



## Shelley Beth Neel

December 7, 1964 - January 21, 2024

Shelley Beth Neel (59) lovingly known as Shelley, the Sneel or that Red Headed Devil Women, passed away on January 21, 2024, in Falls Church, VA, surrounded by her family. She was born on December 7, 1964, in Yazoo City, Mississippi. Shelley lived a life filled with love, laughter, and numerous accomplishments.

Survived by her devoted husband, Samuel Swearingen, and cherished son, Jay Edward Neel, Shelley also leaves behind a legacy of warmth and compassion and her four Maine Coon Cats, Tryghul, Byghul, Argentia and Aria. She is also survived by her cousin, Darlene Passons, and Ken Bufford. Shelley was pre-deceased by her father, Paul Willingham, and mother, Beverly Ann Warren Willingham and brother Paul Willingham, Jr.

Shelley's life journey took her from Mississippi, where she resided from 1964 to 1988, to Anchorage, Alaska, from 1988 to 2005, and finally to Alexandria, VA, where she lived until 2024. She excelled in her career at the Federal Aviation Administration, serving with dedication from April 1999 until her passing.

A proud Airmen First Class (E3) in the military, Shelley received accolades for her service. Her passion for life extended beyond her professional pursuits. Shelley found joy in gardening, knitting, baking, and mastering the art of

Prohibition Era Cocktails. Her enthusiasm for financial investing showcased her curiosity and intelligence.

A gathering will be held at Jefferson Funeral Chapel to celebrate Shelley's life from 11 AM until time of service at noon on Friday April 12th, 2024.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations to be made to the American Cancer Society. Contributions can be sent to: [[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)].

Shelley will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her. Her spirit, kindness, and zest for life will forever be remembered.

# Previous Events

## Gathering

APR **12**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel  
5755 Castlewellan Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22315  
(703) 971-7400  
info@jeffersonfuneralchapel.com  
<https://www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com>

## Memorial Service

APR **12**. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel  
5755 Castlewellan Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22315  
(703) 971-7400  
info@jeffersonfuneralchapel.com  
<https://www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Jefferson Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Shelley Beth Neel*



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**Jefferson Funeral Chapel** - April 11, 2024 at 11:39 AM



“ *Jefferson Funeral Chapel created a Webcast in memory of Shelley Beth Neel*



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**Jefferson Funeral Chapel** - January 22, 2024 at 02:18 PM

AW

*It was such a pleasure knowing Shelley. She is so missed. Her ability to embrace and the care for others, the steely determination in her eyes, and her humor will forever stay with me. Her life was a celebration of all things beautiful this universe has to offer.*

*“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.”  
– Maya Angelou*

*I think Maya wrote this with Shelley in mind!*

*Salute Shelley!*

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**Awni** - January 24, 2024 at 12:46 PM

MM

*Shelley and Sam were over for lunch a few years ago, it was the first time she had met my family. Of course, she brought all kinds of fun gifts for the kids and was so excited explore them with them. They still remember her fondly as the bright spot in an otherwise boring adult lunch!*

*Love and thoughts for a kid at heart!*

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**matthew metcalfe** - January 26, 2024 at 03:14 PM

JN

*Hello!*

*This is Shelley's son Jay.*

*First, thank you for your large part in both the service this page for all the assistance it gave in organizing this event.*

*A question for you:*

*Is there any way that we, Sam and I, could get a copy of this video?*

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**Jay Neel** - April 13, 2024 at 02:20 AM

BJ

“ *Shelley and I were two-stripers at Keesler long ago. She was a good friend and I remember her fondly 38 years later. I am so very sorry for your loss. Bill Johnson, USAF (Ret)*

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**Bill Johnson** - March 05, 2025 at 11:45 PM

SS

“ 12 files added to the tribute wall



Samuel Swearingen - February 04, 2024 at 08:16 AM

KJ

“ Sam, I was so saddened to hear about the passing of your wife, Shelley, and I can only imagine the grief you must be feeling. My sincere condolences to you and your family during this difficult time. May you find comfort in happy memories and some hugs from her favorite cats. Thinking of you.  
~Kathleen Juza

Kathleen Juza - January 29, 2024 at 11:51 AM

JB

“ 11 files added to the tribute wall



Jeffrey Burrill - January 26, 2024 at 05:34 PM

JB

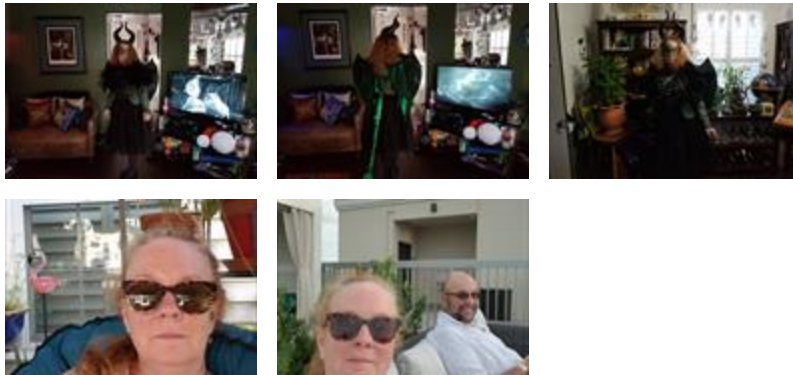
“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Jeffrey Burrill - January 26, 2024 at 05:06 PM

SS

“ 16 files added to the tribute wall



samuel swearingen - January 25, 2024 at 06:51 PM

ST

“ Alaska, 1994? Shelley and Jay



Stephen Twyman - January 23, 2024 at 05:56 AM

SS

Thank you Stephen. I have never seen these.

samuel swearingen - January 23, 2024 at 03:10 PM

JH

“ *Shelley will always be remembered as the tiny fierce redhead that could change the course of anything with the lift of an eyebrow!*

*Whether it was work collaboration, chatting with her about how to provide support to wild doves who chose to nest on her porch, to the latest gardening fascination.... Conversations with her were never shallow nor boring....*

*This woman was (and still is) deeply loved, admired and respected...*

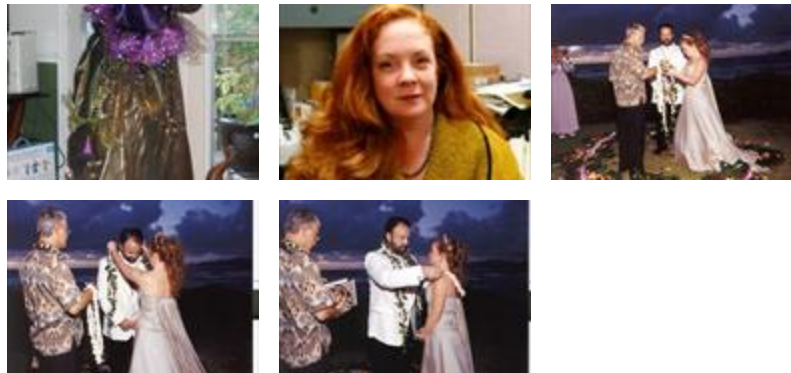
*My heart goes out to Sam & Jay.*

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**Julie Hale** - January 23, 2024 at 01:31 AM

SS

“ *12 files added to the album Shelley Photos*



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**samuel swearingen** - January 22, 2024 at 04:11 PM