



## Deborah "Debi" Lynn Kistler

July 31, 1949 - April 18, 2020

This story is dedicated to the wonderful life led by Mrs Deborah Lynn Kistler. She is survived by her partner Chad Sparks, her brother David Gates, sister Shelley Gates, daughter Sandra Cavanee, son Cody Osborne, five grandchildren, two great grandchildren, numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of long-time friends.

Debi's story begins in Southern California, 1949, but her time there was limited. The family moved from the city life of Santa Monica to a farm in Barstow where she lived the country life. Growing up in that farm house instilled a lifelong love of a culture that values hard work, dedication to family, a love for animals and a desire to nurture the ground beneath her feet. In her later years she returned to those values. Debi spent her golden years with her partner Chad Sparks, returning to a little farm house to raise animals and work the land.

Between these two farm houses was her journey that reached from Hawaii, Australia and Germany. Her father, Bernie David Gates worked for airlines around the world. This took her family to Hawaii first where Debi spent several years in grade school at Kailua Elementary on the island of Oahu. A fish out of water, she told her kids that "it wasn't easy being a fair skinned, blonde haired girl among the many Hawaiian kids."

After a few years work again led her father and family to Australia then eventually Germany, where Debi and her sister Karen spent several notable teenage years flirting with German boys. Leaning on her German heritage she fit in despite her Pacific coast upbringing.

In her adolescence Debi made her way home to the California, resettling back in the just north of San Francisco in the city of Tiburon. After graduating high school there she started her own family with two daughters, Christy and Sandy with her first John Bauer. After a few years she left the city once again, moving into her dad's cabin way up in the mountains of Colorado where she had her son Cody with her Tom Osborne.

The formative years of her children were spent in this mountain cabin. Memories were made beside a beautiful mountain river through the summer and building six foot high snow tunnels in the winter. Fly fishing on the Taylor River at The Gandy Ranch and riding horses and jeeping in our grandpa's old Willies Jeep.

Mom had great stories from these years. She recalled through laughter that "I taught you Cody how to eat with your left hand cause it was not only easier for me but also it was opposite of the ancient tradition where people used to think left-handed tendencies were evil and forced them to be right-handed as a cure."

Sandra and mom also spent many summers riding and competing in horse shows together. They would enjoy a girl's weekend and horse camp. If Sandy could stay on the unbroken horses while mom trained them in the round pin Sandy would get a new pair of Levi 501's.

Time and life eventually carried Debi back to a farm in Paonia, Colorado with Willy Kistler. Mom loved her time there raising horses, cows, peacocks,

turkeys, chickens, dogs and cats, one of which we named "32 toes" since it had an extra toe on each paw. "24 toes" doesn't have a good ring to it.

As her children grew older Debi went back to school and learned how to be a welder. She was an independent person and wanted to make enough money to support her kids on her own.

Debi's life brought her both joy and pain. The losses of her oldest daughter Christy Kistler in 1986, her mother Harriet Ann Harwood, and her sister Karen Brach weighed heavy on her, but Mom survived these painful years by working through it. She never let it slip how much she suffered, as she continued to love her remaining children and helped them grow up.

Over these years mom made her final move to Oregon, once again embracing her country roots by purchasing a small farm in Terrebonne. Showing her strength and dedication she worked in town, raised her youngest son Cody, and even managed to take care of the farm. Through these years she even got to travel the world again, and visiting Hawaii, Israel and Puerto Rico.

Left to an empty nest after raising her children she took a new job at Lance Air building airplanes. This is where she met her final love, Chad, and settled down with him on a new farm out in Crooked River Ranch. She found a lot of happiness and love in life and her retirement, spending time with the people and animals she cared deeply for. Her declining health made travel once again difficult but she still made it back to Hawaii for Cody's graduation and then to Colorado to see Sandy and her sister Karen's children Michelle Davis.

Our mom was surrounded by family and close friends in her final days and we will cherish those moments with her as well as her sense of humor, even when she didn't feel well. Painting her nails, brushing her long silver hair and

holding her hands. Letting her know we would all be brave and strong. Chad would take good care of her dogs Queso, Gator and chickens and the turkey and Joann her dear friend would take care of her horse.

Mom was the best. Her love for her children, her sister's children, her grandchildren, and even great grandchildren was evident. She taught us all many lessons and told us stories that will allow her to live on with us forever.

A celebration of Debi's life will be held at a later date.

Memorial contributions can be made in her name to any charity of your choice.

Redmond Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the family.

541-548-3219

# Tribute Wall



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Redmond Memorial Chapel - July 12, 2023 at 02:24 PM



“ Deborah "Debi" Lynn Kistler

Bend Funeral Homes - April 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM