



Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell

May 4, 1947 - April 25, 2025

Deborah (Debbie) Dorothy Harrell, 77, of Panama City Beach, Florida, passed away peacefully on April 25, 2025, surrounded by her beloved husband and sons at the Big Bend Hospice Dozier House in Tallahassee, Florida. After courageously navigating various lung illnesses in recent years, she departed this life with grace, love, and her family by her side.

Born on May 4, 1947, in Cincinnati, Ohio, to the late John Kaster and LaVerne Herrmann Kaster Dugan, Debbie was their only child and a radiant presence from the start. A dancer with big dreams, she once aspired to become a Rockette — a dream that reflected her passion and joyful spirit. She grew up in Cincinnati before attending Murray State University. There, she was honored as the Sweetheart of the Sigma Chi fraternity and met the love of her life, Richard "Lee" Harrell. The two married on July 25, 1970, beginning a 54-year journey marked by love, laughter, and adventure.

Debbie and Lee began their married life in Jacksonville, Florida, and soon welcomed their sons—Todd in 1972 and Scott in 1977. Life with Lee's career took the family across the Southeast, including Memphis, Orlando, Hickory, and Troy. With each move, Debbie made lasting friendships and planted deep roots. They eventually settled in Tallahassee in 1993, which became home for many cherished years.

An educator at heart, Debbie dedicated much of her life to shaping young minds. She taught in schools in Macclenny, Orlando, and Tallahassee. At Holy Comforter Episcopal School in Tallahassee, where she taught elementary students, she left a lasting impression on generations of children—many of whom still remember her kindness, creativity, and nurturing ways.

In 1998, Debbie transitioned into another calling: senior care. Alongside her family, she helped establish the Home Instead Senior Care franchise in Tallahassee, and later, the Panama City Beach office in 2000. Her compassion and leadership helped countless families navigate the challenges of aging with dignity. She retired in 2015 to focus on her greatest joy -- her family.

Debbie adored being “Grammie” to her five grandchildren and rarely missed a game, competition, or performance. From baseball fields and football stadiums to basketball gyms and cheer competitions, she was their loudest (and proudest) fan. Her boundless love and presence will forever echo in the bleachers.

Debbie also held a deep commitment to giving back. She supported causes close to her heart, including the Wounded Warrior Project, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, and Tunnel to Towers Foundation. She also served on the Tallahassee Senior Center board of directors for a number of years while living in Tallahassee.

She is survived by her devoted husband, Lee Harrell, of Panama City Beach; her two sons, Todd (Carly) Harrell of Shalimar and Scott (Allison) Harrell of Tallahassee; and her five grandchildren, Brody, Wade, and Jack Harrell of Shalimar, and Caden and Ensley Harrell of Tallahassee. She also leaves behind extended family, cousins, and lifelong friends who were blessed to know her.

Debbie's presence, warmth, and wisdom will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered. A celebration of her life will be held on Saturday, June 14, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at The Retreat at Bradley's Pond in Tallahassee, Florida.

In a final tribute fitting her love of family, Debbie's ashes will be spread on the baseball fields where she spent so many happy hours cheering on her sons.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made in her memory to the Big Bend Hospice Foundation, whose care and compassion meant so much to her and her loved ones.

Kelly Barber of Bevis Funeral Home (850-385-2193 or www.bevisfh.com) is assisting the Harrell family with their arrangements.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUN 14. 1:00 PM (ET)

The Retreat at Bradley's Pond
9002 Bradley Road
Tallahassee, FL 32309

Tribute Wall



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell.*



June 12, 2025 at 11:58 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell.

May 27, 2025 at 05:37 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell.*



May 27, 2025 at 05:37 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell.

May 20, 2025 at 04:21 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell.*



May 20, 2025 at 04:21 PM



“ *Skipper Homra purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell.*



Skipper Homra - May 17, 2025 at 02:47 PM



“ *Sympathy and prayers for Lee and all the family for your loss. Knowing Debbie is at peace and all your fond memories we hope will help in the time ahead.*

Anne and Bill Hill

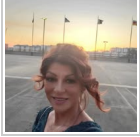
Anne Hill - May 12, 2025 at 09:34 PM



“ *Debbie was a wonderful friend to me on Facebook. She was the sunshine and sweet. Condolences the family.*



Marian G. Roscoe - May 09, 2025 at 09:22 PM



“ *Debbie has been in my life since the 90's and we have stayed in contact until she was no longer able to message with me. I'm going to miss those messages. Scott became my little brother through his mother I'm so grateful to have known Debbie and the knowledge she has shared with me over the years Fly high my friend for we will meet again one day.*

Karyn Shafer - May 09, 2025 at 09:14 PM

SB

“ *Lee and Debbie have been such a blessing to Bill and I over the years. Deb was always a great encouragement to those around her. Prayers for her precious family who loved her dearly!*

Sue Bidwell - May 09, 2025 at 08:56 PM

L(

“ *Lots of love Elizabeth Grace (Lizzie) purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell.*



Lots of love Elizabeth Grace (Lizzie) - May 09, 2025 at 08:02 PM

L(

“ *Lots of love Elizabeth Grace (Lizzie) planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Deborah "Debbie" Dorothy Harrell.*

Lots of love Elizabeth Grace (Lizzie) - May 09, 2025 at 08:02 PM

BM

“ Todd and Carly, Debbie and I send our empathy for your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and the family.
Bruce & Debbie

Bruce Marshall - May 09, 2025 at 07:46 PM

EG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Elizabeth Grace - May 09, 2025 at 07:41 PM