



Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli

March 30, 1955 - December 30, 2020

It is with great sorrow to announce the passing of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli. Stephanie passed away in her home on December 30, 2020 with her children by her side after a hard fought eight-year battle with stage 4 brain cancer.

Stephanie was born in Painesville, Ohio on March 30, 1955, the second child of a family of four children, 3 girls and 1 boy. As a child she was adventurous and outgoing, easily making friends. Her parents taught her to Polka, a tradition passed down from her Slovenian heritage and she took piano lessons, eventually being able to play classically. She graduated from Mentor High School in 1973, and then continued her education in Ohio by enrolling in Lakeland Community College earning her Associates degree.

Deciding she had enough of the harsh and brutally cold winters, she took a leap of faith, and found herself traveling west to Arizona State University to complete her bachelor's degree, leaving all she knew back in Ohio. In 1978 she graduated with a bachelors in Criminal Justice and left Arizona for California with her future husband. Not long after moving to California and getting married, she gave birth to her first child, her son, Daniel. Two years later she would complete her family by having her daughter Andrea. They settled in the Sacramento area where she loved being a mother, teaching her children from an early age about empathy, and compassion, and most importantly treating others as they would wish to be treated. She loved to garden, take bike rides with her children, bake, sing, and dance. She sang in the choir and was extremely active in the small church in her community of Rancho Cordova, where she made many lifelong friends.

Although life in California was going well, in 1989 she found herself moving east to Tarpon Springs, Florida, due to her husband being relocated for his job. Soon after moving to Florida she would separate from her husband, and while having many jobs over the years ranging from Juvenile detention counselor, to Substitute teacher, she would start with the City of Clearwater's parking/engineering division, which would unbeknownst to her, become a career of 21-years. Starting the job in 1992, she would retire in 2013, working her way up from an entry level position, to Parking Manager. When she wasn't at work,

she could be found outside doing things around her home, from raising chickens to general upkeep on a 2-acre yard. Most of all in her free time she loved to dance, as she never needed convincing to go listen to live music (especially blues), and dance the night away. She could be found on any given night at the now defunct Skippers Smokehouse dancing and listening to some of her favorite blues acts. She also loved the beach, boating, baking, and traveling.

Ask anyone that has ever met Stephanie and they will tell you the same thing, that she is one of the nicest people they have ever met. She loved her children deeply, and was always there to give advice and help guide them as a mother, and as a friend. She was funny, witty, smart, independent, hardworking, and wanted to make the world a better place. Rest in Peace Stephanie, you are free.

Stephanie is survived by her son Daniel Stefanelli, Daughter Andrea Passamonte, and grandson Leonardo Stefanelli.

In lieu of flowers the family asks that you please give donations to either of the following charities - <https://www.stjude.org/> or <https://www.metromin.org/> . Immediately following the service please join the family at Craft Street Kitchen , address is 3153 Curlew Rd. Oldsmar, FL. 34677.

Events

JAN 11 **Gathering of Family and Friends** 02:00PM - 03:00PM

11

Curlew Hills Funeral Home

1750 Curlew Road, Palm Harbor, FL, US, 34683

JAN 11 **Service** 03:00PM

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Curlew Hills Funeral Home

1750 Curlew Road, Palm Harbor, FL, US, 34683

Comments



“ Stephanie was the most wonderful person I've ever known and I will never forget all the happiness she brought to everyone who met her.



Louis Turaniczo - April 21 at 08:31 PM



“ What a tragedy to lose Stephanie. I had the privilege of working with her at the City of Clearwater. Stephanie was a pleasure to work with - very professional and good natured. My sincere condolences to her family. Stephanie fought the cancer courageously with a good disposition - someone to be admired.

Kevin Garriott - January 11 at 12:36 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli.



January 11 at 11:09 AM



“ Stephanie was such a pleasure to be around. Always positive and generously kind to everyone she knew. We send our deepest condolences to her family, especially her brother and sister, Matt and Madeline. We know this is such a huge loss. Our fathers were close friends through the American Slovenian club in Fairport which began our connection as kids. She was always someone I admired and respected. RIP sweet Stephanie- I will think of you with each dance. Brian and Susan

sbasel57@gmail.com - January 10 at 06:38 PM



“ Stephanie was a wonderful friend to have, so cheerful even when things didn't seem to warrant cheerfulness! A blessing to me and I will always remember the fun times we had together. Looking forward to seeing her again someday in heaven?

Janice King - January 10 at 01:12 PM



“ I WILL see Stephanie in heaven. Oh goodness so glad I came back and saw that mistaken question mark typo! No, I will see her again someday!

Janice King - January 11 at 10:23 AM



“ Janice King purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli.



Janice King - January 10 at 01:04 PM



“ I worked with Stephanie for years at the City of Clearwater. She was kind and witty, always a professional. I miss you and may you rest in peace. My condolences to her family.

Wayne Wells - January 10 at 11:18 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli.



January 09 at 05:05 PM



“ Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli.



January 09 at 10:41 AM



“ Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli.



January 09 at 10:23 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli.



January 08 at 08:52 PM



“ You will truly be missed Stephanie. It was a pleasure working with you at the City of Clearwater and the Florida Parking Association. We will never forget you. May you Rest in Peace. Adrian Mandreanu

Adrian Mandreanu - January 08 at 11:39 AM



“ I had the pleasure of meeting Stephanie while she was part of the Florida Parking and Transportation Association board of directors. She was such a wonderful and caring human being, always ready to help any of her colleagues as a true team player that she was. She will be sorely missed. I offer my sincerest condolences to her family. May she rest in peace. Chester Escobar

Chester Escobar - January 08 at 10:38 AM



“ Stephanie was a great person and so much fun to hang out with at FPA. She will truly be missed. Rest in peace Stephanie and fly with the angels. We will miss you.

Juli Edwards - January 08 at 10:15 AM



“ Stephanie became my very first friend at college when we found ourselves next-door neighbors in our dorm at Arizona State University. How fortunate for me. Smart, witty, teasing, fun-loving, kind--that's Stephanie. She raised two good people whose devotion to and care of their mother have moved me. Daniel and Andrea, I send love and light. Rest in peace, old friend.

Julie Campbell - January 08 at 08:25 AM



“ I worked with Stephanie for many years at the City of Clearwater. She was one of the sweetest and most compassionate people I've ever known. I am grateful to have known her and will miss her. My thoughts and prayers are with her family and all of her many friends. God Bless!

Tim Kurtz

Tim Kurtz - January 08 at 07:56 AM



“ I had the pleasure of working with Stephanie at the City of Clearwater. She was always very kind and helpful and would lighten up any room. I am very grateful to have known her. My thoughts and prayers are with the family. May God Bless! Lori Vogel

Lori Vogel - January 07 at 01:11 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli.



January 07 at 09:27 AM



“ I had the pleasure of working with Stephanie at the City of Clearwater. She was always smiling, always positive and saw the good in everyone. She brought sunshine to a room. She will be missed.



Paula Chaplinsky - January 06 at 06:54 PM



“ I am so saddened by the passing of Stephanie. She was a beautiful person and made everyone feel special. I knew her through the City of Clearwater and the Florida Parking Association. Everyone loved her; the world will miss her beautiful smile and personality. You can tell what a great person she is was by the way her two children stood by her these last 8 years. They were all blessed. Rest In Peace sweet Steph, your work on earth is done.
Marilyn Etheridge



marilyn Etheridge - January 06 at 09:36 AM



“ I worked with Stephanie in Parking at the City of Clearwater. She was smart, sweet and worked so hard! I enjoyed working with Stephanie. Despite her long battle with cancer, Stephanie always seemed to keep positive. She will be greatly missed! Our prayers are with Daniel and Andrea at this time. Kim and Anthony Feeney

Kim and Anthony Feeney - January 05 at 09:16 PM



“ I remember Stephanie from what now seems like a lifetime ago. We were young girls growing up in a fun filled neighborhood where we all just played together and were always welcome in each other's homes. I have such fond memories of that time so long ago
Even though I haven't seen her in so long, my heart hurts for a special person in my memories.
Hugs to all of you !
Eve Idnurm Behrens



Eve Behrens - January 05 at 05:28 PM



“ We grew up together and will always have memories of the joking around she was always well known for!! A sense of humor and a quick smile and giggle is what I will remember Step by. God bless and fly with angels.

celine dunlap - January 05 at 02:25 PM



“ Melba Davidson lit a candle in memory of Stephanie Zalar Stefanelli



Melba Davidson - January 04 at 12:48 PM



“ Beautiful Friend you will be missed. Though times may change & years may pass - one thing will remain, so 'thankful that I knew you'...
Daniel & Andrea, your selfless caring & unconditional love during your Mother's illness is more than amazing.
Sending love & prayers of comfort.
Like a bird singing in the rain, let grateful memories survive in this time of sorrow.
-Robert Louis Stevenson-

Melba Davidson - January 04 at 12:47 PM



“ My heart aches. Stephanie has been such a bright spot of love in my life for so many years. I am grateful for the 8 years we've had since her diagnosis, more time with her than I ever hoped. I have so much respect and gratitude for Daniel and Andrea and all they've done to care for their mother and to make her happy. I love you both.

Lori Hise

Lori Hise - January 04 at 09:31 AM