



Sharon Hillebrandt

April 11, 1937 - April 10, 2023

Sharon Bennett Harrison Hillebrandt

Sharon J. Bennett was born the second child of William and Josephine (Greenfield) Bennett, born on April 11, 1937, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Growing up they moved to several areas in Michigan, and for a short time, Washington state. She married William Harrison in 1953. They were the parents of four children: Sally, Victoria, Darla and William. She was a successful beautician and owned, along with her husband, the Harrison House Salons in Marshall and Urbandale, Michigan. She moved to Lantana, Florida and became a real estate agent. She and her husband eventually divorced in 1988. She re-married in 1996 to Gerald Hillebrandt, who died in 1999. In 2005 Sharon retired to Paisley, Florida.

Sharon's life was full of adventure, travel and exploration. Her idea of fun was canoeing in the middle of winter, camping in the snow, and training with her children for a two-week backpacking trip to Isle Royal by carrying cast iron skillets in backpacks. She obtained her Captain's license in order to take her family on a sailing trip through various deserted islands in the Andros chain of the Bahamas. She never hesitated to load up the car and go, whether to pop off to the beach or start a thousand-mile trip. When traveling she always wanted to go see what was down "that" road — and she would. She loved to stop and read every historical sign that was passed (well, they were never passed until they were read). She was a true adrenaline 'junkie,' loving the

fastest and scariest of rides — scary to her children at least, but never fast enough for her. She was a woman that, in her 70s, went para-sailing one week in Florida and a few weeks later was zip-lining on one of the longest and fastest lines in Boulder City, Nevada. She was never about the destination, but what she would discover on the way.

Sharon had a love of genealogy and was a lifelong member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Seminole Chapter. In 1998 she was elected to various positions within the DAR: National Representative - VAVS National Advisory Committee, National Vice Chair - DAR Service for Veterans, State Chairman - Service for Veteran-Patients, and Chapter Chaplain. She also helped run the Veteran's Thrift Store and spent a lot of time working with veterans at the VA Medical Center in West Palm Beach, Florida. In 2000 she became the Chapter Regent. In 2001 she became the National Chair - DAR Service for Veterans. From 2004-2007 she was the Advisor for the DAR Service for Veterans. In 2004 she was named a Chapter Honorary Regent of the Seminole Chapter. She was also a founding member of the DAR Heritage Club.

Sharon was involved for several years with the Republican Party. She spent many hours making phone calls to get people to vote, no matter the party. She also spent a lot of time fundraising.

After retiring to Paisley, Sharon joined the board of and frequently volunteered with the Trout Lake Nature Center in Eustis, Florida. She loved teaching the children that visited. She would find various flora and fauna for the children's touch table so they could obtain a better appreciation for them. She knew every plant, animal and insect on the property and loved teaching about them all. She was always excited to find something new, and she was involved with many of the outside activities and fundraisers. She would take her grandchildren and great-grandchildren there to help out, or even just into her

backyard to see what critters they could find. She gained a deep appreciation for the nature around her — although she didn't care much for the armadillos in her yard.

When she first began showing serious signs of Alzheimer's disease, she was taken into the home of her son William, his wife Amy and their family. When it seemed she might need to go to a nursing home for more advanced care, she was instead lovingly cared for in-home by her daughter Victoria, where she remained until she peacefully passed away on April 10, 2023.

Sharon was preceded in death by her parents, her daughter Sally and her two sisters Roberta and Annette. She is survived by her children Victoria, Darla and William (Amy); her brother Jay (Joann) Bennett, her adopted brother Donald (Barbara) Bennett; her grandchildren Shannon, Sara, Ashley, Kirsten, Justin, Ron, Emily, Mellodi, Thomas, Christian, Delaney, Alexandria and Will; 15 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great-grandchildren, and several loved nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be on Sunday, April 16 from 3 to 5 pm at Beyers Funeral Home (279 South Central Ave, Umatilla). The funeral will be held at Beyers Funeral Home on Monday, April 17, 2023 at 10:30 am. A graveside service will be held at 2 p.m. later that day at Glen Haven Memorial Park (2300 Temple Drive, Winter Park) where she will rest next to her husband Gerald

Donations in her memory can be made to the University of Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center, 2101 Commonwealth Blvd, Ste. D, Ann Arbor, MI 48105 or the Trout Lake Nature Center, 520 East CR 44, Eustis, FL 32736-251.

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 16. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Beyers Funeral Home and Crematory - Umatilla
279 South Central Avenue
Umatilla, FL 32784
(352) 669-2146

Funeral

APR 17. 10:30 AM (ET)

Beyers Funeral Home and Crematory - Umatilla
279 South Central Avenue
Umatilla, FL 32784
(352) 669-2146

Graveside Service

APR 17. 2:00 PM.

Glen Haven Memorial Park

Tribute Wall



“ *Beyers Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Sharon Hillebrandt*



Beyers Funeral Home - April 16, 2023 at 11:35 AM



“ *So sorry to hear of Sharon's passing, she was always such a delight when she would come into the Library. Prayers for her Family.*
Sherry
@ Paisley Library

Sherry Scheller - April 15, 2023 at 09:26 PM

ET

“ I had the great fortune to meet and work with Sharon when I first began as the Trout Lake Nature Center's Executive Director 9 years ago. Sharon was a character that often stopped by to visit. She was in charge of our hospitality committee for many of our events, Friday Night Naturalist programs and more.

You never knew what Sharon might bring to Trout Lake. Once she cut the tail off road kill to provide a raccoon tail for our touch table and was know to bring other nature treasures to share with our visitors. She often visited with her dearly loved grandson and other family members. She dearly loved her family and was proud to share the Center with family and friends.

I value my many conversations with Sharon about her life and adventures. She will be missed by many.

Eileen Tramontana

Eileen Tramontana - April 12, 2023 at 11:40 PM