



Deborah Brannock Guerdat

July 24, 2023

June 29, 1948 - July 24, 2023

The first of five Brannock sisters, Deb hailed from deep in The Great Smoky Mountains of East Tennessee.

A born nurturer, she possessed a gentle maturity well beyond her years as she cared for her younger siblings with a profound reverence and sacred purpose that would come to be her trademark in life.

Like her father, Deb delighted in the natural world, the ocean, the mysteries of heady, Southern, summer nights, lightning bugs, swimming, campfires, and music, especially in the form of camp songs sung in palpable rounds beneath starlit skies. Like her mother, Deb was independent and strong-willed, unconventional, and forever marching to the beat of her own drum.

Deb raised three daughters in the Dilworth neighborhood of Charlotte, North Carolina, and at whose elementary school of the same name was a well-loved and highly sought-after volunteer creative writing teacher. She was a poet in her own right, an artist, a true creative, customizing murals for community spaces and making costumes out of thin air upon request- and not just for Halloween.

A staunch sentimentalist, Deb kept all her children's drawings and homemade

Christmas ornaments; in fact, her live Christmas trees remained freshly watered, decorated to the nines, year after year, tucked proudly into the front bay window for all the neighbors and passersby to point at in amusement.

Deb was a brilliant thinker, writer, and conversationalist; as her friend Steve once famously said of her, "Talking to Deb was like playing chess on a 3D chessboard". Deb had wit in spades, an affinity for puns and wordplays, and a deep, enduring love of the absurd, evinced by her taste in authors, her favorite of all being Richard Brautigan.

Deb was a handy-woman, self-taught painter, lemon pound cake-baker, conductor of imaginary voyages, and explorer of dreams and other worlds. But mostly she was a mother... to all.

Deb saw the best in people. She rescued spiders, opened her door to strays, spoke fluent dog, and stopped to help any person (or opossum) in need. To know her was to be immersed in love- and to feel at home (her favorite place) in her presence- to bask in the glow of her kindness, hopefulness, and belief in your greatness.

Deb taught her children to love fiercely and fully. She answered every call and came rushing to offer support whenever there was a need. She saw life not as it is, but as it should be.

Humble as she was, Deb didn't want anyone to know when she got sick- or perhaps that she wasn't immortal as we all believed her to be- not out of a sense of ego but rather out of her refusal to let anyone walk alone in their struggles. She only wanted to be assured that she was effective in loving the lost, orphaned, and wounded souls in her midst during her time on Earth.

As our mother's children, we were pushed outside of our comfort zones

regularly- to find our voices, speak our truths, navigate the impossible, and to never judge another person's situation. We understood in our hearts what our mom so often assessed when someone had "had a hard life"; her greatest quality and legacy remains her compassion.

Deb left the physical realm just after reaching her own 75th birthday on June 29th, passing what would have been her father Casey's 100th birthday on July 20th, and finally departing for his mother's, her beloved Mammaw's, special day, on July 24th. Her daughters were on the phone together as her youngest held her hand in beautiful Northern Colorado- maybe not "her" mountains (The Appalachians), our sister remarked, but mountains all the same- those ancient, kindred spirits of Deb's.

As our Aunt Chris surmised as she concluded in prayer with us, "I think we all know that a great choir of angels awaits your mother... and a whole host of misfits do too". That was our mother Deb's gift to the world: Her unconditional love for anyone who felt unloved, forgotten, unheard, or misunderstood. She valued each individual and every story ever told.

Deb is survived by her sisters: Pamela Brannock, Betsy Brannock (Mike Mitchell), Claudia Haselton (Bill Haselton), Chris Brannock, her many nephews and nieces, her daughters, and their families: Eliza Harris (Chad Harris), Izzy and William Busch, Chelsea Guerdat, grand-dog Cool, Madeline Harvey (Matt Harvey), and Aliya and Levi Harvey.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on Saturday, August 26, 2023 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Eastern DST/ 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Mountain DST. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 161 East Ravine Street in Kingsport, Tennessee, 37660. Virtual attendees can access the event by visiting St. Paul's website: <https://www.stpaulskingsport.org>

and/or YouTube channel: <https://youtube.com/@st.paulsepiscopalchurchkin31>

25

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG **26**. 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM (MT)

ST. Paul's Episcopal Church
161 East Ravine Street
Kingsport, TN 37660
<http://www.stpaulskingsport.org>

Also on YouTube channel: <https://youtube.com/@st.paulsepiscopalchurchkin3125>.

Tribute Wall



“ *Lightly come or lightly go
Though thy heart presage thee woe,
Vales and many a wasted sun,
Oread let thy laughter run,
Till the irreverent mountain air
Ripple all thy flying hair.*

*Lightly, lightly...ever so
Clouds that wrap the vales below
At the hour of evenstar
Lowliest attendants are
Love and laughter songconfessed
When the heart is heaviest.*

~ James Joyce



Chad Harris - August 25, 2023 at 08:42 PM

AC

“ She bought my Grandparent's house in Kingsport and was so gracious to tell me i could visit anytime when i told her that it was my safe space, my happiest place and moved in to a house that was full of love and family first..She was the perfect fit, so much like my Nana and a great positive influence to my Son and loved him like her own. He made her Godmother of my Grandsons. God blessed our lives with her. Rest in Peace beautiful Lady.



Amy Creasman - August 11, 2023 at 12:43 PM

PR

“ Deb was a mother to all! She was the absolute sweetest person I have ever met to this day. She will be so missed! My mother and I will always cherish the time we had with her, and I will be forever grateful to her for helping me get into college and talking to me whenever I needed a friend... Heaven has truly gained a beautiful soul and I'm sure Jesus and her are laughing and talking about her beautiful family and memories! Love you Mama ❤️👍

Pattersen Floberg Roman - August 10, 2023 at 10:26 PM

HB

“ I am so sorry to hear about this. I loved coming to your house when we were little. Your Mom was always so warm and nurturing. And with a little bit of a wild streak- she was our chaperone when we went and toilet papered at night! I have so many wonderful memories of her and that time. She left wonderful legacies that will live on.

Love,
Hillary Saunders Bessett

Hillary Bessett - July 28, 2023 at 08:27 PM

BB

Cousin Deb was indeed a very special lady. I remember how much fun we had so little girls when she would come to spend a week with Mammaw and Pappy. In the last years when we talked there were so many "Remember whens?". I am so glad we were able to relive those wonderful memories. Love, Cousin Barbara

Barbara Bedwell - July 31, 2023 at 06:26 PM

EH

Hillary, that is too funny... but so true! Thank you for the memory.

Eliza Summer Harris - August 17, 2023 at 01:19 PM

PP

“ *Pamela Payne lit a candle in memory of Deborah Guerdat*



Pamela Payne - July 28, 2023 at 12:16 PM

HE

“ *Such a positive soul she will be miss all my love to Madeline and her sisters*

Hernan - July 26, 2023 at 07:14 PM

MH

Thank you, Hernan. You know she adored your family!

Madeline Harvey - July 28, 2023 at 11:44 PM

JS

*Such a lovely woman, I am so glad that I met her, and we had sometime to chat. My love to you and Matt, my niece, nephew and your sisters and their families.
Joyce Seebrooks*

Joyce Seebrooks - August 09, 2023 at 08:07 AM

PW

So very sorry to learn of Debbie's passing. She was maybe the 1st person I met when moving to Charlotte in Dilworth. I believe she was taking Chelsea for a stroll in (or out of) her carriage. Your Mom's beauty, both internal & external was voraciously apparent, so angelic in all ways, to all people. Before reading her eulogy, I wondered how to express her essence, but truly, y'all did just that. After Debbie left Charlotte, we somehow bumped into each other in the airport, & I'll try to locate the picture we took. I regret how careless I was in not staying in touch ... it isn't often one meets a true Angel. My deepest condolences, Peter

Peter Wallens - August 11, 2023 at 12:24 AM

PW

ps: Debbie will be forever remembered & forever missed. One doesn't often get a chance to meet someone like her.

Peter Wallens - August 11, 2023 at 12:26 AM

BK

Dear Madeline, I'm so very sorry to hear of your mother's death and so very sorry I will not be able to attend her celebration of life. I know how very close you and your mother were and my heart breaks for your loss. I have so many wonderful memories of your mom, Jackie, Julia and I supporting you, Alana, Jessie and Michelle as young ballet dancers in training. Your mom expressed such love for the art form and was very dedicated to providing you with all the opportunities and experiences you needed to pursue your gifted ballet career. She had such a creative spirit and appreciation for all the arts. I really enjoyed talking to her not only about dance but literature, art and music. Her breath of knowledge, intellect and insight always came through in our discussions. I'll never forget the road trip your mom and I took to Chapel Hill to attend Jackie's daughter, Vanessa's wedding. My son Mason, who was 8 or 9 at the time, went with us. Your mom immediately engaged Mason in lively conversation, had him laughing, joking and feeling completely included in our adventure to Chapel Hill. Mason later on told me how much fun he had with your mom. She obviously had the gift of knowing how to effectively interact and bring the best out in children. Madeline, your mom left an indelible mark on the world. She will be greatly missed and remembered with such fondness and smiles. My hope is that your memories will in time bring you much needed comfort in your deep grief that she is no longer here with us. With much love to you and your family. Beth Kinny

Beth Kinny - August 15, 2023 at 05:47 PM