



Deborah Ellen Meisenberg

JAN 5, 1956 - JAN 26, 2019



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Deborah Ellen Meisenberg, 63, of Fort Myers, FL, passed away January 26th, 2019, at 10:35 p.m. with her family by her side. She was born to Paul and Dorothy Leoci, January 5th, 1956, in Astoria, a neighborhood of Queens, New York. Deborah graduated from Mineola High School in 1974, received a BA in criminal justice from St. John's University in 1979 followed by a JD from Bridgeport Law School in 1982. She married the late Jay Meisenberg in 1982, and they lived together in Fort Myers for 19 years. Deborah is survived by her twin sons: Paul and Jeremy Meisenberg, both of Fort Lauderdale, FL. She is also survived by her parents: Paul & Dorothy Leoci, of New Port Richey, FL, and her sister, brother-in-law and three nephews: Barbara, Kenneth, Jonathan, Brian, & Matthew Stander, of Milton, GA. Deborah was predeceased by her loving husband in 2008. Deborah was an accomplished attorney, practicing family law in Florida for the last 26 years. She was immensely proud of her family, and leaves behind nothing but beautiful memories. As her health declined, she often repeated the quote: "I'm not afraid of death because I was supposed to die at 18. I had a great life." Funeral services will be held on Friday, February 1st, 2019 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Temple Beth El located at 16225 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, Florida 33908. The burial will take place at 12:30 p.m. at Fort Myers Memorial Gardens Funeral Home and Cemetery located at 1589 Colonial Blvd. Fort Myers, FL 33907. Family and friends will sit shiva immediately following the burial and have a shiva minyan (a prayer service at the house) Saturday from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Meisenberg home at 14220 Royal Harbour Ct., #607, located in Gulf Harbour Yacht & Country Club. Please make donations in support of the American Respiratory Care Foundation <https://arcfoundation.org> or the Brain Injury Association of America <https://www.biausa.org>, in lieu of sending flowers.



MK

Mary E. Kish lit a candle in honor of Deborah.



I am in complete shock and so sad, I went to Deb's FB page to wish her a Happy Birthday and there I saw some oddly spoken words about "missing" and "remembering" from some of her other friends. That made me look up in the Fort Myers media to see if I could find my worst thought; and there I did. I am SO very sorry that I did not know sooner. I left Lee County area in 2009 and Debbie and I touched base a few times a year. Life happens and we all know that she was always on the go. She had many wonderful friends and a loving family. She was a heart that was broken by fate and never truly got over it. While she and her amazing husband Jay fought for his life and sporadic, multiple tragedies, Debbie and I would run into each other at Lee Mem Hospital; me going through my own cancer/chemo issues. Deb always seemed to know what to say to me and lend me some of her insightful strength to get me through whatever fear I was facing that day, altho we were on the opposite side of the Courtroom during our debates and feuds. She cared deeply for her clients and wanted to see them exonerated for whatever their allegations were. I was her adversary within the child welfare realm. We shared clients; she trying to get their children returned to them, I fighting to make the home safe for their return. We sometime argued facts until the Judge would just smile at us and say "looks like we are all fighting for the same thing, so why are we fighting each other?" Child welfare was the "prosecution" {do these tasks and get clean, sober, safe... or your kids do not return home}. Debbie was "defense" {her clients swearing they did not commit the allegations and wanted to be free from the stigma of abuser, addict or neglecter}. No matter what, the minute we left the courtroom, we were no longer on opposite teams- we may not have been the best of friends, but we certainly were far from enemies. One time Debbie asked to make "an appointment" with me to discuss a case/issue that was close to her heart but not on her docket. I was intrigued and curious. Here this knowledgeable and courageous attorney at law wanted to pick my brains about child welfare. I was honored. It turned out to be a discussion about a little girl names Isabella. She adored this child and cried through most of our discussions. I gave her what I could from deep down inside and also prayed with her that everything would fall into place. I left the job for LOA due to my cancer and never heard anything more about it. One day she saw me, gave me a big "thumb's down" and I put 2 & 2 together. I know she adored her boys, Paul & Jeremy and I know she loved her family and friends. I also know that she loved life and wine. She made sure she always had a sip of both almost every day. When you work within the ugly room of child welfare, especially defending parents you know have done harm, it is all you can do to get 'out' and smell Life and sip Wine. Debbie is finally with Jay, where she longed to be - in his arms and dancing on clouds. Fort Myers will miss the smile and the frown that Debbie shared daily. I send my condolences to all her family and all her friends. I say I am truly sorry for not knowing that she passed away on January 26th, 2019 - just goes to show you that our lives do go on when others are grieving. I know how many I have lost and how much I have grieved, especially in 2019. It was a bad year for me in the losses. In a way I am glad I did not know about Debbie's passing at the time; it would have lent to much more grief that I would have. Debbie, Rest Peacefully. I like to think that they are not just stars in the sky, but trillions of islands that are filled with all the wonderful people that we love and lose; they sit up there and shine down on us at night ~ protecting us from afar. May you & your family find comfort and peace in all the years of smiles and hugs that you shared before you lost him; Rest Peacefully Pop Pop ~ continue your love through Shine. Mary E. Kish



Tribute Wall

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MK

January 5 at 9:52 AM

BS

Barbara Stander September 19 at 12:34 PM

I just found this beautiful note ! Thank you for your kind words. It sounds like you knew my sister well. Barbara Stander

DM

Delano Mcdade posted:

Thank you Deb for what you did for my Son and I. I'm sorry to find that you have left us. You were a great attorney and I apologize for beating up your copier all of the time.

July 21 at 12:44 PM

ET

Elizabeth Temkin posted:

Debbie was a formidable opponent in court and made me a better attorney. Her friendship and mentoring was a gift I will always cherish. She inspired me to live each day to the fullest, no matter what life brings. She was selfless, always caring for others first. I miss her dearly and wish to offer my sincerest condolences for your loss.

February 5 at 8:48 AM

MS

Margie Schumacher posted:

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Leoci, Barbara, Paul and Jeremy, I am saddened to hear about the loss of your daughter, sister, and mother. Deb lived each moment to its fullest. She inspired many of us with her amazing will to push-on. I have very fond memories of our time together. I will miss her. She is now with the love of her life, Jay and no longer struggling with her health. Prayers of strength to each one of you during this difficult time.

January 29 at 6:01 AM

MD

Maria Donor posted:

Dear Paul and Jeremy, my deepest condolences to you. You do not know me I am a friend of Barbara Stander for many years. Barbara I am so sorry for your loss of your sister. If I were closer I would be there for you. I know the feeling I lost both of my sisters and parents. I know how close you were to Deborah. I was not close with mine. Remember all the good she has done.

January 28 at 12:51 PM



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Sue Losey posted:

Dear Paul and Jeremy, Our whole family is sincerely sorry for the loss to you of your dear Mother. We held her the highest esteem. She was always so kind hearted and seemed to always be smiling. We have many and only sweet memories of her and your family.

January 27 at 6:36 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Deborah by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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