



Paula Elaine Saari

September 17, 1957 - November 17, 2021

Glen Duane Saari

October 9, 1953 - January 5, 2022

It's difficult to separate Glen and Paula Saari because to everyone who knew them, they were one. Individually, however, they each accomplished amazing things.

Glen was born on October 9, 1953 in L'Anse, Michigan. He graduated from Michigan Technological University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 1975. He never used his degree and instead started underground mining with his brother soon after graduating. He loved what he did, and he was great at it, mining a little bit of everything during his 44 year long career. Often, mining took him out of state which required him to be away from his family for long stretches at a time. Being the only male in the house, we are sure at times he thought of work as a vacation! Complaining wasn't something he knew how to do, and even though he was tired and his body ached, he would never let you know it. The only times he brought work home with him was in the form of hard rocks which his children and grandchildren proudly displayed throughout the house. He led by example and taught his family the importance of hard work. Glen was an active city council member for four years and he was vital in getting the downtown skatepark approved and built for the kids of Salida to enjoy.

Home was his favorite place to be and he found so much joy in helping his daughters and grandchildren with their homework, playing basketball in the park, and instilling in them a love for rock and roll. He was a rock and roll trivia master, and music was always playing in the house. He loved reading and educating himself on current events, and on sunny days, he could always be found outside, shirtless, drinking his beer and reading the Mountain Mail, the Denver Post, or the L'Anse Sentinel. If he wasn't home, he could be found at the golf course, wearing tie dye and swinging a club with his buddies. Very witty and quick to speak his mind, he led you to believe he knew it all. His granddaughters had a running joke that if Big Papa didn't know it he would think of something real fast! His big, broad shoulders were great for snuggling up to as well as leaning on for comfort and advice. Every family needs a rock, and he certainly was ours. A gentle giant, Glen was a proud father and grandfather, and his greatest accomplishment was raising his family and providing a safe, nurturing and fun place to live.

Paula was born on September 17, 1957. She moved to Colorado in the late 1970's and found her permanent residence in Chaffee County in 1983. She worked various jobs including City Market, Real American Tees, the Salida Post Office and Scanga Meat Company. Eventually, she began working for Developmental Opportunities, later known as Starpoint. Paula's ultimate happiness was found in giving great care to all the consumers, and her kind and compassionate heart created a safe place for everyone she cared for. Paula did bring her work home with her, and the family grew when a consumer came to live with them. This was the best possible lesson on love, compassion and acceptance a mother could give her children and all their friends. Paula's bubbly personality, infectious laugh and love for everyone is simply unforgettable. She displayed kindness, love, patience and gratitude to all she knew, and she led by example as she taught her children how to open their hearts and minds to those less fortunate. A caregiver may have been what she excelled at, but motherhood and being a grandmother, a Nana, was her true calling and passion.

Having four daughters, each unique in personality and behaviors, she created a safe place in her heart for each of them and spoiled them rotten with love. If it was too cold, she gave rides and playing hooky from school was an option when she wanted quality time with you. She wasn't the best at keeping secrets, but we all confided in her anyways and always. She had a magical touch that would make you worry and stress less, and a heart so big it sheltered us from the storms. She loved her dogs and could often be found walking them around town and down by the river. She enjoyed going to Mount Princeton Hot Springs with her daughters and grandchildren and was a constant in every family event and celebration. She loved her family and never let a day go by without letting them know or feel it. Paula was always making people laugh and was the best entertainment in the room! She danced when no one else was, didn't judge or hold grudges, was quick to forgive and so easy to love.

Every love story starts somewhere, and Glen and Paula's love story blossomed in Buena Vista, Colorado in 1984. Paula was a single mother of two beautiful daughters, and Glen was living the bachelor lifestyle. One night at the Lariat, Paula was so beautiful and caught Glen's eye and the rest is history! Of course they both had their own version on how the events played out that night, but one thing they agreed on is that Mom played hard to get and refused to drink a "real beer" or Budweiser instead of the Miller Light she had in front of her. Soon after, Mom found herself at a town basketball game that Dad was playing in. He said that she loved how his tan legs looked in his shorts, and she said he was funny and handsome and he never gave up on her. Whatever it was, together they created a magical life and their love story is a classic, timeless tale.

They were married on March 9th, 1985, in a friend's Buena Vista backyard, witnessed and celebrated by close friends and Paula's young daughters, Crystal and Tiffany. Six months later, Erika was born and for the next five years they raised their daughters in Buena Vista. They could be found enjoying themselves at the softball fields, the park, the golf course or the roller rink, and sometimes the Green Parrot or the Lariat. Raising kids in the 80's looked different than it does today, and Erika will tell you that some of her best memories are playing music on the jukebox and dancing with her dad at the Parrot.

In September 1990, they moved their family to Salida and welcomed their fourth daughter, Franki, that very same week. They bought a house in the perfect neighborhood and this house quickly became home to everyone who walked through the door over the next 31 years. Strong and loving relationships were built with the neighbors, and lifelong bonds were created. Devoted parents and grandparents, they supported their girls in all school and extracurricular activities and were always their biggest fans. They were always easy to pick out of a crowd too, couldn't miss them in their bright tie dye and smiles!

As much as they loved being parents, they would be the first to tell you that the abundance of joy they felt being grandparents far exceeded that of being Mom and Dad. The love they felt for family and life intensified with the birth of their grandchildren. Lindsey, Jase, Alicia, Kaija, Zailee, Nola, Lennox and Quinn brought so much love and joy to their hearts, and the relationships and bonds created are simply earth-shattering. Nana and Big Papa made every day more special and their grandchildren feel so incredibly thankful for the support, love and laughter they all shared.

Glen and Paula's love for each other could never be shattered, broken or lessened. They gave each other what the other needed for 38 years and were each other's best friends. Through sickness and in health and for richer or poorer, they made it together and made it look easy. They kept their love alive with sarcastic bickering and name calling, dancing whenever and wherever they wanted, listening to rock and roll and attending as many live concerts as possible, always holding hands and giving hugs and kisses, saying "I love you" while supporting one another in all things life, and eventually, also in death.

The world and everything in it was more vibrant and colorful with them here but the lessons taught and memories made will never be forgotten and will always be cherished. We are so blessed to have witnessed the love between our Mom and Dad, our Nana and Big Papa. To capture how they made all our hearts feel in words is truly impossible. So many memories created and so many more we will miss. The family finds beauty in their love story and the intensity in which they loved each other, on Earth and now in Heaven. Our hearts will forever miss their physical presence in our daily lives, however, we all know that the love they gave and raised us on will see us through. We find comfort knowing their love couldn't keep them apart, and that they are dancing together in Heaven.

"When a man truly loves a woman she becomes his weakness. When a woman truly loves a man he becomes her strength. This is called the exchange of power."

Please join us for Glen and Paula's Celebration of Life!

Saturday, June 4, 2022 in Salida, CO

at the Scout Hut in Riverside Park.

12noon to 5pm

Come eat, drink, laugh or cry and share memories with their friends and family!
Rock and roll, food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages provided.

Everyone and anyone who loves them is welcome
and we encourage you to wear bright colors or tie dye!

