



Rita T. Knapp

June 25, 1942 - December 21, 2025

With profound sadness, the family of Rita T. Knapp announces her passing at home in Moorestown, New Jersey, on December 21, 2025, after a brief illness. Born on June 25, 1942, in Trenton, she was the cherished daughter of Matthew J. Davern and Ruth Davern, both predeceased.

She was the sister of Maureen Gallagher, Dennis Davern, the late Paul Davern, and Matthew Davern, who made the ultimate sacrifice when he was killed in action on Mother's Day in 1966 while serving in Vietnam — a loss that shaped her strength and deepened her empathy for the sacrifices of others.

Rita was the wife of the late John H. Knapp and the devoted mother of Amy Knapp-Richey (Christopher) of Moorestown, NJ, Richard Knapp (Tammy) of Browns Mills, NJ, Robert Knapp (Deborah) of Southampton, NJ, and John H. Knapp, Jr. (Ann) of Brockway, PA. She was the proud grandmother to several grandchildren. She will also be sorely missed by her two dear friends Janice Gruber of Mt. Laurel, NJ and Lorenzo Lora of Browns Mills, NJ.

Rita's calling was nursing especially critical care-where her sharp mind, compassion, and steady confidence touched countless patients and families across many decades.

Though her demanding career often kept her away from home, she worked

tirelessly to provide stability, security, and every necessity her children needed. Her work ethic was her love language, expressed through sacrifice, long hours, and a deep desire to ensure her family never went without. Her dedication to the nursing profession was inspiring, and she was profoundly proud that two of her grandchildren chose to follow in her footsteps and that her influence will continue for generations through the caregivers she inspired and the lives she touched.

As her health declined, Rita was surrounded by love, care, and presence of her immediate family—reminding all who knew her of the deep spiritual importance of tending to the people in our lives. Her passing calls each of us to reflect on the preciousness and fragility of family, forgiveness, second chances, and time itself.

Tomorrow is never promised; the small acts of reaching out—a visit, a call, a moment of grace matter more than we often realize. Rita delighted in the company of visitors, greeting loved ones with stories and her warm, infectious laugh.

The family finds comfort in the words of Scripture:

"Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." —
Romans
12:10

This verse reflects the heart of what truly sustains us—showing up for each other, especially when it requires intention, compassion, and strength.

Rita's interment will be private, and the family kindly requests privacy during this time of grief and transition.

May her memory be a blessing, and may her legacy of care, resilience, and

devotion endure in the hearts of those she loved and in the generations she helped shape.

Tribute Wall

CL

“ I worked in Pediatrics at Deborah in the 1980's . I can remember Rita at the start of my career there . I appreciated her sense of humor and willingness to share her experience. May she rest in peace.

Catherine Losse - December 30, 2025 at 06:11 PM

DB

“ I worked three plus decades with Rita. They were the most funniest years at Deborah. When it snowed a group of us would stay at the hospital and work endless hours but we laughed and cheered ourselves and patients on. Rita truly loved being a nurse and never left a colleague or patient not cracking up at the seams. I know her tenacious laugh and personality will brighten the skies everyday. Rita please say hi to my aunt Rita you had a special bond with her. Rest in peace . My deepest condolences to you Amy and family. Your mom loved you so much and was so proud of you and your accomplishments. She told me once when we meet in the emergency room She loved being in your care. Wishing all your family a beautiful new year !

dianna barker - December 29, 2025 at 09:05 AM

JG

“ I met the Knapp family in the mid 1970’s shortly after I moved to NJ with my ex-husband and our daughter; leaving our family and friends on Long Island in NY. Rita’s brother, Paul, and their mother were our first friends, soon to become my best friends and my 2nd family after my divorce. As I’ve learned over the years, it takes more than blood to be “family”. It wasn’t long before I was included in all the Knapp family gatherings. I will cherish these memories forever. Sitting around the table, dishes piled with food, football game on TV, all the kids laughing....Those were the days. There was always more than enough to add an extra plate or two for frequent unexpected guests.

I always admired Rita. In addition to raising four children, she worked as a nurse full time and took classes to obtain her master’s degree. John did most of the cooking while relentlessly teasing each and every person in the room.. Rita entertained the group with elaborate stories while we laughed until we cried. I swear she could have been a standup comedian. But I think if you asked her, she’d say that her proudest achievement was her children.

John and Rita purchased a blueberry farm where John took pride in planting a variety of crops, mostly vegetables. Rita would spend her spare time canning. They turned their garage into a large pantry which was well stocked with enough to keep them going throughout the winter. I particularly loved pickled cauliflower and the tomatoes were outstanding!

We celebrated countless Christmas’s, welcomed in many New Years, shared happy occasions such as weddings and births, and we also grieved together as a family over the years.

One thing that remained constant was Amy’s devotion to her parents and her will to keep a promise she made many years ago. When it became impossible for her parents to care for each other themselves, Amy and her husband, Chris, welcomed them into their home. Amy made it her mission to provide her parents with the

utmost quality of care. She successfully cared for them both and ensured that they were safe, comfortable and surrounded by love during their last years on this planet.

Rita missed John terribly as he passed first. He certainly left a void that couldn't be filled. Rita began to decline gradually after that, but she remained strong as long as she could, telling stories to all who would listen. I will miss hearing her joyous laugh her cheerful personality and her genuine smile whenever I entered her room. Rita Knapp was one of the smartest, kindest, most generous human beings I have ever met.

May her memory be a blessing for all her family and friends.

Janice Gruber - December 26, 2025 at 04:32 PM

RP

“ *It saddens me to learn of DeeDee's passing. I am so sorry for your loss Amy.
Bay*

rita a pagnoni - December 26, 2025 at 07:16 AM

CD

“ *My sincerest condolences to you and your family. I enjoyed my short term caring for sweet Rita awhile back in Browns Mills. You honored a difficult promise and I am proud and in awe of you, knowing personally the cost of that commitment. She can now rest in peace with your send off. 🙏 Bless you!*

Carollynne Kurtas D'Aquino - December 25, 2025 at 03:43 PM