



Jenny Lee Hartford (Vreeland)

February 19, 1962 - December 29, 2023

Jenny Lee Hartford (Vreeland), 61, of Astor, FL, and Schenectady, NY, passed away unexpectedly on December 29, 2023.

Jenny was born in Albany, NY, on February 19, 1962, to Susan (Burkle) Smith and John R Smith II.

As a young girl, Jenny was always curious. She loved to catch sunfish early in the morning so they could be in the frying pan for breakfast. She loved exploring the shore, playing flute, and causing mischief.

At 17, she got married to James F. Vreeland III and together they had four children. She later became a mother to two children through a long-term relationship.

She was a stay-at-home mother for several years. She valued each moment with her kids. She provided warmth and challenging counsel to them as they grew.

Jenny dropped out of high school as a teenager, but later returned to school and got her GED on credit hours through SCCC. She started taking classes at Union College and graduated with a BS in Mathematics. She went on to get her MS in Education with a minor in Computer Science.

She wanted to change the world. And she did. She was tireless in her dedication to helping those less fortunate than herself.

She worked as a counselor at Waitt House, an institution dedicated to the care of teenagers in the foster system. When the facility closed, she took one of the young men into her own home until he came of age.

She was a drug counselor at Conifer Park. She ran an afterschool program at Carver Community Center. She loved Schenectady. The community, the diversity, the over 90 languages spoken. Schenectady was her home and heart.

After finishing her Master's, she finally became a teacher. It was her dream work. She was a resource to every student and family she met. She cherished working at Steinmetz Education Center, helping students succeed when others had found them too difficult to tolerate. She later worked at Mont Pleasant.

After a rocky road to early retirement precipitated by the onset of debilitating mental illness, Jenny rallied. She restarted her life. A Phoenix rising, once again, from the ashes of a previous life.

She started going to camp at McConchie's in Galway, NY.

She studied permaculture to design food gardens that were responsible and efficient.

She became a snowbird in Astor, FL. She met her dear husband, Wayne Hartford.

She was a member of the Masonic Temple in Schenectady. She said she joined so that she would have an after-hours place to drink but she took this organization seriously.

She was an incredible cook and introduced friends and family to numerous world cuisines. She won numerous grants for the organizations she worked for.

Mom created community everywhere she went. Everything she did, she did hard. And she did most of it well.

Her grandchildren were the light of her life.

Jenny is survived by her husband, Wayne Hartford; her children, Sara Bush, Chelsea Abè (Colby), Jake Vreeland (Danielle), Amelia Vreeland-Wolff (Justin); and Kirsten Chuley; grandchildren, Jacob and Jace Vreeland, Dietrich, Leeloo, Reese, and Penelope Abè; Zander, Zephyr, and Zedric Wolff. Her mother, Susan Smith; brother, John R. Smith; nephew, John R. Smith; brother-in-law, Brett Chapin. She is also survived by Jahonna Chaires.

Our family offers condolences to the many lives she touched who cannot be listed here.

She was predeceased by her husband, James F. Vreeland III; and her son, Erik Chuley; her close friend, Mae Williams; and her father.

The family will have a private viewing. A Celebration of Life will be held at the Astor VFW, 55620 Veterans Dr, Astor, FL 32102, at 12pm on Saturday, January 13th, 2024. A repast will be held at a later date in Schenectady, NY.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JAN 13. 12:00 PM (ET)

Astor Vfw
55620 Veterans Dr.
Astor, FL 32102

Tribute Wall

DC

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Daniel Chapin - July 17, 2025 at 08:34 PM

DC

“ Jenny, always believed in me - I was glad we got to talk again in the last few months... I just miss her and cereal in the morning. I'll read a chapter of *The Prophet* for ya sis... -Danny



Daniel Chapin - July 17, 2025 at 08:33 PM

RO

“ Love you Jenny 💔💔



Raeann Trifilo - Olds - January 12, 2024 at 07:48 AM

RO

You will always be in my heart. The many days we spent together with or without the kids will be forever cherished and held very dear to my heart Heaven definitely got an angel and now you can fly high my friend 🙏💕 love you forever 💔💔

Raeann Trifilo - Olds - January 12, 2024 at 07:53 AM

TL

“ Jenny lived across the street from me in Mt Pleasant when I was a young girl and would watch me occasionally. She always has a smile on her face and a warm hug. My condolences to the family.
Tara Livingston

Tara Livingston - January 11, 2024 at 10:11 AM



“ Elise VanCise lit a candle in memory of Jenny Lee Hartford (Vreeland)



Elise VanCise - January 10, 2024 at 06:41 PM



Jenny was always a joy to see at the library and we'll miss her beautiful light. Much love and prayers for the family during this time.

Elise VanCise - January 10, 2024 at 06:43 PM

TC

“ Death is not extinguishing the light, It is only putting out the lamp because the dawn has come. ... 🦋

Hugs and Prayers 🙏

Tara & Rick Collins - January 09, 2024 at 06:37 PM



“ *Serene Reflections Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Jenny Lee Hartford (Vreeland).



January 08, 2024 at 05:15 PM