



Debra Shepherd

August 14, 1954 - October 4, 2021

Debbie Shepherd, age 67, passed away peacefully on 4 Oct 2021.

Debra Kay Hubbard was born 14 Aug 1954 to Francis M. Hubbard and Bernice O. Hale Hubbard in Great Valley, New York. She was born at home, and was so tiny that her mother put her in a shoe box to sleep.

When she was two years old, the family moved to Salamanca New York, where she spent her growing up years. She had fond memories of playing in the backyard with her siblings. She told stories of her father's vegetable garden, and the way her thrifty mother kept the family going. One of her favorite memories of her mother is her big Thanksgiving dinners, and the white birthday cake she made for Jesus every Christmas. Debbie has always been a petite little lady (4' 10" as an adult). Her brother Bill remembers her wearing her favorite Halloween costume (Cinderella) 3-4 years in a row because she didn't outgrow it!

Debbie struggled with dyslexia and decided to drop out of school in the 10th grade. Later a dedicated friend and teacher, Jo Ellen Coppersmith, tutored Debbie and helped her get her GED. Debbie was proud of this achievement. She went on to complete certifications to be a Preschool Teacher, and a Certified Nurses Aide. Debbie used her skills to teach preschool, work at senior living centers, and do Family History work. She had a gift for locating her ancestors in old census records, and found great joy in doing their temple work in LDS Temples. She even discovered that some of her ancestors belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints too. This made her very happy.

Debbie moved to Olean, New York in her early 20's, where she became acquainted with members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Their belief in Jesus Christ and eternal families resonated with her, and she joined the Church in December 1979. In September 1983 Debbie had the chance to move to Utah with Jo Ellen and her family. Debbie jumped at the opportunity for a fresh start in a new place. She settled in Pleasant Grove, Utah, and lived with the Coppersmiths for the first year until she got her feet under her.

Debbie was a hard worker and a great asset at the “Ray of Sunshine” daycare. Owners Ray and Olga Homer loved her like a daughter, and watched over her for the rest of her life. Debbie became director at their second facility when it opened in Lehi, Utah. She was often put in charge of the babies and younger classes because she had a great love for the little ones. All of the children adored her. She would even take them home to care for them after work at the daycare when a single parent couldn’t get back before closing at 6pm. She would tell story after story of her preschool children, and how much she loved them. Lifelong friendships were formed and she became a part of many families as she quickly worked her way into all of their hearts. At Church, she served many years as a Nursery Leader with 2-3 year old children. She taught beautiful object lessons about Jesus Christ and his gospel, and brought special gifts and treats for the children.

In 2005, Debbie became a CNA. She was the most caring and empathetic of caregivers. She was keenly aware of those that didn't have family that came to visit, and would spend extra time with them. She could get the most despondent of residents to smile and cheer up, and had a unique ability to look beyond someone’s physical disabilities and connect with them soul to soul.

In November 2004 Debbie hosted a Thanksgiving dinner. One of her guests brought a friend, Steve Shepherd. A friendship developed into a romance, and on 22 Sept 2005, Steve and Debbie were married in the Mount Timpanogos Temple. Steve and Debbie were a blessing to each other, and brought much joy to each other. They enjoyed visiting friends, hikes, picnics, concerts and their favorite—parades and rodeos. They were big fans of the library, the senior center, recreation center, and watching movies. Her favorite movies were the oldies with Shirley Temple, Fred Astaire, and Judy Garland - especially The Wizard of Oz. She was an official member of the Donny and Marie Osmond fan club, and even went on a cruise hosted by the Osmonds. Debbie and Steve were active members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and made many lifelong friends there. They attended the temple often and especially loved reading the “Come Follow Me” gospel study program together.

Debbie loved all animals, especially cats and dogs. Many photos of her from young age to adulthood show her with a cat in arms. Debbie loved to cook, and liked to collect cookbooks and recipes. She definitely had a sweet tooth! She had little bags of candies tucked around her room, and loved baking sweet treats, especially at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Debbie suffered from various health issues throughout her life. She endured many

surgeries and appointments to keep her well. Steve was always her protector and she missed him fiercely when they were separated during hospital stays. His death on 4 July 2021 was a great loss for her, but she was grateful for him to be relieved from his suffering and pain. Her faith in Heavenly Father and the gospel of Jesus Christ comforted her in her grief because she knew she would see Steve again. In August she began struggling with bronchitis, and then pneumonia. She suffered a stroke in September, which led to her final decline. Debbie was ready to go, anxious to be back with her beloved Steve.

Debbie had nine siblings, six of whom have preceded her in death: Dennis Hubbard (living), Patricia Reed, Judith Connell, Thomas Hubbard, Kenneth Hubbard, James Hubbard (living), Arlette "Artie" Hubbard (living), William "Bill" Hubbard (living), and Timothy Hubbard. Debbie missed her family dearly, and talked about them often. She loved her nieces and nephews and their growing families. She treasured the photos they sent her, and loved keeping in touch over phone and Facebook.

We express deep gratitude to the staff of Beehive Home Care Center in American Fork, and Certified Nursing Services for their loving and compassionate care. They truly went above and beyond for Debbie. We also express love and gratitude for the ministering watchcare of their American Fork and Pleasant Grove Church Wards who loved Steve and Debbie dearly and treated them like family. Debbie felt incredibly blessed to be surrounded by so many friends and family that rallied around her throughout her life, and especially in her final weeks.

Funeral Services will be held Tuesday, October 12th at 10:00 am at Utah Valley Mortuary 1966 West 700 North, Lindon, Utah. Interment at Pleasant Grove Cemetery, 500 N 100 W, Pleasant Grove, Utah. Click here to view services on Tuesday <https://my.gather.app/remember/debra-shepherd>

Funeral arrangements are provided by Utah Valley Mortuary.

Events

OCT **Funeral Service** 10:00AM - 11:30AM

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Utah Valley Mortuary

1966 West 700 North, Lindon, UT, US, 84042

Comments



“ A webcast video has been added.



Utah Valley Mortuary - October 08 at 11:07 AM



“ Debbie was one of the most beautiful people I've ever known. My family and I had so many wonderful memories of Debbie. I've known her since 1987. We hit it off great and became friends and roommates for many years. Her she is with my son Logan and several years later, with two of my three daughters Jennica and Jasmin. She was also a wonderful "Aunt" too infant Jade, who is not pictured here. The kids all adored her as did my whole family. We considered her family and were so blessed to have known her. She will be missed tremendously.



Cathy Harrison - October 12 at 12:32 AM



“ 10 files added to the album Memories Album



Utah Valley Mortuary - October 08 at 11:19 AM



“ 13 files added to the album Memories Album



Utah Valley Mortuary - October 08 at 11:03 AM