



Peggy Rizzo

March 30, 1949 - January 18, 2026

Margaret Rizzo, known always as Peggy Rizzo, a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, teacher, and friend, passed away on January 18th 2026, leaving behind a legacy of warmth, love and joy that will be felt for generations.

She was married to the love of her life, Tom Rizzo, for 53 years. Together they built a family rooted in love, shared values, and enduring friendship. She was the proud mother of two children and a devoted grandmother to four grandchildren, each of whom brought her immense happiness and pride.

A lifelong educator, Peggy spent her career as a public high school teacher, where she inspired countless students with her love of learning, patience, and genuine care for young people.

In her retirement, she was still inspired to teach, learn, and share. She was a docent at both the Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Cloisters, sharing her enthusiasm for art, history, and beauty with visiting schools and students. Few things delighted her more than bringing a work of art to life through storytelling and insight.

Peggy cherished friendship and family above all else. She had an open heart, a joyful spirit, and a contagious enthusiasm that made people feel instantly at ease. Wherever she went, she made instant and lasting friendships.

She found great joy in music, books and movies, and she believed in the power of a good story, a vigorous walk, a satisfying crossword puzzle, and showing up for anybody who needed it. Her kindness, laughter, and light will be profoundly missed.

She is survived by her husband of 53 years, Tom Rizzo; her two children, Laura and Thomas; her four grandchildren, Anna, Matthew, Benjamin, and Lila, and a wide circle of friends and colleagues whose lives were brighter by knowing her.

In honoring her life, we remember a woman who made the world better simply by being in it.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Peggy's memory can be made to her favorite charity:

<https://www.stjude.org/>

Cemetery Details

Brookside Cemetery

425 Engle St
Englewood, NJ 07631

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 21. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Barrett Leber Funeral Home
148 Dean Dr
Tenafly, NJ 07670
(201) 568-8043
<https://www.barrettleberfuneralhome.com/>

Visitation

JAN 21. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Barrett Leber Funeral Home
148 Dean Dr
Tenafly, NJ 07670
(201) 568-8043
<https://www.barrettleberfuneralhome.com/>

Funeral Mass

JAN 22. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary's RC Church
20 Legion Pl
Closter, NJ 07624

Interment

JAN 22. 11:30 AM (ET)

Brookside Cemetery
425 Engle St
Englewood, NJ 07631

Tribute Wall

BA

“ I had the honor to work with Peggy at Northern Valley. She was always positive and upbeat. She wanted to see all her students succeed! I express my condolences to a wonderful human being

Bert Ammerman - January 24 at 09:45 AM

TP

“ Remembering the fun times we all had at the Metropolitan Museum of Art sharing educational strategies we used on our school programs tours! There was no kinder, generous and more supportive person than the Met's work of art- Peggy Rizzo ❤️

Teddy Pearlman - January 22 at 04:22 PM

TP

“ Will greatly miss Peggy with whom I trained 15 years ago at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. We became Special Education tour guides and became part of a tight knit group of friends. I will always remember her joy and passion for the art and her kindness and sense of fun! I can never look at a Giacometti sculpture without thinking of Peggy teaching with pipe cleaners and aluminum foil! Your creative, loving spirit is with us!!❤️Teddy Pearlman

Teddy Pearlman - January 21 at 05:58 PM

TP

“ Our cadre of Special Education guides at the Metropolitan Museum of Art bonded over the years and Peggy was a integral part of that group. Her wisdom, kindness, passion and sense of fun will always be remembered! She is now sitting in that big easy chair in that David Hockney painting that she joyfully presented to us over 15 years ago!
I'll miss you in the galleries! ❤️Teddy Pearlman



Teddy Pearlman - January 21 at 05:40 PM

PZ

“ I want to express my sincere condolences to Peggy's family. Though we met recently I could see how special she was. An accomplished and wonderful woman who brightened every room she walked in. She will be sorely missed. I only wish I have spent more time with her.

Pamela Zabitz - January 21 at 01:47 PM

AL

“ Peggy has been a blessing for so many people. I know Peggy, and I both share a great part of her life. Her children and grandchildren were the light of her life. They meant everything to her. We both loved spending time with them. How bless was I to have had the privilege to share the same love for them. I promise you my dear friend (Peggy) I will for ever watch over them as we both did. You taught me well on what true love looks like.



Adalgisa Lugo - January 20 at 10:13 PM

“Peggy was a dear friend—caring, compassionate, supportive, and enthusiastic. She was always there when you needed someone, offering a kind word or a comforting hug. Our friendship was built on shared experiences and mutual understanding. We had similar upbringings, were the same age, raised children of similar ages, and even became grandmothers at the same time. These commonalities gave us endless things to talk about, laugh over, and be silly together.

Our friendship began more than fifteen years ago when we trained as volunteer educators for school children at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Both of us had backgrounds in teaching—Peggy in special education and me in art education. Although the training days had their challenges, we found joy in exploring the museum’s halls, especially on Mondays when it was closed to the public. Together, we spent hours in the library, researching art objects to include in our tours and practicing presentations with other friends, especially Lisa.

After a year, we began leading student tours through the museum. As we passed each other with groups of children trailing behind, we exchanged waves and smiles. Later, we would compare our experiences, sharing ideas and strategies to engage the students more fully. Through these moments, colleagues often become an extended family, deepening connections.

Peggy and I also shared a love of books. I tended to read art-related works, which piqued her interest, and she introduced me to novels she enjoyed. Just recently, she mentioned reading “Stan and Gus.” Our conversations often drifted to politics and government, where we found common ground. Peggy was always interested in my son’s life and offered him her support as well.

Some of my most cherished moments with Peggy were our strolls around the Cloisters overlooking the Hudson River. We would get lunch and then walk, talking to catch up on everything happening in

our lives. Our last conversation was about a month ago, and we planned to meet at the Cloisters at the end of January.

Knowing Peggy was a blessing. The memories of our time together will always bring a smile to my face, and her presence will be deeply missed.

My condolences to Tom, Thomas, Laura and their beautiful grandchildren.

Elaine Jones-Bronin - January 20 at 01:56 PM

LS

Elaine Peggy was so very special: such a loss for so many.

LINDA STEWART - January 23 at 10:16 AM

YH

“ *I am very sorry to hear about Mrs. Rizzo’s passing. I feel so fortunate to have had her as my teacher at NVD. She was a very caring woman who had a lot of patience. I remember students who had no interest in school hugging her before class. She made every student feel important and supported. My prayers are with her family and friends.*

Yvonne Honig - January 19 at 07:02 PM

TS

“ *I had the pleasure of working with Peggy at both NVD and NVOT, she was a wonderful person! My thoughts are with you all at this sad and difficult time. Teresa Shea*



Teresa Shea - January 19 at 12:48 PM