

In Memoriam

JEANNETTE OOSTHUIZEN

26 SEPTEMBER 1971 -10 NOVEMBER 2023



*In the morning of my life, I shall look to the sunrise.
At a moment in my life when the world is new.
And the blessing I shall ask is that God will grant me,
To be brave and strong and true,
And to fill the world with love my whole life through.*

*And to fill the world with love my whole life through
In the noontime of my life, I shall look to the sunshine,
At a moment in my life when the sky is blue.
And the blessing I shall ask shall remain unchanging.
To be brave and strong and true,
And to fill the world with love my whole life through*

*In the evening of my life, I shall look to the sunset,
At a moment in my life when the night is due.
And the question I shall ask only I can answer.
Was I brave and strong and true?
Did I fill the world with love my whole life through*

As I read these lyrics by Petula Clark, I look back over Jen's life and I can answer yes to all these questions, Yes, she was Brave, she was Strong and she was True, and she filled the world with her special kind of love her whole life through.

Jen loved her profession more than anything else, Her calling to be a veterinarian was so deeply ingrained within her soul. She had more compassion than anyone I have ever known, and she was deeply affected by her clients and patients and their welfare often weighed heavily upon her heart. She was so dedicated, often to her detriment, being so hard on herself when she couldn't always control the outcome, something that many veterinarians struggle with. She wanted to help every animal that she came across and was always willing to go the extra mile, to give everything that she had. She was kind, and caring and she had such a gentle disposition. She would sacrifice anything to help where she was needed. I remember many a missed dinner where she was still 'checking up on her patients' even when she wasn't on duty. She wore her emotions on her sleeve, and she carried so many of her patients in her heart.

She tried so hard to climb out of the hole and the darkness that mental illness creates; all she wanted to do was go back to being a veterinarian. She knew nothing else, and that is what her entire being was knitted together for. I am so proud of the fight that she put up, she was so brave, she was so strong and she was so true.

I will miss you my friend – and as your sun has set, I'm so glad that I was privileged to know and see your heart.

Lynda Horne

It is with much sadness that we pay our final respects and say goodbye to our dear friend Jeannette Oosthuizen who has lost the protracted struggle against depression.

Although the recent events cast a dark shadow of sorrow, we shall always remember Jeannette as loyal to her friends, honest and true to herself and principled in her dedication as a veterinary professional. Dedicating her whole life to her veterinary career, her unremitting love and care for animals was clear to everyone. Jeannette, if only you could realise and embrace your worth, and live the precious life that you deserve; the world you left behind would have been graced.

We shall miss you.

Now put down the burdens precious little one.
You and I must not forget how to live.

Sophette Gers

Jeannette was a very special lady.

A lady of many layers.

Outer layers of a troubled soul, despair, heartbreak, torment and anguish.

But tucked away inside all of that, she was gentle, humble, honest, loyal and kind. With a heart for giving all she had to her patients, to her work, to her garden, to anything she set her heart, mind and hands to.

If one had to sum Jeannette up in one word, it would be FRAGILE.

It was a privilege to know her. I wish I could have done more to rescue her from herself and the internal torment and anguish she lived with. She had so much to give but lacked the belief and knowledge of her true worth.

There were moments when the true Jen flourished and it warmed the heart to see her with joy and contentment.

Where did THAT Jen go?

She was robbed of that true self and the pressures of the veterinary career left her ravaged and engulfed by the dark cloud of oppression.

She was left with such internal torment and anguish to the point of no hope and the only exit was the act of taking her own life.

It is just so so sad! Equally sad that she is not the only veterinary colleague that we have lost to the same overwhelming hopelessness.

There have been many others and we have to ask ourselves surely there should be more that we can do to save future others from such hopeless despair?

We will miss you, Jen, your life was not in vain!

To any other troubled souls out there:

1 Corinth 13:13

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love.

The greatest is LOVE, but HOPE is grouped there with faith and love, so it must be important.

HOPE is a positive imagination.

HOPE is an anchor.

HOPE is the confident expectation of good.

PLEASE practise HOPE.

Find something to HOPE for, and have a VISION filled with HOPE.

Lorna Daves (Hulett)

IN MEMORIAM

In Memoriam

We honour and remember the contributions made by our colleagues who recently passed away.

SAVA Members:

Dr Michael Edward James: 02/08/1942 – 04/04/2022

We honour their contribution to our profession and society in general and pray that their families and loved ones will find the strength to carry them through these times of bereavement.