



Martha Diane (Dee Dee) Johnston

January 6, 1942 - July 10, 2022

Our Mother...Diane, Martha, DeeDee, Baba D, Mom
Born 1942 in Miami Florida
Brothers...Mitch, Bob, Jimmy
Sister...Jan

Like all of the names for our mother she had a big life. Young love, four children, two businesses, five grandchildren (hence all of her names). One thing is certain she was adored by everyone she touched.

Mom's Story

She didn't come from much. At a very young age she had the burden of caring for her sickly parents and three siblings. She met our father at the age of sixteen. They had a rather short courtship and married at age 18. Baby girl #1 came along. Dad enlisted in the Navy shortly after they married so as to secure entry into college. They moved to Norfolk VA and Dad was shipped overseas. He was gone for almost a year. I would imagine this was definitely a hardship on both parents.

Eventually they moved back to Miami and along came baby girl #2. Mom became a dedicated homemaker. She learned how to sew and made most of our clothing, Halloween costumes, curtains etc.

Dad was accepted into FSU and decided on a degree in accounting. We moved to Tally and lived in a village off campus with other families. Then came baby #3. When Dad graduated, we moved back to Miami to be closer to family. Mom's immediate family situation was grim. Her sister had a baby girl. She was not a stable parent and needed help. And along came baby girl #4...she was adopted. We had a houseful as Mom's youngest brother, Jimmy, needed a home too so they took him in. I remember Mom tried hard to make her brother comfortable by decorating his room (formerly mine) painting it black with glow in the dark accents. She was so loving and kindhearted. With inspiration for Julia Child's cookbooks, she expanded her talents.

Dad wasn't happy with his job at Arthur Anderson long hours and intense amounts of work. He applied to a few companies in Tally and was offered a job. We moved back to Tallahassee and Jimmy remained in Miami. I'm sure this was a very tough situation for Mom.

We moved into a newly constructed two-story house with 4 bedrooms and big front and back yards. With fresh canvases, Mom began transforming our house into a showplace. She painted a huge mural on the living room wall and decorated our bedrooms expertly. We were so proud! She worked tirelessly in the yard laying sod and actually enjoyed it (us not so much)! There were adult-only dinner parties where she would start cooking days before the party. We kids would spy on the adults and pray there was enough dessert leftover. We all have fond memories of the themed birthday parties and the homemade pizza was a hit with all our friends.

She loved camping at the beach. Running became her passion. They had the opportunity to become the owners of Phidippides which was an athletic store in the bottom of Northwood Mall. There they met and made fast friends with the customers. She signed up to run her first marathon and made the Tally

Democrat sports page as she was the last runner to finish!

Eventually, the business proved to be too much for their marriage. Northwood Mall was negatively impacted after the opening of two other malls. They sold the business and the house and decided to part ways, however, they remained friends.

Mom dreamt of opening a restaurant and being a self-taught chef, she knew she could do it. The opportunity to take over an established sandwich shop became available. Not having restaurant experience, they brought her in and trained her. Her dream had come true. She worked long hours arriving at the crack of dawn. She expanded the menu by adding sophisticated items like the Salad Niçoise, the Greek and delicious made-from-scratch soup for each day. We all worked by her side for years at different times. It seemed everything she touched turned to gold. Her success resulted in three Hopkins restaurants!

Later in life, she turned to painting beautiful canvases. Framing them in the finest museum-quality frames and giving them to us as presents. There are more than a few people that have artwork that she gifted to them. This gave her much joy.

Diane, Martha, DeeDee, Baba D, Mom...you meant so much to us and we will miss you dearly. Luckily, the restaurants are booming and your presence is there as it is in the paintings we have from your hands. Love you to the moon and back.

I'd like to pay tribute to my sisters, Jennifer and Debbie, for taking Mom into your homes and caring for her in difficult times. I'm so grateful to you both.

Thank you Linda @ L&L for the last four years our mother was in your care.
Thank you for the caring, sweet beautiful nurses who took loving care of our
beloved Mother-Baba D. You all are angels and shine bright as stars.

Sorry this is so long. It was something I had to do. Dementia sucks!
Valerie

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUL **23**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory
200 John Knox Rd
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 385-2193

Tribute Wall

RB

“ I’m Valerie’s husband and DeeDee was my mother in law. What impressed me the most about her was she possessed a quiet determination.
She defined what she wanted.
She detailed how she was going to gain it. And she determined to achieve it.
A great example is her decision to own a restaurant without any prior experience. Owning a restaurant is incredibly hard and being successful at it is even harder. She started with one restaurant (Hopkins Eatery) and she ended up with three locations. She took the same approach to becoming an artist. She started with small canvas paintings and progressed to large, colorful and expressive works.
She will be missed but she always be remembered as a special person.

Rick Beecher - July 23, 2022 at 07:06 AM

RC

“ Richards, Mitchell & Cross, CPA's purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Martha Diane (Dee Dee) Johnston.



Richards, Mitchell & Cross, CPA's - July 22, 2022 at 09:55 AM

AW

“ *Angela and Larry Wolfe purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Martha Diane (Dee Dee) Johnston.*



Angela and Larry Wolfe - July 21, 2022 at 04:35 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Martha Diane (Dee Dee) Johnston.*



July 20, 2022 at 04:54 PM

CK

“ *What a beautiful obituary! DeeDee was kindest person I ever knew. I have fond memories of working with her and her daughters at Hopkins when it was by Barnacle Bill's. They were such a wonderful, hard working family. I'll always be grateful to my brother Richard for introducing me to them. Rest in peace DeeDee~
Corinne Madonia*

Corinne Madonia Kuhlmeier - July 20, 2022 at 03:44 PM

VB

Thank you so much Corinne! I think about those days we worked together often. Miss seeing you!

valerie beecher - July 21, 2022 at 02:58 PM

OO

“ My favorite memory of our BabaDee was the day that she taught my cousin Chloe and I how to paint! Chloe and I each picked a pretty item from around Baba’s house (there were countless pretty items) and she set us up with a canvas, easel, and paint. She showed us how to shade and create depth. She helped every step of the way and my painting still hangs above the supply closet at Hopkins’ on North Monroe. I was so proud of that painting and even brought it to school to show my art teacher and class (I did not mention to them that Baba basically did the entire thing for me). We are lucky to have had such an artistic and creative grandma. -Olivia

Olivia Ogden - July 18, 2022 at 12:55 PM

VB

I remember that! Chloes is hanging downstairs!

valerie beecher - July 18, 2022 at 01:04 PM

VB

“ Baba D- did some of her shopping for the restaurant every morning at Publix. She saw the same people daily that worked the early mornings. There was an elderly man she met one day. His name was Bennet (James). He was a lonely soul and offered to help Mom with her shopping. This lead to a great friendship and Had James running errands daily. James became feeble and couldn’t continue helping out. Mom looked after him and helped him until his passing. She was his angel- hoping they are meeting up in heaven as I write. Valerie-first child 💕🙏

valerie beecher - July 18, 2022 at 12:34 PM