



REMEMBERING
Debra Holly Vanderveen

April 29, 1957 - February 17, 2026



With deep love and profound sadness, we announce the passing of Debra Vanderveen (née Howarth), born April 29, 1957, to Bridie and Norman Howarth. She passed away on February 17, 2026, at the age of 68, after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

Nearly ten years ago, Debra was given just six months to live. True to who she was, she faced that diagnosis with strength and determination, choosing to focus not on the illness, but on truly living each day to the fullest.

Born in Rivers, Manitoba and raised in Abbotsford, British Columbia, Debra built a life centered around love, family, and connection. She shared 40 beautiful years of marriage with the love of her life, her husband, Calvin Vanderveen. Together, they built a partnership filled with laughter, adventure, unwavering support and were blessed with their daughter, Casey, who was the light of her life and her greatest pride.

Following her diagnosis, Debra made the most of every moment. She loved traveling with Calvin and cherished meaningful trips with her many family members, creating memories that will be treasured forever. She never missed an opportunity to gather with family and friends — whether it was camping in the summer, playing games around the table, reading a good book, or simply enjoying conversation and laughter. She also adored her golden retrievers, who brought her so much comfort and happiness over the years.

Debra was a kind, loving, and generous woman whose infectious laughter could light up any room — and usually did.. She had a vibrant spirit and a warmth that made everyone feel welcome. She was an incredible mother, and her sparkle, strength, and love live on through her daughter, Casey, and husband Calvin.

She is lovingly remembered and survived by her husband, Calvin Vanderveen; her daughter, Casey Vanderveen; her six siblings — Sharon Enns (Doug), Doug Howarth (Elaine), Brenda Ritchie, Kathy Van Staaldunen (Ray), Janice Burden

(Ken), and Denise Smit (Len) — as well as her nieces, nephews, cousins, and many dear friends.

Debra's legacy is one of kindness, joy, and deep love for the people who meant the most to her. She showed us all how to face life, and even its hardest chapters, with courage and heart.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

