



Laura Wills Bizzell

September 13, 1939 - October 23, 2024

With profound sadness and gratitude for a life beautifully lived, we announce the peaceful passing of Laura Ann Bizzell, née Wills, on October 23, 2024. Surrounded by the loving family she nurtured throughout her 85 years, Laura's final moments reflected the grace and warmth that defined her remarkable life. Born on September 13, 1939, to Walter Guy and Lucibel Wills, in Dothan, Alabama, Laura embarked on a journey that would touch countless lives through her extraordinary capacity for love and her gift for creating family wherever she went.

Laura's childhood took root in Tallahassee, where her family relocated during her early years. She created many lasting friendships throughout her school years and was an alumna of Leon High School. On December 14, 1956, Laura married Robert "Mac" McBride, and together they had four children: Lorre, Robert, Jeff, and Gregg. Throughout their 17-year marriage and after its end in 1974, Laura's primary focus remained on her children, dedicating herself to their wellbeing and growth with unwavering devotion.

In the 1970s, Laura began her professional journey working in DC Wheeler's men's clothing stores, where her natural grace and attention to detail served her well. Her career path then led her to the Florida House of Representatives, where she rose to become Documents Supervisor. In this role, she found particular joy in mentoring the young staff members who joined her team during legislative sessions. Her leadership style, marked by warmth and wisdom, created an atmosphere where both work and relationships

thrived. Colleagues remember her not just as a supervisor, but as a mentor whose influence extended far beyond the workplace.

In 1976, love found Laura again in Donald Bizzell, a partnership that would prove to be a testament to love's enduring power. Their blended family grew to include Don's daughters, Beverly and Jennifer, whom Laura embraced with the same boundless affection she held for her own. Their love story wrote its most poignant chapter in their later years when Don, his memory softened by dementia, fell in love with Laura anew and asked for her hand once more. Their vow renewal, blessed by their children, became a celebration of love's ability to transcend even time's passage.

A Legacy of Love

At the heart of the Bizzell home was Laura's beloved kitchen, affectionately known as the "My-T-Fine Café." Here, she created memorable dishes including her baked spaghetti, chocolate cake, and the crown jewel – cornbread dressing and gravy that became the cornerstone of countless family gatherings. Then there was the infamous year that the oven died, chaos ensued, and no one could find that spoon, that is until we got to the bottom of that dressing pan. Thanksgiving at Laura's table was more than a meal; it was a celebration of family, both born and chosen, where every guest was embraced as kin.

Known lovingly as "Gees" to her eighteen grandchildren and seventeen great-grandchildren, Laura's presence graced every possible family milestone. Her dedication to family extended beyond blood ties to embrace grandnieces, grandnephews, and friends, all of whom found a home in her heart.

To the younger generation, she leaves behind her love and the wisdom of Proverbs 4, with emphasis on Verse 23: "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

Faith and Service

Laura's faith formed the foundation of her life's work. As a devoted member of

Tallahassee Heights Methodist Church, she found joy in serving with the "Kitchen Angels," her voice lifting in praise with the summer choir, and her hands busy in the fall pumpkin patch. Her creative spirit found expression in the stories and poems she penned for her family, including treasured tales like "Bobby Butterfly," "Ginger Runs Away," and "A Girl Called Lucy" – written legacies that will continue to delight generations to come.

Family Legacy

Laura was the true matriarch of a large, diverse, and loving family. She was preceded in death by her husband, Donald J. Bizzell, her parents Guy and Lucy Wills, her sisters, Mary and Thersa, and brother Walt. She is survived by six children, Lorre Howell (Joseph Sr), Robert McBride III (Martha), Jeffrey McBride (Rose), William "Gregg" McBride (Yenys), Beverly Aiken (Bruce), and Jennifer Van Dyke (Kevin) and her brother-in-law Bob Dorsey (Mary).

Laura had the blessing of calling 18 people grandchildren. They include Joseph Howell Jr (Marsha), Jeffrey Howell (Kimberly), Elizabeth Howell, Jessica McBride, Hannah McBride, Robert McBride IV, Laura Lee Walker (Jason), Melissa Neal (JCody), Bryant McBride (Zoey), Madison Hanna (Anthony), Javier McBride, Jonathan Van Dyke (Ashley), David Van Dyke (Meagan), William Van Dyke (Chloe), Thomas Van Dyke, Leslie Lamora, Scott Burdette, and Tyler Burdette (Andi).

These blessings multiplied with 17 great grandchildren! Ben and Carys; Laurel, Max, Brooklyn, Mary, Taylor, and Christian; Ella and Finley; Brian and Atlas; Leah; Jorge and Isabella; Enea and Bo.

Laura's family circle extended far beyond, enriched by her many beloved nieces, nephews, cousins and their families, each of whom held a special place in her heart and added unique threads to the tapestry of her family's story.

Family Acknowledgment

A special expression of love and gratitude goes to Gregg, Yenys, and Javi, whose selfless dedication and countless sacrifices made it possible for our mother to remain in her cherished home throughout her life. Their devotion exemplified the very essence of family that Laura held so dear.

Special Thanks

The family expresses heartfelt gratitude to Big Bend Hospice and Nurse Chrystal DeGreef for the compassionate and joyful care they provided Laura.

Memorial Services

The family invites friends to celebrate Laura's life with a coffee visitation in the Fellowship Hall of Tallahassee Heights Methodist Church on October 31, 2024, from 9:00 to 10:00 AM, followed by a graveside service at Tallahassee Memory Gardens at 11:30 AM officiated by pastors Mike Shockley and Ken Hamilton.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions to Big Bend Hospice or Tallahassee Heights Methodist Church to honor Laura's legacy of service and love.

A Final Tribute

Laura's lively spirit, her gift for making everyone feel special, and her ability to transform any gathering into a celebration of family will be profoundly missed. Her legacy lives on in the countless lives she touched, in the stories she wrote, and in the love she planted in hearts that will continue to bloom for generations to come.

Proverbs 31:25-28

"She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed."

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

Cemetery Details

Tallahassee Memory Gardens

4037 North Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Previous Events

Fellowship and Visitation

OCT **31**. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

Tallahassee Heights United Methodist Church
3004 Mahan Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32308

Family will be gathered in the Fellowship Hall.

Graveside Service

OCT **31**. 11:30 AM (ET)

Tallahassee Memory Gardens
4037 North Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Tribute Wall

SM

“*“DEATH LEAVES A HEARTACHE NO ONE CAN HEAL, LOVE LEAVES A MEMORY NO ONE CAN STEAL.” My deepest sympathy for you all. I was blessed to have known Laura and I will miss her forever. I love you Laura. You and Don are together again and I know it's a beautiful thing.*

Sonja McCown - November 13, 2024 at 10:55 AM

LO

“*1 file added to the album Memories*



Lorre - October 30, 2024 at 11:42 PM

LH

“*14 files added to the tribute wall*



Lorre Howell - October 30, 2024 at 10:12 AM

LR

“ *Laura had a wonderful life filled with loving family. The Jones family; Linda, Mike, Ginny, and Barbara; were blessed to have been a part of the extended family. We kids always called her "Our Other Mother".*

Our thoughts and prayers to everyone as you celebrate a very special Mom.

Much love,

Mike Jones and Linda Jones Robbins

Linda Jones Robbins - October 29, 2024 at 06:47 PM

EK

“ *I worked with Laura in the House from 1989-1998, she in Documents and I in various parts of the. Clerks Office. She taught me so much. She was always so very kind, VERY funny and smart as a whip. I think Laura Lee was the youngest grandchild at the time and she told me (newly married and planning a family) many cute stories of her. She and Bettye Davis were such a loving presence in that office. You were so blessed to have her. I hope you publish her stories some day. We would all like to read them.*

Erin Kaven - October 28, 2024 at 03:47 PM

LH

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Lorre Howell - October 27, 2024 at 08:35 AM

LH

“ 48 files added to the tribute wall



Lorre Howell - October 26, 2024 at 11:16 PM

LH

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Lorre Howell - October 26, 2024 at 10:57 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Laura Wills Bizzell.

October 26, 2024 at 09:17 AM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Laura Wills Bizzell.*



October 26, 2024 at 09:17 AM



“ *83 files added to the album Memories*



Elizabeth Howell - October 25, 2024 at 06:45 PM