



*Amy Yacko Contreras,  
April, 2020*

Melissa Marie Golan Rougeot  
August 11, 1979 - April 10, 2020

## “Mel”

On April 10, 2020 Melissa Marie Golan Rougeot passed away at the Texas Stroke Institute, Plano, Texas after a brief illness. Melissa was born in Dallas on August 11, 1979 to Joseph Golan and Mary Jane (Gore) Golan. She graduated from Ursuline Academy in 1997 and then graduated from the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, with a degree in Journalism in 2001. She worked for Star Local Media in Richardson, Texas for almost twenty years and was their Circulation Director at the time of her death.

Melissa's passions included enjoying her Golan and Gore families, golf (traditional and Golden Tee virtual golf), being outdoors and volunteering at the Network of Community Ministries. Melissa was known for her quick and infectious smile as well as her selfless and compassionate spirit. She delighted in life's simple pleasures: walking in parks, watching sports with her family, playing games, swimming, frolicking with her nieces and nephews, and competing at games with family and friends. She loved playing cards with her father especially when she won!

She was preceded in death by her mother, Mary Jane (Gore) Golan, her maternal grandparents, James H. Gore, Sr. and Ruth Marie Gore, and her paternal grandparents, Sigmund A. Golan and Genevieve Rzepka Golan. Melissa is survived by her father, Joseph Golan, (Chande); sister, Katherine Irene Hilton, (Drew), (children, Brayden, Kennedy and Maddison); brother Joseph A. Golan (Veronica), (son, Elias). Her aunts, uncles and cousins in her father's extended family include: Bernadette Golan (Crown Point, Indiana); Charlotte Golan (Boulder, Colorado); and Margaret Bac (John), (daughter, Jenna), (Scott's Valley, California). Her mother's extended family resides in Indianapolis, Indiana and includes the following aunts, uncles and cousins: Donna Gore Olsen, (Bernhard III) (children, Bernhard IV, James, and Ann); Ruth Gore Yacko (Michael) (children, Amy, Michael L., and Matthew), James H. Gore, Jr., (Robin) (children, James III, Ashley, Brandon, Jonathon), and Robert Guy Gore (Brenda) (children, Caroline, Elizabeth and Grace).



## The Golan Girls

*Leave a memory or thought.*

**Website: [rememberingmelissa.com](http://rememberingmelissa.com) Login: melissa123**



I will always remember Melissa as my cool older cousin from Texas :) It was always so fun to see the Golan family when they would come back to Indy for a visit; especially around Christmas time, as the holiday festivities made a visit from cousins even more exciting. I remember the Gore family Christmas celebrations in Uncle Mike & Aunt Ruthie's basement- we enjoyed food, playing pool, the occasional talent show, and of course the ever-anticipated enormous Hershey bar from G-ma Gore that had a little something extra tucked inside. I remember Melissa, laid-back and having fun catching up with everyone. And she was always kind. She had a calming quality that stood out too (especially in the midst of a lively Gore Christmas gathering!).

I also remember when my parents, brothers and I made the LONG journey to Texas one summer to visit the Golans. They had just finished building their new house and had only recently moved in when we came - very brave of them! :) The boys and I had so much fun playing with Melissa, Katie & Joey and seeing their new home. Looking back, I'm very thankful that my parents saw the importance of taking a trip like that to spend time with our Texas family- that was my first memory of being in Texas, and definitely one of the most special memories I have of spending time with Melissa, Katie & Joey.

*Ashley Gore Paquette*

*I got to see Melissa when she came into town to visit Aunt Ruthie. Her and Mom met me for lunch. She was in good spirits and was excited about her recent splurge on the new Lexus. They both had veggie burgers and I joked with the waiter that I was the only carnivore at the table. We will all miss her. Love you all.*

*Ben Olsen IV*

Melissa was by far the most kind hearted person. I can still hear her contagious laugh. She was always there for each and everyone of us. It touched me deeply when she came to visit me in Denver when I was in the hospital. She handed me a puzzle book and magazines and said “Don’t get too excited, I just picked these up in the airport. Thought you might be bored.” (Insert Mel laugh here). She was always so thoughtful of others. It was a lot of fun to hang out with her, my mom and Aunt Ru during that visit. They both really lifted our spirits. When she arrived in Denver, she had a brown Michael Koers purse that matched my pink one and mom’s black one. Aunt Ru thought we were in some sort of purse cult lol. When Emma (my daughter) graduated from high school, I bought another one to match my outfit (it’s a pretty awesome purse design y’all). I remembered Mel had a brown one but I didn’t realize it was the same shade until she came to visit this past February and she walked in. Purse twinsies!

When I was helping take care of Grandma Gore, Mel came to visit and gave me a pair of Aunt Janie’s earrings. It meant so much to me that she thought of me. That was Mel though, always so thoughtful. There are too many childhood memories to count but one that sticks out is the Christmas when the Golans came into town and Mel was trying to hide her gecko tattoo so Uncle Joe wouldn’t see it. That was the \*big\* secret that Christmas. I remember playing the slot machine in Grandma and PawPaw’s basement and going to Brown County with her. I can still hear her voice calling for Benji. She really loved that dog.

I went down to Texas for business a few years back and she came to meet me for dinner and got the crew together for dinner a second time. It was so nice to spend some time with her and the family, I’m so glad I had the chance to do that. The last time I saw her, I gave her a hug and asked her if anyone had given her any shit about smoking on her trip yet. She laughed that incredible laugh and said “Yep”. I told her, “Ok, good! Just wanted to make sure we had our bases covered. Safe travels and we’ll have to connect again soon, love you.” That was the last time I saw her. If I haven’t said it before, thank you for your kindness and generosity of your time, energy and love. You were a beautiful soul and you will be missed very much. Love,

*Annie (Olsen) Natalie*

- ◆ Melissa had a great sense of humor and a dry wit. While Aunt Ruthie was in the Rehab center, we were all talking and I could not remember something, and Aunt Ruthie said that she would get me a room in the Memory Section of the nursing facility. Mel thought that was pretty funny until a couple of days later she could not remember something and I told her not to worry that Aunt Ruthie would get her a room next to mine in the Memory Section.
- ◆ Mel had a generous spirit. During her recent visit I mentioned that there was a new movie, “Emma”, based on a book by Jane Austen, that I wanted to see and knew that her Uncle Ben would have no interest in seeing it. When we discovered we would have a couple of free hours before she needed to be at the airport, she said that she wanted to treat me to the movie. We got popcorn (no extra butter), and thoroughly enjoyed the movie and our time together.
- ◆ Melissa talked about her volunteering at “the Network”, how much she enjoyed the work but struggled sometimes in her communication with the clients. One of the last text messages that I got from her was her recounting the challenges of trying to confirm the time of an appointment with a client with limited English who kept shaking his head. It took her a few minutes to realize that he was not shaking his head “No” but rather he had a tic!

May God bless and keep Melissa in His care until we see her again.

*Uncle Ben and Aunt Donna Gore Olsen*

*To laugh often and much; To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; To appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a re-deemed social condition; To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.*

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Melissa recently visited Indianapolis in order to support her Aunt Ruthie while she was in a Rehab facility recovering from a stroke and multiple surgeries for cardiovascular issues. Little did we know that it would be our last visit with Mel before she, too, suffered her own stroke and multiple cardiovascular issues. Obviously, it gives us all pause to be reminded how fragile life can be and how suddenly those we love can be gone. While we are a family who has faith that we will see her again, we grieve for ourselves that she is no longer with us. Melissa stayed with us while she visited Indianapolis and she was able to connect with many of her aunts, uncles, and cousins during her visit - a gift that really means a lot to all of us.

After her mother died in 2003, her Aunt Ruthie and I committed ourselves to staying in touch with Melissa, Katie and Joe. We were no substitute for their mother but felt that we wanted to be there for the kids as we knew that their mother had always been there for our children. During this tremendous loss, the inability to be there for her sister and brother has been the hardest part. In an effort to support them, and their father, we decided that putting together our memories of our time with Mel might be one small way to let them know how much we thought of her but also care about them. The following is a list of things that her uncle and I will remember about Melissa:

- ◆ Melissa was a good cook. She was an “on again”, “off again” vegan who challenged our family to provide satisfying meals to someone so particular. We learned how to fix salmon using Italian dressing that we still use today. When she was here this year, she made a point of going to the nearby Kroger store to pick up everything she needed to make us a Mediterranean salad. When questioned about the use of hard salami in the salad, she said that she wasn’t that strict of a vegan and was only getting back to it gradually!
- ◆ Mel and I shared an interest in journalism and it was fun sharing with her the Gore family history of our Great Uncle Robert Hayes Gore who started in the newspaper business in Evansville, Indiana, and ended up buying several newspapers in his lifetime. He was active in national politics and died a multi millionaire. I loaned her a copy of a book that his son wrote called “From the Edge of Poverty” and when I checked with her recently she still had the book but reported it was in storage for the time being. I will never be sure if she was more interested in his journalism career or in his journey to becoming a multi millionaire!

Melissa displayed so many admirable values that we aspire to be like. She was patient, family-oriented, and had such a kind heart. She had a great sense of humor as well- never afraid to partake in fun at the risk of appearing “silly.” When she flew up to Indy for New Year’s Eve one year, she attended a family get together that was cowboy-themed. Many scoffed at the costume elements that were encouraged, but not Melissa! She rocked with a cowboy hat and vest all night, even when playing poker. She was not just accepting of new members to the family, but open, encouraging, and approachable. We are so appreciative of the fact that she flew across the country for a week to help take care of Ruth. Not many people would take the time to do that, but she did and was so helpful to everyone in the family. Melissa was always the older, and often times much wiser, cousin. She will be greatly missed.

*Matt and Laura Yacko*



One of our favorite memories of Melissa is when she and her Mom and Dad came to visit Grandma and Grandpa Gore in Indianapolis. She was only two years old and Janie and Joe had been working with Melissa on learning shapes. There were probably AT LEAST 25 different shapes in a square container. Janie would pull one shape out at a time and ask Melissa what shape it was. Keep in mind that she was barely two years old. She got every shape correct...and there were some very difficult shapes...for instance: Parallelogram, Rhombus, Crescent, Pentagon, Heptagon, and many more. Most 2 year olds are barely talking and she knew all of these shapes and could say them. We knew then, that not only were we not as smart as a fifth grader, but we also as adults were not smarter than a two year old!!

Another of our favorite times with Melissa, Janie, Joe, Katie and Joey were the year that they moved into their new house on Brabant Drive in Plano. It was 1988 and we came for a visit the week after they moved in. It was also the week of Melissa's 9th birthday. We enjoyed getting to be part of her birthday celebration. She loved Playmobil sets and received several for her birthday. She would sit for hours on the landing, halfway up their steps and play by herself.

On that trip, we also got to go to Wet and Wild with Melissa and family, a delicious pizza buffet restaurant, an indoor amusement park, and many other activities. We made a lot of memories on that trip and still cherish that time together.

*Uncle Jim and Aunt Robin  
Along with Jimmy, Ashley, Brandon and Jon*

Please note that our sweet cousin,  
Jonathan Gore, is harassing our lovely Melissa:)



## Gore Cousins 1992

