



## DEENA (GRANT) TAYLOR

August 18, 1956 - December 9, 2023

Deena Mae (Grant) Taylor, 67, of Brewerton, passed away Saturday December 9, 2023 at St. Joseph's Hospital. She was born in Agawam, MA on August 18, 1956 to the late Clarence and Mary (Urekew) Grant.

Deena was a student for life. She believed in higher education and continuous self-improvement. She attended six different universities, studying majors ranging from Biology, Anthropology to Early Childhood Development, Elementary Education to lastly Special Education endorsed in every certification she could receive. She attended Harvard College, Morningside College, UMass, Grand Canyon University, Lehigh Valley Community College. She also taught a bio lab tech course at MIT during her studies at Harvard. She holds numerous associates and bachelor's degrees, highest being the Masters of Teaching.

She was so passionate about teaching children. She owned and operated a daycare and preschool, Small Wonders in Pennsylvania, where she raised 70+ other children as her own. In Massachusetts and Iowa, she entered the special education field and took care of the most profoundly impacted students. Her classroom was her family and she poured her heart into educating those children. She often said the most fulfilling part of her role as an educator was being able to help a student (many of hers who were otherwise restricted by the physical limitations of their body) to communicate with the world and find their community. She could connect with her students in ways that were truly unique.

She was an adamant lover of animals and believed strongly in conservation efforts. Her spirit guide was a red-tailed hawk. She often saw them in her days and knew they were looking over her, guiding her in the right direction. She was inspired to start a local chapter of Roots and Shoots in Iowa by Jane Goodall. She was the Nature Director at Brooks Day School. She loved teaching respect for the earth and kindness to all living creatures. She loved bears especially, frequently donating to conservation efforts for their cause. We often brought food, toys, and donated blankets to animal shelters. She has two children, Stephanie Taylor, of Brewerton and Mark Taylor, of Colorado. She has 3 immediate siblings; Douglas (Teresa) Grant, of Maine, Daryl Grant, of Arizona, and Debra Grant, of Texas and numerous half siblings and step siblings, three nephews; Andrew, Forrest, and Marshall Grant and three nieces; Katie, Kristen, and Diana.

She moved around frequently in her life, but spent most of her time in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Iowa and lastly New York. She loved moments by the ocean. She often said all she wanted in life was a safe little slice of the earth that was near the water. She would prefer hours of listening to the ocean waves in peaceful times. She loved to spend time enjoying the company of others, telling stories, sharing food and memories. She was an amazing chef; she would make an eight-course meal and call it light snacks. She welcomed all to her home, especially at the holidays. Every Christmas she would bake a tray of cookies and we would deliver them on Christmas Eve to the local fire department and police department.

Spiritually, she believed strongly you receive back what you put out to the world, relationships, and people in positive energy and spirits. She followed many Native American spiritual beliefs. She wants us to remember the good memories and think of her with warmth in her heart. She does not want us to mourn for too long, but know her body is at rest and her spirit is with us always.

There will not be a formal ceremony. Instead, we will celebrate her over the years many times to come with small celebrations in multiple locations that

mattered most to her with the people she cherished most.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory can be made to the Jane Goodall Foundation and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

BAGOZZI TWINS FUNERAL HOME, 2601 Milton Ave, Solvay, has care of arrangements.

# Tribute Wall

JM

“ *I look out of my window,  
and I see the morning dew.  
The sky so vast and lonely  
And like me it is so blue.*

*Blue in my heart  
Blue in my soul.*

*My mind it is so cloudy  
and hardly is on queque ,  
repeatedly and repeatedly  
only thoughts of you.*

*You in my heart.  
You in my soul.*

*Days go by .  
Weeks go by .  
Life goes by.*

*It hurts so much inside me,  
but this pain it is so dear.  
This is the only way I know  
for me to have you here.*

*Here in my heart.  
Here in my soul.*



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**James Monahan** - July 05, 2024 at 01:52 PM

AH

“ Deena was our son Sam’s teacher and friend both at Hoover and at PVJH. She had a way with kids that many did not have the pleasure to see. Always an advocate-always placing them first. Always seeing the possibilities. She spoke often of her beautiful children-how proud they made her! Her passion for knowledge and education was obvious! Deena will always have a special place in our hearts. We are very sorry for your loss 💙 Ann Hechler

Ann Hechler - January 10, 2024 at 09:28 PM

JM

Deena was a wonderful person.

James Monahan - July 01, 2024 at 07:16 AM

TR

“ Tony Russo lit a candle in memory of DEENA (GRANT) TAYLOR



Tony Russo - December 15, 2023 at 09:29 AM

MU

“ Marleen Urekew lit a candle in memory of DEENA (GRANT) TAYLOR



Marleen Urekew - December 11, 2023 at 05:49 PM