



Greta Clair Schenkel

January 2, 1973 - August 25, 2020

Greta Clair Schenkel, 47, of Huntington, died at 7:50 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2020, at home.

Born Jan. 2, 1973, in Kokomo, and diagnosed with Down syndrome at 6 weeks old, one doctor told her family that Greta might live to be 12 years old. Instead, she embarked on a decadeslong journey of shattering expectations and delighting her family, friends, and colleagues with sarcasm, spunky one-liners, and a love of craft supplies.

A volunteer at Pathfinder Services for 21 years, she was a fixture at Kids Kampus, where she read to the children and helped with crafts. She was awarded the 2009 Herbert D. LaMont Award, which recognizes outstanding volunteerism and is the top honor from Pathfinder Services.

Greta's early years were an era when developmentally disabled children were marginalized or, as was recommended to her parents, institutionalized. But Greta began her education journey at Johnny Appleseed School in Fort Wayne, now Easterseals Arc of Northeast Indiana, a groundbreaking school started by parents who dreamed of an education and support system that would prepare their children to live independently in the community if they chose. She then enrolled in the Huntington County Community School Corporation, where her teacher, Judy Vanderspoo Frishman, not only taught

Greta to read but also introduced the class to life skills such as how to vote and how to call for help in an emergency. Greta graduated from Huntington North High School in 1991 — the first year developmentally disabled students could receive diplomas with the rest of their class. As a Viking, she was known as the girls' basketball team's biggest fan, and when the team won the state basketball championship in 1990, Greta was included in team photos and took home a piece of the net.

Greta participated in Special Olympics for bowling, swimming and basketball and was a member of the Jestors Theatre Group at the University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne for many years. She also was a member of SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church and was known to write letters to Father Ron Rieder, the longtime pastor, expressing concern for her sisters' choices and asking for his intercession.

Those sisters, along with cousins, refined Greta's sense of humor and ultimately made her crave her own independence. After her younger sister left the family home, Greta moved into an apartment of her own in 2001. She shopped and cooked for herself until recently, when the effects of Alzheimer's disease — a common affliction among individuals with Down syndrome — made independent living more challenging.

If Greta could add to her own Obituary, she would use her own catch phrase: "Just to let you no." "Always love life, laugh always and comfort others."

Survivors include her parents, Kent and Sally Schenkel of Huntington; sisters Anna Morrow of Granger and Liza (Matthew) Miller of Carmel; and her grandmother, Betty Schenkel of Huntington. She is also survived by her nieces and nephews who loved her so dearly as did her cousins and a myriad of friends! She is preceded in death by grandparents Marion Schenkel and Joe and Georgia Shape.

Visitation will be from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Aug. 29, 2020, at SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church, 860 Cherry St., Huntington, Indiana. A Mass of Christian burial will immediately follow at noon Saturday, Aug. 29, 2020 at SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church with Father Tom Eckert officiating. Burial will be in Mount Calvary Cemetery in Huntington at a later date. Please follow local recommendations for face coverings and social distancing during all events.

Preferred memorials are to or Pathfinders' Kids Kampus, in care of Bailey-Love Mortuary, 35 West Park Drive, Huntington, IN 46750.

Cemetery Details

Mt. Calvary Cemetery

5025 N. Goshen Rd
Huntington, IN 46750

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 29. 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

SS. Peter and Paul Catholic Church
860 Cherry St.
Huntington, IN

Mass of Christian Burial

AUG 29. 12:00 PM (ET)

SS. Peter and Paul Catholic Church
860 Cherry St.
Huntington, IN

Tribute Wall

NH

“ Dear Schenkel family,

We were so sorry to learn of the passing of your dear Greta. Some of our favorite memories of her came from stories shared to us by Georgia Shape, who we would regularly see in Clearwater Beach, FL. Georgia adored Greta (as you well know)! She was such a dear heart with a kind and gentle soul. How lovely to know that she and her grandmother are once again together. (We moved to Zionsville, IN four years ago to be closer to family here.)

We send our love and prayers to you all.

Bernie and Nancy Huesing

Nancy L Huesing - September 10, 2020 at 02:03 PM

LQ

“ *Our family never knew Greta but I felt I did just by reading all of Sally's facebook notes! She was a remarkable young lady and wow did she contribute to so many lives! Greta was so blessed to have you both as parents that from day 1 you did everything possible to give her a loving and beautiful life.*

Our thought, prayers, & love reach out to you family!

Chris & Linda Quayle

Linda Quayle - September 01, 2020 at 07:42 PM

SH

“Gretta was an awesome inspiration to the community. Her love of basketball and volunteering will never be forgotten



Sarah Hite - August 31, 2020 at 06:22 PM

DO

“Donna Buzzard Oden lit a candle in memory of Greta Clair Schenkel



Donna Buzzard Oden - August 31, 2020 at 10:02 AM

JA

“Sally and Kent, we are praying for you and your family. Greta will be missed by many.

John and Laurie Adams - August 30, 2020 at 02:45 PM

RB

“I am so sorry for your loss. I have never met Gretta but I feel like I know her. I know her Uncle Joe and aunt Carole Shape. You see I worked with Carole for 13 years, 5 to 6 days a week and many stories were shared about the loved Gretta. I know they talked on the phone to Gretta often and shared emails. I know Gretta and her Uncle Joe liked to share jokes together. I know Carole and Joe loved her very much. ❤️🙏
Love and prayers to the family.
Regina Brantley

Regina Brantley - August 28, 2020 at 10:21 PM

AR

“ *Angie Richardson Rice lit a candle in memory of Greta Clair Schenkel*



Angie Richardson Rice - August 28, 2020 at 05:48 PM

LS

“ *Sending hugs and prayers to you all. I loved chatting with Greta. She had the best stories, especially about Delilah, and her laugh was so contagious. My daughter loved working with her at Pathfinders and has a painting on her wall that Greta gave her. She will be missed by many and memories of her treasured.*
Laura and Miranda Smart

Laura Smart - August 28, 2020 at 04:28 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Greta Clair Schenkel.*



August 28, 2020 at 01:58 PM



“ *Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses was purchased for the family of Greta Clair Schenkel.*



August 28, 2020 at 12:55 PM

 Chon
Michael

“ *Kent and Sally, I am so sorry for you loss. My Mother loved Greta! She was a wonderful beacon of happiness every time she saw Mom. They had a very special relationship and Greta always made Mom happy when she saw Greta.*

Sincerely,

Chon Michael

Chon Michael - August 28, 2020 at 08:26 AM

DS

“ *Liza, our sympathy to you and your family.*

Dennis and Marilyn Sonner - August 28, 2020 at 08:18 AM



“ *Kathy Harper lit a candle in memory of Greta
Clair Schenkel*



Kathy Harper - August 28, 2020 at 01:51 AM

AD

“ *Angie Dennis lit a candle in memory of Greta
Clair Schenkel*



Angie Dennis - August 27, 2020 at 06:30 PM

KM

“ *Our hearts ache for your family.
Greta a nurturing gal with a great wit, and an abundant love for others.
Our memory of Greta and your family greeting us early on Saturday mornings, opening your Home to care for our child . So much love !
Our thoughts and prayers are with you!
All of our love , ❤️ Bill and Kari McVoy*

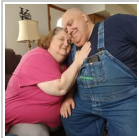
Kari McVoy - August 27, 2020 at 05:30 PM



“ *Enduring Grace was purchased for the family of
Greta Clair Schenkel.*



August 27, 2020 at 04:00 PM



“ *Janet Powell lit a candle in memory of Greta
Clair Schenkel*



Janet Powell - August 27, 2020 at 02:16 PM

SS

“ *I was blessed to have had the honor to know Greta. Producing artwork, whether painting or pottery or fun crafts. Her laughter and silly poses for photos will forever be how I remember her. I have a few photos on my phone camera that I cherish*

sarah schwab - August 27, 2020 at 02:08 PM

AP

“ April (Cunningham) Pries lit a candle in memory of Greta Clair Schenkel



April (Cunningham) Pries - August 27, 2020 at 02:01 PM

MS

“ Kent, Shelly & Family, May your memories bring you peace & comfort in your grief. Greta will be missed by many. LOVE MONTE & MARY JO SCHENKEL

Monte and Mary Jo Schenkel - August 27, 2020 at 12:04 PM

SK

My thoughts and prayers are with you all .

Sarah kenworthy - August 27, 2020 at 06:20 PM



“ William Briggs purchased the Guiding Light Bouquet for the family of Greta Clair Schenkel.



William Briggs - August 27, 2020 at 11:50 AM



“ I never had the privilege to meet this special person; however, I grew to love her by seeing posts her mother had on Facebook. The enthusiasm she had for life was obvious. I can't begin to image the lives she touched and made better. She was God's gift to all.
Bill Briggs

William Briggs - August 27, 2020 at 11:44 AM

RA

“ *Greta, the forever Huntington North Viking Super Fan! Sure will miss seeing her at all the ballgames!*

Renee Armstrong - August 27, 2020 at 11:04 AM

ST

“ *Sally and Kent I am so sorry for your loss. Prayers from our house to yours. I know my daughter, Angel Shepperd, always liked being around Greta.*

Shelley K Trippe - August 27, 2020 at 08:15 AM

PP

“ *Dear Kent and Sally-My deepest sympathy to you and your family during this time of sorrow and loss. I do know how bad your heart hurts.*

Although I was not around Greta all that much. It was enough to instill memories and I always asked about her every time I was around Joe Jr. I guess she was somebody that you never forget. Again, my heart goes out to all of you.

*Kindest regards,
Paul D. Powers
Fernandina Beach, Florida*

Paul D. Powers - August 27, 2020 at 07:03 AM

Megan
Karr
Myers

“ I will always remember Greta and Sara in the Jester plays together. I loved the weekends Greta would come spend the weekend at our house. She and Sara would dance and giggle all day and night. I am so sorry for your loss Kent, Sally, Anna and Liza. Greta touched so many lives and will be greatly missed. May you find comfort during this difficult time.

Sincerely,
Megan (Karr) Myers

Megan Karr Myers - August 26, 2020 at 08:00 PM

AR

“ Greta was the sweetest, she would come into the toddler room when I worked there t Kids Kampus every day. And we would talk about how excited she was to get her apartment And how happy she was when she finally got to move in. And she liked to talk about her cats. She will be missed.

April Rogers - August 26, 2020 at 06:37 PM

NM

“ Nancy L Mccoart lit a candle in memory of Greta Clair Schenkel



Nancy L Mccoart - August 26, 2020 at 06:25 PM

VS

“ Greta was such a sweet and kind soul! She touched so many lives and is loved by people that don't really know her but know how kind and caring she was to everyone!

vicki Smith - August 26, 2020 at 04:14 PM