

Sharon Skolnicki



Sharon Skolnicki, a devoted mother, dedicated friend, and admired member of her community, passed away on May 16, 2025 in Durham, NC. Sharon struggled with the effects of Alzheimer's disease in her final years, but found a way to maintain the sweet, outgoing positivity that was her trademark.

Motherhood, Family and Mentoring Sharon had a talent for providing her sons and her daughter support while ensuring that they accepted an appropriate level of accountability, resulting in lessons learned and personal growth in her children. Whenever her children were in a tight spot—needing guidance on a last-minute English essay, a roof over their heads, emotional support when a relationship went sideways, or an infusion of cash to keep their finances afloat—Sharon was there. Her instinct to nurture others was deeply ingrained in her. When asked why she worried or cared so much, she often answered, “I’m the mom.”

No matter where it was, her home was a welcoming place.

When neighborhood children stopped by, she engaged with them—talking, joking, and allowing them to be who they were in that moment. After her children were grown, Sharon continued to mentor young children of close friends, neighbors, and extended family. She read to them, sent them books through the mail, went to their dance recitals, and taught them what she knew about nature.

Sharon had a gift for making all people be seen and appreciated. Whether out for a walk, or shopping for groceries, or sitting down at a restaurant, she would greet someone and tell them how much she liked what they were wearing, or how lovely their family was.

Love of animals and nature While raising her family, Sharon took her children on walks in the woods, encouraged them to look up and learn about the stars in the night sky, and drove them through the countryside to gather wildflowers to dry and use in arrangements and to plant their seeds in her garden to attract butterflies, giant moths, and all kinds of birds. Her love of plants was lifelong and Sharon used her passion to create gardens at her homes in Mt. Lebanon and Bethel Park, PA and in Durham, NC.

Sharon cared for and cherished animals. While she always had a dog or a cat (or two) in her

home, she also made her home a beacon for stray cats. She sustained several stray cats for many years, providing them food, building them shelters, and nourishing them with attention and affection.

Growing up near Lake Erie, Sharon acquired a love of the water at the beaches of Lakeview Park in Lorain, Ohio.

Sitting by a body of water brought her peace and comfort, whether it was the Atlantic Ocean at Nags Head or Emerald Isle, NC, Lake Johnson in Raleigh, NC, or by the ponds she loved in Durham, NC.

Bird watching was a hobby that Sharon relished no matter where she was. Trips to Florida, California, visits with her son and daughter-in-law in Ohio, and the 3-week cross country road trip to celebrate her 50th birthday with her other son and daughter were opportunities to add to her bird-watching life list.

Community and Career Sharon was a natural leader, and whatever the circumstance, she found joy in serving her community. She held leadership roles in the Mt. Lebanon Junior Women's Club and the Markham Elementary School P.T.A., organizing events, raising funds, and welcoming new residents to the community.

As a bank employee focused on community banking, Sharon took the time to truly know the individuals, families, and small business owners who were her customers.

Because she understood their values and goals, Sharon worked diligently to find a way to say "yes" to their requests.

One of the final positions in her career was as the Branch Bank Manager of the PNC Bank in Library, PA. The relationships she made there were long-lasting. Several coworkers there were among her dearest friends, and the business owners she helped returned many kindnesses to her over the years.

Sharon Anne Spaich was born on December 15, 1942 in Lorain, Ohio. She was the oldest of three children of John Spaich, Sr., a crane operator with U.S. Steel, and Sophie Spaich (Afanasio) who managed the home. Sharon graduated from Lorain High School class of 1961-A, the last January-graduating class. There she was a member of Y-Hi Jackets, a social group that forged the bonds of lifelong friendships for her.

In 1964 Sharon married Walter T. Skolnicki of Lorain, Ohio, and soon after the couple moved to Pittsburgh.

Sharon understood the value of a great education. After the birth of their first son, Mark, the family moved to Mt. Lebanon, PA, to provide access to one of the best public school districts in the state. With the birth of son Tom, and daughter Beth (Weese), Sharon joined a strong community in their neighborhood, forging friendships that took their families on beach vacations together, and celebrated holidays and birthdays together. After her marriage ended in 1987, Sharon made her home in Bethel Park, PA in 1988, where she remained until moving to North Carolina in August of 2023.

In addition to her daughter Beth and son-in-law Tim Weese, son Tom and son-in-law Kevin Kane, and son Mark and daughter-in-law Kaarina Ornelas, Sharon is survived by her aunt

Mary Ann Scardami, and brothers John Spaich (Barbara) and David Spaich.

Sharon's family would like to thank all of her wonderful friends and neighbors who helped her throughout the years, especially later in life. An open house in celebration of Sharon's life will take place on July 19, 2025 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM at the Bethel Park Community Center, located at 5151 Park Ave, Bethel Park, PA 15102. For more information, contact sase1.celebration@gmail.com Memorial contributions may be made to Lorain County, Ohio Metro Parks for maintenance of Lakeview Park.

Please specify Lakeview Park with your donation.