: New Inpatient Care Center Building, General, or Hospice)
- Go Fund Me (<https://gofund.me/eabd63d5>): Accepting donations to provide supplies to volunteers that make quilts, hats and other goods that support cancer patients as well as tributary snacks for those who treat cancer patients.

# Previous Events

## Celebration

MAY 20 (MT)

Bohlender Funeral Chapel  
121 W. Olive St.  
Fort Collins, CO 80524

# Tribute Wall

EZ

“ I went to HS in Gary Indiana with Rita & after we graduated we both went to work at US Steel in Chicago. She was such a sweet person, happy I had the privilege to have known her. I know you will be missed! RIP Sweet Rita...

Edie Smith Zulkowski - April 05, 2023 at 06:17 PM

LC

“ So incredibly sorry for you loss. Rita was one of the nicest people I have had the pleasure of knowing. She was like a ray of sunshine. We are so thankful to have known her and loved her for the time we had and so sorry her time was way to short.

Lisa Cimorelli - March 03, 2023 at 11:35 AM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Rita J. Greene.



March 02, 2023 at 10:48 AM

GB

“ My deepest condolences to your family and loved ones. Rita was a bright light to all who knew and loved her, and she will be truly missed. May you find peace, comfort and strength moving forward in the coming days.  
Much love, Gina Blardo

Gina Blardo - March 02, 2023 at 10:25 AM

SG

“ *Rest in peace Rita*

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**stefano gnerucci** - February 13, 2023 at 04:58 AM

AM

“ *Rest in peace my dear Rita. Your lovely smile and sweetness will be in my heart forever.*

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**Annalisa Mereghetti** - February 07, 2023 at 03:35 AM

BS

“ *I worked for RMI and traveled with Rita for several years all over our European market. She was such a wonderful lady and had one of the greatest laughs of anyone I know. She will be missed by many many friends around the world.*

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**Barbara Stafford** - January 31, 2023 at 08:26 AM

ME

“ *I know Rita for 20 years. She was important for the travel industry and she loved her job. I remember, when she showed us the Beauty of Wyoming. We've been in contact all those years and happy when we could see each other. She was a remarkable woman. She will be missed. Rest in peace Rita.*

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**Meike** - January 29, 2023 at 11:41 PM

LC

“ Had the good fortune to work with Rita first when she was in Fort Collins and then in WY. At a Go West Summit that my wife Jan attended with me, we sat together and in conversation Rita and Jan realized that, growing up one town apart in Indiana, that had attended the same HS prom and at some point (not at the same time) dated the same guy. We've been special friends ever since and we will miss her greatly.

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**Larry Cohen** - January 29, 2023 at 04:15 PM

MF

“ When I just started working for RMI in the Netherlands, Rita was one of the women that seemed to have been there forever. At that time it seemed to me that she was the State of Wyoming. We had the pleasure of having her over here to visit our countries several times. The one thing we shared is that we both had no children of our own, but during our lives we had grown to love a child that was brought into our lives. Rita shared with me a beautiful strong poem about the love for the child you did not give birth to. These words still mean a lot to me. I will cherish them forever, and they will always remind me of Rita.

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**Marjolein Fraanje** - January 28, 2023 at 04:38 AM

OM

“ I always loved Rita and her spirit to overcome grief and sorrow, and to keep a gentle approach and smile. She has been one of the most human soul I ever met in my life. She had strong sense of humor, she was passionate and dedicated, she had compassion and was one of my very best American friend. I have been missing her smile and her glance, the nice conversations we used to have in person and in our letters. I felt so enriched when we took a week trip together in Colorado some years ago. We wanted our Thelma & Louise adventure, a little piece of freedom and fun. I was so fortunate to work with her in her years at Wyoming Tourism. I was her Italian connection. I loved her so much. She has been a ray of light in my life. I will be missing Rita, so deeply. Rest In Peace my dear friend.

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**olga mazzoni** - January 28, 2023 at 03:26 AM

PG

“ Rita and I worked together in the tourism industry for several years. She represented the state of WY as international marketing manager and I served the same role for the state of Montana. We worked hard and traveled many times together but also had some great times on our travels. We both have been retired for several years but remained in contact. I will miss her, Rest in peace dear friend.

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**Pam Gosink** - January 27, 2023 at 09:22 PM