



## Debby Norman

November 1, 1949 - December 4, 2020

Dr. Debby Norman, known to many as Ms. Norman, Mama Debby or Aunt Debby, Age 71 of White House, Tennessee, passed away quietly December 4th, 2020 in Sonoma, California. She was born November 1, 1949 to Joe & Gloria (Marchetti) McAlister.

She is preceded in death by her parents and sister, Derina Lassiter (Carl) of Greenbrier. She is survived by her husband of 16 years, Joe Lohner, White House, Tennessee; brother, Michael McAlister, Madison, Tennessee; daughters, Star Laurence, Sonoma, California, Tara Duncan (Shawn), Murfreesboro, and Heather Norman, Gallatin; niece, DeAnna Walls (Michael), White House, Tennessee, numerous nieces and nephews; six grandchildren- Falynn, Blake, Alex, Glorie, Ava and Sloan; and one great-grandchild, Rhett.

Dr. Norman was born in Nashville, Tennessee and lived throughout her life not only in the Nashville area but also cities such as Miami, Florida and Ponchatoula, Louisiana. While her father worked for the United Nations, they lived around the world in countries like Lagos, Nigeria of Africa; and Madrid, Spain where she graduated from High School. This inspired her lifelong love of travel. She longed to return to Africa and especially Northern Italy, where her mothers family originated.

She was called to teach at a very young age. She received her undergraduate

from Belmont University and began her career at Hendersonville High School and then on to White House High School. After receiving her Masters Degree at Western Kentucky University, she taught at White House Middle School for 25 years. Her love of teaching was matched equally by her love of learning. As the perpetual student herself, she achieved her Doctorate degree at Tennessee State University. Her constant need to push herself and look for new challenges led her to begin teaching at Hunters Lane High School, and also MNPS Virtual School (one of the first online accredited High Schools in the Nashville area) where she finally retired. Over the years, she taught at many colleges/universities including: Volunteer State Community College, Trevecca Nazarene University, David Lipscomb University, University of Phoenix, Draughons Junior College, Tennessee State University and Nashville State Community College. She was always motivated and had a child-like enthusiasm for teaching and learning; she loved poetry, books, and hearing about the latest world news events. She loved her daughters, grandchildren and new great-grandchild more than life itself. She treasured her students, friends, colleagues, and her whole extended family.

Debby influenced everyone she met throughout all walks of life. Because of her strong spirit and personality, you never had to guess what she was thinking. She was sincerely honest and had a way with helping others find comfort/guidance in her presence. She was recognized everywhere by former students approaching her to say how she impacted their life. It would be some funny and/or amazing story often being asked, "Do you remember me?" or told, "You were my favorite teacher!" Her influence was great and she will be happy to know that the legacy she left behind will be paid forward.

Remember her with laughter, for she had an infectious sense of humor and love of life. Our mother will be missed more than we can adequately describe. Our only solace is that she is reunited with her dear parents-Mama Gloria and Daddy Joe and her sister Derina. She will finally get the much deserved rest

she needs from all the hard work she did here on Earth. Her energy is boundless, and she will continue to guide us in ways only we will know in our hearts- throughout eternity.

Her visitation will be: Thursday 4:00-7:00pm at Austin & Bell White House, Tennessee; Friday 10:00am-2:00pm, 4:00-6:00pm at Austin & Bell White House, Tennessee. 6:00pm The Praying of the Rosary for all who would like to attend in the Chapel at Austin & Bell White House, Tennessee. Saturday 10:00am family welcoming guests in the church vestibule followed by 11:00am Funeral Mass at St. Josephs Catholic Church 1225 Gallatin Pike. Interment will follow at Spring Hill Cemetery 5110 Gallatin Pike South, Nashville, Tennessee 37216. Serving as pallbearers: Shawn Duncan, Blake Norman, Michael Walls, Andy McAlister, Troy Jernigan, Clint Cooper, Christopher Bittner and Noah Reamy. Honorary pallbearers: All former students. ARRANGEMENTS ENTRUSTED TO AUSTIN & BELL 533 Highway 76 White House, TN 37188 (615)672-5000 [www.austinandbell.com](http://www.austinandbell.com)

Turn again to life, Mary Lee Hall

If I should die, and leave you here awhile...Be not like others sore undone, who keep long vigils by the silent dust. For my sake, turn again to life, and smile, nerving thy heart and trembling hand to do something to comfort other hearts than thine. Complete these dear unfinished tasks of mine, and I, perchance, may therein comfort you.

Cemetery

Spring Hill

5110 Gallatin Pike

Nashville TN 37216

US

Visitation

Thursday, December 17, 2020

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Austin & Bell Funeral Home White House

533 TN-76

White House TN 37188

US

615-672-5000

615-672-1274

Visitation

Friday, December 18, 2020

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Austin & Bell Funeral Home White House

533 TN-76

White House TN 37188

US

615-672-5000

615-672-1274

Visitation

Friday, December 18, 2020

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Austin & Bell Funeral Home White House

533 TN-76

White House TN 37188

US

615-672-5000

615-672-1274

Rosary

Friday, December 18, 2020

6:00 PM -

Austin & Bell Funeral Home White House

533 TN-76

White House TN 37188

US

615-672-5000

615-672-1274

Funeral Mass

Saturday, December 19, 2020

11:00 AM -

St. Joseph Catholic Church  
1225 Gallatin Pike S  
Madison TN 37115  
US

Funeral Home Austin & Bell Funeral Home White House  
533 TN-76  
White House TN - 37188  
US  
615-672-5000  
615-672-1274

# Tribute Wall

JB

“ I absolutely love Debby Norman. I met her at Hunters Lane High School when I served as a consultant with the EE program. She always confided in me, and we shared many happy times together. I am saddened over her passing. I also had the privilege of working with her daughter Tara and son-in-law Shawn in the sale of purchase of home. My home goes out to them and and the family.  
*Judi Bell*

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**Judi Bell** - December 19, 2020 at 05:50 PM

GU

“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Debby Norman.

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**Guest** - December 17, 2020 at 11:24 PM

SL

“ She loved you like a daughter and she always knew you would help look after me. Thank you for your friendship and for your heart - and coming to rescue me from the turmoil and suffering I was feeling in California *yellow\_heart*

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**Star Laurence** - December 17, 2020 at 12:25 AM

JL

“ Looks so much like Star in this photo. No doubt they are kindred spirits. *John*

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**John Laurence** - December 16, 2020 at 03:07 PM

TC

“ I have so many fond memories of Ms Norman mostly beginning with Tamela Honey..... Memories and advice that I will cherish forever - We shared numerous conversations about life and death. We laughed and we cried. She had a heart of gold and would keep our conversations private. She told me along time ago that one day when she passed away to always smile when I said her name... She was a sweet, loving and kind human being as well as a role model for me when I was a teenager. I will miss that woman something terrible but have peace knowing that she is resting in Heaven with her Parents and Sister. I will smile every time I say her name!! Star, Tara & Heather - She loved each of you equally - but each in a different way. John 1334

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**Tamela Campbell** - December 15, 2020 at 11:34 PM

AH

“ 75 files added to the album Life Tributes

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**Austin & Bell Funeral Home** - December 15, 2020 at 06:24 PM

TD

“ Thank you so much for your kind words. I love that saying about the light. It is so true!

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**Tara Duncan** - December 14, 2020 at 05:12 PM

TD

“ Thank you so much for your kind, heartfelt words. I'm so grateful she had you as a friend Mary and had a lasting touch on your life. That is the way we will all carry on.

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**Tara Duncan** - December 14, 2020 at 05:11 PM

NA

“ *Being teacher neighbors and confidants all those years at the Lane, you helped me to keep my sanity during the rough days. Sharing your ideas with me, we always knew we had each other's backs and made a great teaching team. I'm so sorry our let's meet for lunch after retirement was so few and far between. You brought so much joy and inspiration to so many, and touched so many lives. You will be greatly missed. My love goes to your family to keep those memories alive. She has gone into a room, a room we cannot find. But we know where she has been by the lights she left behind. So true. heartheartcandle candle candle*

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**nanci** - December 14, 2020 at 04:44 PM

MB

“ *Mama Debby~ I have searched poetry, prose, scripture, literature, and liturgy trying to find the right words. There are none. Since we met at Hunters Lane, you've been a constant in my life. When I lost my dad in 2009, you were the only teacher of the 200+ at the Lane to come to his wake. I have so many memories of you-like last year when you called me to tell me you'd been diagnosed with breast cancer and we discussed your treatment options. You laughed so hard when I told you that you should opt for the complete mastectomy so that you could have reconstructive surgery and get a pair of new 20-year-old breasts instead. I always used you as a reference when I applied for jobs or scholarship opportunities, and you would call me to ask what I wanted you to say and you'd fill out the reference while we talked. We spoke often of your daughters, grandchildren, and great-grandson and your boundless love for them. You emanated love-love of learning, love of family, love of living. I will forever strive to be more like you as a mother, a grandmother, an educator, a friend, a Catholic, and a human being. I must admit, I am a little salty that you left without a chance to say good-bye. I will take that up with you when I get to heaven but I know you'll say Listen, honey and set me straight..Thank you for being my mentor and friend. I love you Mama Debby and I will miss you so, so much. I already do.*

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**Mary Browning** - December 14, 2020 at 03:19 PM

AH

“ *Debby Norman*

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**Austin and Bell Funeral Home** - August 14, 2020 at 09:07 AM

DR

“ *Debby and I were in graduate school together a decade or so ago. I still remember how much fun she brought to our classes. I am so sorry to hear of her passing.*

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**Dr. Susan Moore Russell** - March 19, 2020 at 09:22 PM

PP

“ I loved Dr. Norman. She was an incredible colleague, mentor, teacher, friend, and confidante. I never knew the last time we spoke would be our last time together. I will always treasure our times together. Rest In Peace my friend.

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**Patrick E. Phoebus, Ph.D.** - January 27, 2020 at 10:45 PM