



Dorothy Ann DeNiro (Nejedlo) RN, Ph.D.

August 25, 1940 - February 2, 2024

Dorothy Ann DeNiro (Nejedlo) passed away on February 2, 2024, in Pueblo, CO, at the age of 83.

Dorothy Ann is survived by her loving husband of sixty-two years, Rocco DeNiro, her son Stephen DeNiro, daughter Susan (Brian) Weber, grandchildren Ian, Shane, Jordan, Alexander, Austin, and great granddaughter, Kairi. She is predeceased by her parents, Andrew and Virginia Nejedlo, and her son, Richard DeNiro.

A Funeral Mass will be held at 9:45 am on Saturday, March 23, 2024, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Pueblo, CO. A Rosary will take place on Monday, March 25, at 1:00pm at Roselawn Chapel, followed by Inurnment at 2:00pm. In lieu of flowers donations can be made in Dorothy's name to The Mercy Center, 1439 N. Chestnut St, Colorado Springs, CO, 80907

Born on August 25, 1940 in Green Bay, WI, Dorothy was the oldest of eight children. Dorothy came to Pueblo, CO after she graduated from high school to attend the St. Mary Corwin Hospital Nursing Program. Upon graduation Dorothy began her nursing career at St. Mary Corwin on the medical ward. Dorothy had discovered her passion for nursing and earned the position of head nurse of the psychiatric ward even before she had received her board grades. Dorothy served a short stint at Parkview Hospital until St. Mary Corwin called her "to come back where she belonged". She worked there until

moving to the Colorado State Hospital where she worked for the next 33 years. While at the State Hospital, Dorothy earned her Masters Degree of Nursing from the University of Austin, TX. With her advanced degree, Dorothy added psychodrama and family therapy programming to her work as a ward nurse.

In 1979, Dorothy became the Director of Nursing and in 1984 she began her doctoral program at the University of Texas. After five summers, while still working full time, Dorothy earned her doctoral degree. When Dorothy was 59, and after building an outstanding functional structure at the State Hospital, she retired.

In 1993, Dorothy began teaching clinicals for Beth-EL College of Nursing. She taught hundreds of nursing students over the next 12 years until she was asked to develop a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program at Colorado State University – Pueblo. She worked at CSU-P from 2008 to 2015 when she retired for good in order to enjoy the many activities she loved. Throughout her career, Dorothy met and worked with many wonderful individuals who imprinted on her life and impacted her greatly.

Dorothy had a long and illustrious nursing career and was inducted into the Colorado Nurses Association Hall of Fame in 2006. Dr. Dorothy DeNiro's education began with a diploma at St. Mary Corwin School of Nursing in Pueblo, Colorado. She eventually achieved a BS in Behavioral Science, then an MSN and PhD from the University of Texas, Austin, where she studied under Hildegard Peplau. She used Peplau's writings as a basis for teaching counseling skills to nurses throughout North America.

Her entire nursing career has been dedicated to nurses, nursing education and patients in Pueblo and southeast Colorado. During her 21-year tenure as the Director of Nursing at the Colorado Mental Health Institute of Colorado

(CMHIP), she developed many innovative programs for working with patients with mental health issues. Because of her efforts, CMHIP was named the best state hospital in the United States by the Public Citizen Health Research Group and National Alliance for the Mentally Ill in 1988. She initiated a Scholarship fund at CSU-Pueblo to assist nursing students attending the BSN program. In a creative innovation, designed to assure a better trained and fully staffed nursing department, she developed a program to allow nurses to work 20 hours, attend nursing school 20 hours, and be paid full time. An MS program in Psychiatric Nursing, in coordination with University of Colorado School of Nursing, was developed during her tenure. She has supervised psychiatric clinical student rotations. At the state of Colorado level, she worked to develop job descriptions and competencies for nursing and nursing support positions.

Having been a member of the Colorado Nurses Association since 1973, Dr. DeNiro had been active at the local district level and the Colorado Society of Clinical Specialists in Psychiatric Nursing (DNA 31) level. She felt her most important contribution to nursing was bringing individuals together in unique ways to further the professional goals of nursing.

In 1987, Dorothy was recognized as an Outstanding Woman by the USC-Pueblo Outstanding Women Awards. In 2011, Dr. DeNiro received the Robert Hawkins Award for Excellence in Mental Health Leadership and Advocacy. In 2012, Dr. DeNiro received a President's medallion and was honored by Dr. Lesley Di Mare, President, Colorado State University-Pueblo for her distinguished alumni achievement and Dr. DeNiro also received the Nightingale Award for Excellence in Human Caring.

In her retirement, Dorothy continued to participate in Rotary and choir practice. Rocky and Dorothy attended Sunday services at St. Charles

Community at St. Ann's Church on Pueblo's east side and the couple enjoyed spending time every year in Maui and Phoenix along with an occasional cruise. One of Rocky's students, Mario, took the pair on annual excursions to Aspen for the musical festival, to Notre Dame in Indiana and to many concerts, always staying in stylish hotels. He treated Rocky like a loved father.

Dorothy and Rocky kept up their Italian tradition of having a fish dinner on Christmas Eve for many years, even though their meal consisted of four fish instead of the traditional eleven. They would eat sardines with spaghetti and cod fish, broiled or baked. Easter was celebrated with a fancy breakfast cooked for the church by Willie Gaye, Southern Classic Cuisine. Birthdays and Anniversaries were always special and celebrated at their home in Rye.

Dorothy Ann DeNiro will be dearly missed by all who knew her, and her memory will live on in the hearts of her family and friends.

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

MAR 23. 9:45 AM (MT)

Cathedral of the Sacred Heart
414 W. 11th Street
Pueblo, CO 81003

Rosary

MAR 25. 1:00 PM (MT)

Roselawn Funeral Home Chapel
1706 Roselawn Rd
Pueblo, CO 81006

Inurnment

MAR 25. 2:00 PM (MT)

Roselawn Cemetery
1706 Roselawn Rd
Pueblo, CO 81006

Tribute Wall

YA

“ *Heartfelt memories. Susie. Your mom was wonderful. Your daddy and Dorothy were so great together. Thinking of you today. Yoli*

Yoli Arriaga - March 23, 2024 at 11:06 AM

DM

“ *Susan - So sorry to see this about your Mom - may she rest in peace...
Don Mauro*

DONALD MAURO - March 11, 2024 at 01:19 AM

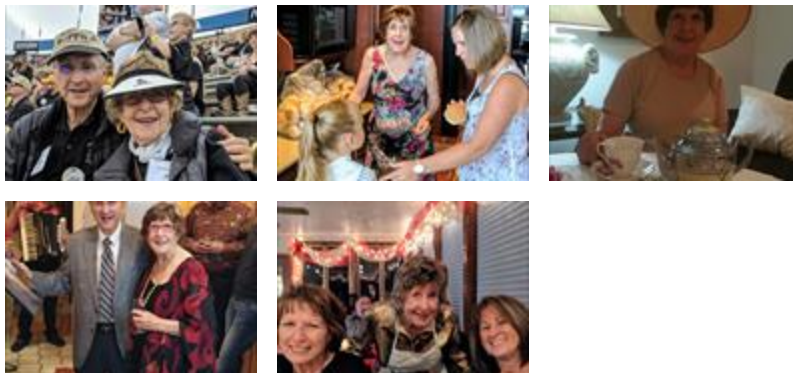
BW

“ *Dorothy was my friend and sometimes sister, mother, therapist, and an inspiration. She inspired me to be my best. Her kindness will be with me always. I will strive to live life as she did knowing that she set the highest of standards Book Sister - Bev Waggener*

beverly waggener - March 10, 2024 at 05:49 PM

BW

“ *29 files added to the album Dorothy DeNiro Legacy*



Beverly Waggener - March 10, 2024 at 05:22 PM

JB

“ Dorothy was always gracious and kind to all who knew her. My last memory of her was at the funeral for Maggie Divebliss at St. Anne's Church. She was a member of the choir and Rocky played the flute. They would invite me over for a meal along with other friends like Doyle Muller. They tried to look out for older friends. What a kind, loving soul.

J. Michael Beck - March 08, 2024 at 04:18 PM

BR

“ 11 files added to the album Dorothy DeNiro Legacy



Betsy Riffle - March 07, 2024 at 04:09 PM

BY

“ My favorite memory of Dorothy was asking her for assistance when my wife and I were going through a IVF treatment. I asked her to help me practice giving my wife the nightly shots. Spent most of the evening laughing at memories of Steve and my growing up during Boy Scouts, LUVlife, and his going through nursing school. She also showed me the nicest way to give shots in the butt. Bob Yarberry

Bob Yarberry - February 24, 2024 at 10:57 AM

JH

“ We are so sorry for your loss of Dorothy. She was a delightful person and a good and cheerful friend. She hosted wonderful Christmas parties that we truly enjoyed. As well as being an accomplished advocate for nursing, she was just a joy to be around. She will certainly be missed by all who knew her.
Jill Moring and Cork Hayden

Jill Moring & Cork Hayden - February 22, 2024 at 03:13 PM

SW

“ With my deepest sympathy in the loss of Dorothy. She was a special friend, and such a great person. With her help, I was able to start my nursing career. My thoughts and prayers are with Rocky, her family, and her friends. She will be missed.



Shirley Wagner

shirley wagner - February 13, 2024 at 09:40 PM

PE

“ God speed to a wonderful person.

Peg - February 13, 2024 at 12:29 PM

KL

“ So sorry, Rocky, for the loss of your beautiful wife. When your son was in the hospital, Dorothy came to visit my wife Carrie, who was in the hospital at the same time. I really appreciated Dorothy's doing that! I lost Carrie. also. I know what you are going through. It will get better, but, of course, it will never go away. My sincere condolences!
Ken Lewis

Kenneth E Lewis - February 12, 2024 at 07:20 PM

DJ

“ Dr. Dorothy (I never knew that she had a PhD) was an amazing mother, wife and friend. She was generous beyond description. My thoughts and prayer are with Dorothy and her family, for she is now in the sunrise of the Great Spirit forever. 🕊️

DENNIS T JOHNSON - February 11, 2024 at 08:45 PM

MD

“ I am deeply sorry to hear of Dorothy' passing. Dorothy was a real inspiration to her many students throughout her years of teaching. Even more, Dorothy can be best remembered for being the "rock" of her beautiful family. Dorothy was the perfect role model as wife, mother, and grandmother.

My thoughts and prayers are with Rocky. Steve, Suzy, and all of her extended family members. Dorothy will certainly be missed by all, who will remember her for her exemplary kindness and contagious smile.

mike deluca - February 11, 2024 at 01:36 PM

CA

“ My prayers are with all of you at the passing of dear Dorothy. I will always remember her as a sweet dynamo. She made me feel that I could accomplish anything. The world is a less brighter place.
CHRISTINE ARMSTRONG

Christine Armstrong - February 11, 2024 at 01:12 PM

PG

“ When I heard the news I was so very heartbroken. My first thoughts went to Rocky and how much he loved her. When I worked at the CSUP nursing department, he would often ask me to allow him access to her office while she was in class so that he could go in and surprise her with decorations on special dates and anniversaries. It melted my soul to see her face brighten when she would return from an errand to see all of the hearts and chocolate or whatever it was that he would bring to surprise her. Their love showed me that there was true love out there and that I needed to look harder for it. It was an honor to be invited to their house every Christmas season for a department party. We all had so much fun and laughter. I really don't know how this world could go on without her. She was such a huge impact in so many lives. I hope and pray that her family and friends find peace and remember the good and beautiful times. Thank you, Dorothy, for being a good friend to me. Thank you, Rocky, for sharing her with so many. With much love and respect. - Patricia Garcia

Patricia Garcia - February 09, 2024 at 05:48 PM

TB

Dorothy was one of the most gracious ladies I've ever known. She was a great nurse, teacher, leader, and human being. She was a role model for me in my career, and she will be missed. Prayers to the family. She's in heaven.
Teresa Bernal

Teresa Bernal - February 12, 2024 at 05:01 PM

ID

I worked with Dorothy when they were selling Amway products. She was always so full of life. I enjoyed just being around her. We also shared stories about working on our doctorate degrees. She will truly be missed.. My prayers to Rocky and family.

Ima Dunn - February 12, 2024 at 11:58 PM