

Meggie's Celebration of Life

There may also be a traditional funeral. Meggie's mother and grandmother may be planning a traditional funeral, which would be a separate event. For details, please reach out to Meggie's mother, **Ola Świder-Hingston** (+48 574 509 576 / olaswider@me.com), or her grandmother, **Krystyna Świder** (+48 504 242 824).

Gathering to Celebrate Meggie's Life. As Meggie's father, I want to bring together her friends, classmates, fellow Scouts, teachers, physicians, mentors, family members, and everyone who loved her — to celebrate her life, her dreams, her humour, her big heart, and all the things that made her wonderful and irreplaceable. Let's share stories, laughter, and tears, and remember her honestly. I hope it'll be a joyful gathering, even though there will be sadness too — because Meggie's life held both, and she would have wanted us to tell the truth about her.

Celebrations of Life are common where I'm from in the US, but newer here in Poland. Here are a few things to know:

When & where: Saturday, 20 June, 11am–1pm, at Park Cytadela, Poznań (*Café Słoneczny Taras, formerly Café Niebiańska*). If that date doesn't work for you, please tell me right away — I'd like as many people there as possible, and it may be possible to adjust the date.

Language: English or Polish, as you wish. I'll arrange a simultaneous interpreter so everyone will be able to understand everything.

What to wear: Dress as you would have to meet Meggie in life — Scout uniform, student clothes, bright colours or dark, formal or informal: whatever feels right for you.

The setup: There'll be a stage, mic, and sound system. We'll video the event and live-stream it on Facebook and Zoom for people in Europe, Canada, the US, and even Vietnam who were touched by Meggie and want to join in. Some of us will have prepared speeches, but anyone who wants to say something about Meggie will be encouraged to do so.

Music, readings, performances: If a particular song meant something to Meggie or to you, let me know in advance and we'll play it. The same goes for poems, scenes from plays, or even jokes — just send word ahead so we can plan for what you'd like to do and make sure there is time for it.

Ice cream: Meggie's favourite food. She could eat it three times a day and never gain weight. We'll have ice cream for everyone.

Animals: Meggie loved animals. Please feel free to bring your pets (remember to bring water for them).

Photos & videos: Please send any you'd like to share — we're putting together a montage for the LED screen and a memorial website afterwards. Please send to WhatsApp +48 505 100 834 or email ahingston.uk@me.com.

The hard topics: If you want to speak about self-harm, foster care, suicide, the legal system, or mental health, please do. Meggie had bright sides and dark sides; we want to honour the whole person — because we miss the whole person.

If you have other ideas, call or text me at +48 505 100 834, or email me at ahingston.uk@me.com.

Thank you for loving Meggie.

— Andrew Hingston, Meggie's father