



Brunhilde "Bruni" Charlotte Boyden

November 19, 1937 - December 16, 2025

Brunhilde "Bruni" Charlotte Boyden, 88, formerly of Newport News, Virginia, passed away peacefully in Williamsburg on December 16, 2025. Known for her vibrant personality and love for adventure, Bruni's life was a testament to resilience and living in the moment.

She was born in Wolkenburg, Saxony, Germany in 1937 to Erhardt Heinrich Birkholz and Elfriede Charlotte "Lotte" Dorff. Her father was a medic for the German military but perished in World War II. Bruni was raised as the only child of her mother in their village in the Soviet occupied zone, later known as East Germany before reunification. Despite the hardships of the time, she had fond memories of her hometown and family beneath the 'Castle of the Clouds', where she developed a love for nature and animals. She eventually left Germany and made her way to Montreal, Canada before immigrating to the United States as a young adult and met a young marine scientist, Craig Ruddell, in New York whom she married on August 20, 1963. After moving to Washington state for her husband's doctoral studies, her two sons, Douglas and Mark, were born. The family eventually settled in York County, Virginia, where Bruni had many friends and neighbors while raising her two boys. She became a citizen of the United States in 1979. Following her separation in 1984, Bruni moved to nearby Hampton, Virginia to start a new chapter in her life.

Bruni met the love of her life, Richmond P. Boyden, in the early 1990s while a member of a social club for dancing and dining. Excited to start their new lives together, the two were married at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Hampton, Virginia on October 28, 1995. Bruni adored Rich as much as he adored her and, together, they traveled as much as possible. They especially loved cruising to exotic locations such as Alaska and the Caribbean. After Hurricane Isabel damaged their home in Seaford, they decided to head inland to Newport News, Virginia in the newly developed community of Port Warwick. With their adopted dog, they spent many wonderful years exploring their new home and getting to know their many neighbors and friends.

Bruni had a soft spot for her furry and feathered friends, treating each and every one like the valuable family member they were. She was especially fond of her many adopted dogs, whom she trained and worked with to become therapy dogs to help those in the hospital.

Bruni was preceded in death by her parents. She is survived by her beloved husband, Richmond P. Boyden and her sons, Douglas Magnum of Williamsburg, Virginia, and Mark Ruddell (Jenny) of Chemnitz, Germany, as well as three cherished grandchildren. Her warmth, kindness, and adventurous spirit will be deeply missed by all who knew her. A special thank you to all of the wonderful staff of The Cottages at Spring Arbor Williamsburg for the exceptional care provided to Bruni over the past three years.

A funeral service will be held 2 PM, Monday, December 22nd at Vincent Funeral Home, 417 11th St., West Point, VA. The family will receive friends from 1 to 2 PM, just prior to the service. Interment will take place in McKendree Methodist Church Cemetery, Manquin, VA.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to the ASPCA or any local humane society in honor of Bruni, reflecting her lifelong love for animals.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **22**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Vincent Funeral Home, West Point Chapel
417 11th St
West Point, VA 23181
(804) 843-2550

Funeral Service

DEC **22**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Vincent Funeral Home, West Point Chapel
417 11th St
West Point, VA 23181
(804) 843-2550

Tribute Wall

JH

“ *My sincere condolences to the family. I will remember Bruni's smile and her willingness to help others.
We worked together @Montgomery Ward Credit/GE Capital.*

Jonne Hatdy - December 22, 2025 at 02:03 AM

SS

“ *My condolences and love to Rich and Doug. Sue Slate*

Sue Slate - December 21, 2025 at 10:48 AM

TW

“ *Sorry For Your Loss*



Thomas Widgeon - December 21, 2025 at 07:47 AM