

denver and the west

## A vibrant life cut short

Friends, family remember Linnea Dick and her love of animals, music and dance

By Howard Pankratz  
The Denver Post

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Opal Dick reaches out to touch her daughter's casket during services in Fort Collins on Thursday. Linnea Dick, 20, was sexually assaulted and murdered last Friday. (Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post)

The touch was gentle, a mother's touch. Only this one was placed on the casket holding her daughter.

Throughout the service Thursday for Linnea Dick at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Fort Collins, Opal Dick's extended hand reached out to her daughter.

"I want to say how sorry I am I can't hold you tight," Opal Dick said. "That's what she always asked me to do — hold her tight."

The Fort Collins community turned out Thursday to fill to overflowing the small church built in 1905.

More than 400 sat or stood in the church, or outside in the soggy grass.

They paid tribute to a person described as a "beautiful, intelligent and caring young woman." The 20-year-old Dick was sexually assaulted and murdered in her Fort Collins home last Friday.

"She was a loving daughter, sister and friend," said Pastor David Bradshaw. "She had such a vibrant spirit and a love for life that showed through everything she did. Linnea had a road map for her life. There were so many things she wanted to do before her life was taken from her."

During the service, the family, Bradshaw and friends recalled how Linnea Dick's passions were music, dance, photography and cooking.

They recalled her love for animals, saying she rescued many animals in need. She loved her pets, including her dogs, Lage and Bentley; her cats, Desi, Kahjuh and Teensil; and her lizard, Van Gogh.

And her mother made her a promise during the service — "your animals will be loved."

"I will talk to you every single day," promised Opal Dick. "I will look for signs every day that your spirit is with me."

On a screen near the white casket, the mourners saw 90 pictures of Linnea's life with a theme that resounded of family and animals — with her mom and dad, with her sister, Andrea Gliva, and with her

pets — the cats, the dogs and riding horseback.

"I want you to know that I love you very much," Andrea said. "You always made me look at things with a different perspective. I know at times I was hard on you, but only because I wanted the best from you."

"You were one of the sweetest people I ever knew. I know you are in a safe place now," she said.

Surrounding the casket were dozens of floral arrangements. On top of the casket in a steel-colored frame were two pictures of the young woman who was a student at Front Range Community College and had planned to finish her bachelor's degree at Colorado State University. Her dad, Don, has worked in the CSU chemistry department for 38 years.

On the day her murder was discovered, her aunt Rose Carroll recalled, there was a beautiful sunset to the west of Fort Collins, "and all of us who saw that sunset knew you were in heaven," Carroll said. "I will love you and always miss you."

The family asks that donations be made to the Linnea Dick Memorial Fund to benefit animal shelters in northern Colorado c/o Carroll-Lewellen Funeral and Cremation Services, 503 Terry St., Longmont, CO 80501.

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## Funeral Service Held For Ft. Collins Murder Victim

An image from Linnea Dick's funeral service  
CBS



Reporting  
Mike Hooker

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (CBS4) — Funeral services were held Thursday for a Fort Collins woman found dead inside her burning home last month.

Linnea Dick's funeral was a celebration of her life, but her loved ones had to acknowledge the terrible way that she died. Firefighters found Dick's body in an upstairs bedroom on May 30. The coroner's office says she died of asphyxiation. Investigators said she was sexually assaulted and strangled.

Family members described Dick, 20, as someone who loved music, cooking and dancing.

Her mother said Dick had recently developed a road map for her life and was taking college classes. Her words about her daughter were read aloud during the service by Eric Gliva, a cousin of Dick's.

"First of all I want to say how sorry I am that I could not hold you tight enough to protect you on Friday, May 30. That's what you always asked me to do ... 'Hold me tight.'"

Dick's grieving cousins remembered pretending to be the Spice Girls together.

"My sister and I always argued over who could be Baby Spice, but (Dick) would always be Ginger," one cousin said.

Perhaps more than anything, family members said Dick had a passion for saving and caring for animals. Her obituary says that she rescued many animals and loved her pets. One of her dogs died in the fire at her home, but firefighters were able to save her other dog, three cats, a lizard, a turtle and a tank full of fish.

Even though they grieved about not having Dick with them, friends and family still cherished the ways they still see her in the world around them.

"The day you were taken from us we had the most beautiful red-orange sunset. It was the color of your hair," Gliva said. "I will find comfort in sunsets like that: knowing that you are happy and whole again."

Police arrested Joseph Curt earlier this week and he was charged with Dick's murder.

The victim's family said Curt was an acquaintance of Dick's live-in boyfriend. His next court appearance is scheduled for June 9.

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