



## Donna Milligan Cline

October 27, 1963 - August 20, 2023

The family of Donna Milligan Cline are deeply saddened to announce her passing on August 20, 2023. Donna began her life as a world traveler, being born in Zaragoza, Spain on October 27, 1963. She lived in Thailand, Japan, and numerous places throughout the states before finally settling with her family in Kathleen, Georgia, where she lived for most of her childhood. She attended Westfield Academy in Perry, Georgia for high school, where she graduated in 1981. Donna then attended Georgia Southern University, where she graduated in the Spring of 1987 with a B.A. in Fashion Merchandising. She then moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where she worked for Lord & Taylor, and later for multiple real estate companies as an administrative assistant. She was a member of the Alpha Delta Pi sorority where she met several lifelong friends and made several memories that she was able to tell her daughters about.

It was in Atlanta where Donna met the love of her life, Robert Gene Cline. She reported to her children that their very first date was August 15, 1990, and that they both knew instantly that they had met their soulmate and would spend the rest of their lives together. Donna and Robert were married on October 3, 1992, and were blissfully married for over thirty years at the time of her death. In 1996, Robert and Donna had their first daughter, Emma Grace, and they had their second daughter, Mara Eva, in 2005.

Donna was an amazing mother to her two daughters and devoted her life to both of them and to her husband. It was while raising her daughters that Donna developed a passion for the performing arts, and she spent enumerable hours and days supporting and watching both her daughters at dance recitals, pageants, and theater. Never satisfied to simply sit on the sidelines, Donna actively supported the organizations in which her daughters participated, including most recently the Miss Georgia Volunteer Program, which she supported from its inception. Donna truly had a servant's heart, and everything she touched was the better for it. She leaves behind an amazing legacy of service and kindness, and her warm smile and gracious demeanor will be sorely missed by her family and her friends in the community.

Donna was preceded in her death by her father, Tillman U. Milligan. She is survived by her beloved husband of 30 years, Robert Gene Cline, her two daughters, Emma Grace Turnipseed (Boyd) of Henderson, Nevada, and Mara Eva Cline, and her beautiful new granddaughter, Tillman ("Tilly") Rose Turnipseed, who was born on July 7, 2023. She is survived by her mother, Ethel Marie Milligan, of Kathleen, Georgia, and her two brothers, James David Milligan of Kathleen, Georgia and John Alan Milligan (Sheryl) of Colleyville, Texas, and her brother-in-law, Calvin Cline (Marianne) of Arlington, Texas.

Visitation will be held at Flanigan Funeral Home in Buford, Georgia at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 26th. The funeral will take place at Buford First Baptist at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 27th, with a livestream to be provided for her family and friends who cannot make the service. Pallbearers will be Calvin Cline, Colton Cline, James Milligan, John Milligan, Sr., John Milligan, Jr., and Pierson Milligan. The graveside service will follow the funeral service at Broadlawn Memorial Gardens.

Donna left this earth doing what she loved most—being with and caring for her children. Earlier this month, she and Robert travelled to Las Vegas to see

their new granddaughter, and she was able to be with her daughter Mara Eva on “Bid Day” at the University of Alabama. Her family and friends deeply grieve her sudden loss. But Donna loved her Lord and Savior, and her family and friends take comfort knowing that she is with Him in Paradise, and that they will see her again.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Buford Performing Arts at Buford High School, 2455 Buford Hwy, Buford, GA 30518 in memory of Donna Cline. For electronic donations please follow this link <https://checkout.square.site/merchant/8phpzrppag8c0/checkout/57ldtfkjqbwaitr5lfbog4v7>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG **26**. 6:00 PM (ET)

Flanigan Funeral Home  
4400 South Lee Street  
Buford, GA 30518

## Funeral Service

AUG **27**. 3:00 PM (ET)

Buford First Baptist Church  
4550 Hamilton Mill Road  
Buford, GA 30518

# Tribute Wall

RL

“ My heart breaks for Robert, Emma Grace, Mara Eva, as well as for Donna's family and closest friends. Words truly fail at a tragic time like this.

*I will never forget all the years together training her two beautiful girls to sing; lessons in NYC and then online. So many wonderful laughs and heartfelt conversations along the way. We could have talked for hours if only time allowed. I'll miss your wonderful spirit "Miss Donna" and will never forget our time together. We'll gossip again when I get to the other side. With Love Always, Your "Mr. Richard."*

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**Richard Lissemore** - September 18, 2023 at 11:40 AM

EM

“ Donna joined our small class at The Westfield School in 8th or 9th grade. Instantly, because of her kind spirit and gregarious nature, we were drawn to her. You could not be around Donna and not smile and laugh! I last saw Donna in 2016 at a class reunion. The beautiful smile and joyful demeanor had not faded, but intensified. Because then we got to catch up on the most wonderful years of our lives, marriage and motherhood. Go rest high, sweet Donna. We were blessed to have known you.

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**Elizabeth Messer Mitchum** - August 28, 2023 at 12:17 PM

TM

“ Donna and I met at Westfield School and became inseparable friends until she went off to college. Donna had an infectious smile and everyone loved her. Donna was a product of her precious Father and Mother. She inherited their sweet spirits and hearts. As with most classmates, we lose contact with each other as we all go on our separate ways in adulthood. I have very fond memories of Donna. My thoughts and prayers are with the family and all her friends. Keep your memories close to your hearts ❤️



Tracy Moreau  
Hiram, Ga

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Tracy Moreau - August 27, 2023 at 01:26 PM

LO

“ Donna and I were classmates at Westfield. I will never forget how beautiful and funny she was, inside and out. Praying for her family.

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Linda Odom - August 27, 2023 at 12:19 PM

BW

“ Donna was a treasure. She became part of our family as a babysitter for our first daughter (now 37) when she was around 2 years old and then to our second daughter (now 34). Donna joined us for family trips and made everything so much more enjoyable. We, and our daughters adored her. I believe Donna truly loved our daughters as well.

Both of the girls (Allison at age 6 and Cori age 3) had the honor of being flower girls in Donna and Robert's wedding. We still have their beautiful little dresses hanging in their closets.

Donna surprised us all when she showed up unannounced for Allison's high school graduation. I was so touched I couldn't stop crying - it was so Donna. We kept up with Christmas cards and an occasional phone call but that was the last time we saw her. We have such wonderful memories of her always with a smile, her kindness and warmth, her sense of humor and gentle demeanor.

*Dear Robert: We cannot express how sorry we are for the loss of your beloved wife.*

*To Emma Grace and Mara Eva - we are so terribly sorry and heartbroken for your loss of your wonderful mother.*

*Love, Barb, Thom, Allison and Cori*

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**Barb Williams** - August 27, 2023 at 08:38 AM

SC

“ I met my legendary friend Donna when Mara and my daughter Zara were in the same 2nd grade cheerleader squad. Needless to say we became instant friends along with our girls. It was only a couple months after we'd met when my husband was unexpectedly hospitalized. True to her nature she was the first stepped up and helped take care of my daughter, besides another friend, during that week. Even so early on in our friendship she was so easy to trust. Ever since we have been together at many games, parties, school events, mutual house calls etc. I never felt not lifted up leaving her presence. She had always a genuine, generous, kind and loving demeanor and warm, welcoming smile on her face. I and my family feel privileged to have had the friendship with her for many years and will always cherish our memories. Pictures represent a few of those memories. When she's graciously received a painting my daughter who considered Donna a second Mom made for her. She and I, during a volunteer event at the Fine Arts Center where she dedicated so much of her time and skills. And with friends taken at EG's wedding which was one of her happiest moments. She'll be terribly missed and I will keep praying for her beloved family for peace.



Seval Crump - August 26, 2023 at 01:18 PM

KA

“ Trying to choose between three memories that stand out vividly, but, honestly, all of them should be shared. (1) When I met Mrs. Donna, it was at the Cline family tailgate during football season my sophomore year. I'd heard so much about her from Emma Grace, but I was entirely unprepared for the purest kindness and hospitality she would provide. She seemed to already know everything about me and care about my endeavors as if I was her own. I will never forget her instant outpouring of love. (2) This memory is perhaps my favorite: in a time of difficult father-daughter struggles of my own, I asked Emma Grace if I could come stay with her for a night. I showed up to their home late at night, and Donna had snacks in the kitchen and the biggest smile on her face. She didn't ask me about my situation, she (and Robert & Emma Grace) just surrounded my cloudy brain with love and laughter. I will never forget that. (3) At Emma Grace's bachelorette party, hearing a woman I admired and respected and thought was PURE perfection telling hilarious stories from her college days and joking around with us 20-somethings... so funny. She had the perfect level of sass mixed with genuine kindness. Quite literally unattainable for anyone else to master! Mrs. Donna is a treasure. My heart is broken for my second family and for the world that is now much, much less bright.

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**Kat** - August 26, 2023 at 09:37 AM

RZ

“ Mrs. Donna was like my second mama growing up. Emma Grace and I were born a day apart and wanted to spend just about everyday together following that for years! I have the sweetest memories growing up with the Clines’. I was not good at sleepovers when I was younger, I always tried though, Mrs. Donna and the girls would get in her big bed and she would stay awake with me until my mom usually came to get me, but she never left me alone. She treated us like absolute princesses. I also just realized at 27 years old, my favorite cake is not just any red velvet, it’s only Mrs. Donna Cline’s cake ❤️ Praying for peace and comfort over all of the Cline family members.

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**Rachel Zitzelsberger** - August 25, 2023 at 10:36 PM

AM

“ It’s been many years since I’ve seen Donna but my Dad always kept up with her on Facebook until he passed. When we were very young and all the way up until Donna left for college our parents were good friends and we went to the same church and we were always going to their house. Donna was about 4 years older than me so I always loved hanging out with her she always had a big gorgeous smile and was so sweet and pretty. To her husband and daughters that I have never met I’m so sorry for your loss and will continue praying for God to bring you comfort. To Mrs Milligan, James, John and family I’m truly sorry and will be praying and thinking of you all during this hard time. Donna you will be missed by your loving family and friends but will never be forgotten. RIP Donna until I see you in heaven one day.

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**Angie Roberts Martin** - August 25, 2023 at 01:32 PM

MJ

“ Sweet Sweet Donna girl- to know her was to love her and be loved by her in return.

*She was an effortless beauty, captivatingly compassionate, and the embodiment of love for everyone lucky enough to be in her presence.*

*I first met our Donna Girl in August of 2015 after having an immediate soul connection with her oldest, Emma Grace. She and Donna welcomed me home to Alpha Omicron Pi on bid day with open arms, happy tears, and the widest smiles. I was instantly struck by Donna and her daughter and knew they were a special family. Emma Grace will forever be my “Big Sister” not only in our sorority but also in real life. I had never been away from my own mom for an extended period of time but Mrs. Donna stepped into that maternal role for me, whether intentional or not, and made me feel as if I could call her with anything and she would take care of it.*

*Some of my favorite memories with her were laughing and eating well at their tailgate tent, watching her coordinate Greek Sing, hanging out with she and Mr. Robert at Sky Bar, dancing together at Emma Grace’s Wedding and at a beach house in Destin for her bachelorette party. I remember her taking my measurements for our bridesmaid’s dresses and being so gentle. I remember her laugh, her sweet, soothing voice, and most importantly her love for her girls and Mr. Robert, for Boyd and Tillman Rose and for all of our friend group. It is abundantly clear that her biggest pride was her family and everyone can see why.*

*Mrs. Donna has forever inspired me to love fiercely, to love your family even harder, and to do all of the hard things in life with beauty and grace. She raised two wonderful women who embody her soul and shines through in their character.*

*I truly believe that Donna was actually an angel all along, and was called Home once she knew her girls were okay.*

*She will be deeply missed and will never, ever be forgotten.*

**Millie Jordan** - August 25, 2023 at 10:36 AM

KA

*Just beautiful, Millie*

**Kat** - August 26, 2023 at 09:39 AM

BA

“ Donna’s my ADPi sorority sister from GSU. We were roommates during my last year of college. One of my greatest memories with Donna is dancing on the speakers at Phi Kappa Pi’s fraternity house with her. We would flap our wings like a bird to the song “The Bird” by the Time. We would laugh until we cried so often anytime we were together. She brought complete JOY into my life!

*We loved talking about our kids and what stage of life they were in. I love her girls like my own and feel so honored to celebrate their successes and accomplishments. Donna’s finest achievement in life were her girls.*

*I am deeply saddened by her loss but so grateful for the short time we had together. I will be forever thankful for our memories with one another. They broke the mold when Donna was born. She had a servants heart and loved everyone! I have peace knowing she is abiding with our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven now and forever. 💎💙  
<> Pi love forever, Betty Lou Letsinger Anderson*



**Betty Lou Anderson** - August 25, 2023 at 01:30 AM

AM

“ Have you ever met someone that made you want to be a better person? That was Donna. A better mom, a better servant to the lord, a better wife. There was no end to what she was capable of. She loved my daughter and always went out of her way to wish her happy birthday or stop by my shop and bring me Maras favorite cava bowl because it was my favorite too. Thank you God for sharing her with us. My life is exponentially better having known her for the short time that I did. These past three years finding myself as a business owner in Buford and making friends along the way has proven to be one of the biggest blessings I've been granted and Donna made that even better. I will continue to pray for beautiful Mara, EG and her sweet husband and best friend, Robert. Thank you for sharing her with us. She is so precious to me ❤️

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**Amanda Min** - August 24, 2023 at 07:56 PM

MM

“ Donna was a wonderful person and a dear friend for many years as a confidant during the early growth years of Tatum which over 15 years became the largest CFO firm in the country. She was our key administrative support leader from essentially its inception of growth and she later became my personal administrative assistant as its president as we expanded across the country. Donna was always exceptional in her knowledge and absolute commitment and loyalty to help us succeed. She led the expansion as we added numerous supporting team members across the country. I can remember how proud she was of being married to Robert and her absolute excitement in becoming a mother. She was far too young to leave this world, but she leaves a wonderful legacy of family, friends and past successes. I only have fond memories of the season she and I worked together. I know with her heart she takes with her great wisdom and love in the presence of the Lord.

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**Mike McCracken** - August 24, 2023 at 06:04 PM

RS

“ I met Mrs. Donna and Mara Eva at the Miss Florida Volunteer Pageant in 2021 and then crossed paths with her several times the following year; I remember thinking immediately that she was "good people." She was so proud of her children and I could easily tell she was one of those once-in-a-billion Moms.

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**Rachel Shumaker** - August 24, 2023 at 04:23 PM

NL

“ Where do you even begin to sum up Donna girl? She was like a second Mother to me. Donna loved others SO WELL and so naturally. She always looked out for people and made everyone smile. She joined us for Emma Grace’s bachelorette party and we were more than excited to have her spend that weekend with us. All of EG and Mara’s friends loved her like their own Moms. She treated us all like her daughters. She was such a joy, all the time. She made me laugh so much. I am so thankful for her giving me my best friend Emma Grace. She was beyond proud of EG and Mara. This picture is from a night she joined us at Sky Bar in Auburn. There are videos of her clapping and cheering us on as we danced. Another photo is of Robert, Mara, and Donna at my wedding in Huntsville. I was so honored they came to celebrate Heath and I. Last, I added a photo of EG’s bachelorette party. We all had so much fun celebrating EG and Boyd’s upcoming marriage. It was such a delight to have her join us.

The last text I have from Donna is her telling me how absolutely in love she was with her new granddaughter Tilly. Donna deserved an entire lifetime of being a grandmother. She was born to be one. It’s not fair she got such a short time with Tilly. I will never let Tilly forget how much her Poppy was obsessed with her.

Donna was the BEST of the best, and that’s an understatement. She is so missed and so, so loved. I can’t wait to see you again one day, Donna girl.



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**Nicole Lents** - August 24, 2023 at 02:20 PM

KA

*Ugh happiness. Just beautiful, Nip*

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**Kat** - August 26, 2023 at 09:40 AM

AH

“ Seldom have I seen anyone as visibly proud of her children as Donna Cline. It was just a joy to be around her because she was so filled with joy at every occasion.  
Amy Haney

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**Amy Haney** - August 24, 2023 at 02:04 PM

DA

“ I met the wonderful Cline family when Mara Eva was selected Miss Freshman at Buford High School. Little did I know then how close we would all become. When Mara Eva was later crowned Miss Georgia Teen Volunteer (I serve on the board), the Clines became instant family. Donna was so supportive and encouraging of all participants and I cherish the memories of our travels to the state pageants of Alabama, South Carolina, and Florida. Donna had a way of making us all want to be better people by her simple acts of kindness toward others. She is sorely missed by so many.  
Darrett Amyx

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**Darrett Amyx** - August 24, 2023 at 01:57 PM

DM

“ I will miss you kind and caring heart and soul and I have been blessed to have your kindness bestowed on me. Love you LIGHT always. Gods Peace.



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**Dennis L Miller** - August 24, 2023 at 01:47 PM

JJ

“ I will never forget Donna's beautiful smile and all the warmth and fun times she brought to all of her sisters in ADPi at Georgia Southern. My deepest sympathy and prayers for all the family.

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**Judy Lynch Johnston** - August 24, 2023 at 10:33 AM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Donna Milligan Cline.



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August 24, 2023 at 05:08 AM



“ A.D. Jones lit a candle in memory of Donna Cline



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**A.D. Jones** - August 22, 2023 at 06:01 PM



“ Susan Barlow lit a candle in memory of Donna Cline



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**Susan M Barlow** - August 22, 2023 at 05:59 PM

RK

“ Little did I know when Mara Eva became our first Miss Georgia Teen Volunteer what a dear, dear friend Donna would become! So many fun trips, so many memories, and so much laughter when we were all together!! Donna had a servants heart and would always make sure everyone was taken care of! You will always be remembered by me and the Miss GA Volunteer board as a dear friend. Thank you for your friendship, your love, and your constant support! You will be missed, but always remembered!

*Russell Kirby*

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**Russell L Kirby** - August 22, 2023 at 05:34 PM