

Sandra Duerstein

June 12, 1946 - December 24, 2025

Sandy was a much loved Daughter (Bill & Isabelle), Niece, Sister (Marty) and Sister-in-law (Pamela), Mother (BethAnne), Mother-in-law (Andrew), Grandmother aka: 'Gra-Sandy' (William), Aunt (aka: 'Aunt Sandy the GREAT'), Cousin and Friend to many (ESPECIALLY her life-long Best Friends Patti & Bob and her beloved Josephine).

Following her graduation from Point Park Junior college in 1966, Sandy began her long-running career in healthcare at the now closed St. Francis Hospital in their high-risk nursery (now known as a NICU). She remained there until 1976, where she began her long tenure at the Central Blood Bank of Pittsburgh. Initially, Sandy began working in 'Whole Blood Donation' and eventually found herself working in Apheresis, more specifically with Hemophiliac patients. For several summers, she found herself working as the 'nurse on duty' at a camp for hemophiliac children, which she greatly loved and looked forward to each year. From there, Sandy became the 'Nurse coordinator' with the Hemophilia Malignancy Study with the University of Pittsburgh under Dr. Margaret Ragni: "Sandy was wonderful - she had a positive outlook and energizing personality. You could not find a better research coordinator anywhere!" Sandy's friendly, outgoing nature grew and thrived in dealing with facilities around the United States for the study. She frequently would drag her daughter or her best friend Jo, out and about on weekends - not only for breakfast at Eat 'n Park, but to find "little presents"

that she could send to the new friends that she made as she worked on the study. Following the conclusion of the study, Sandy changed direction and began to do medical billing in Pittsburgh until 1998...

On April 8th, 1998, the LOVE of Sandy's life was born in Fairfax, Virginia. From the moment she held her much-loved and adored grandson William, she knew her days in her beloved hometown of Pittsburgh were numbered, and a little over a year later she traveled the 250 mile one-way trek for the last time and moved in with her daughter and much loved son-in-law, Andrew.

Upon settling down in Manassas Park, she began working for Prince William Hospital in the Central Scheduling Department, but her TRUE "job" was as Grandma-Sandy (aka: "Gra-Sandy"). Her world revolved around her beloved Grandson and his around her. Her time off found them playing THEIR imaginary game "man" (which only THEY were allowed to know how to play or the rules to!) and her crawling on the floor for HOURS. Weekends had her driving him to EACH and EVERY store in Northern Virginia to find whatever Pokemon William was searching for, or to Blockbuster after work on Friday to find William's movie of the week that he longed to see. 'Gra-Sandy' was also known for "Grandma's scrambled eggs", "Grandma's ramen noodles" as well as her stew, beef stroganoff, her much loved "Chili-cheese egg squares" and her delicious Green Bean Casserole (taking her secret recipe with her).

She loved EVERY. SINGLE. MOMENT. of being William's Grandma. He was her pride and joy and the true love of her life, right until her last breath....and that love remains deeply reciprocated. "I love Grandma Sandy with all my heart. She always gave me so much love: She would listen to me rant for hours on end, and was always there for me when I needed her most, and for that I was always grateful to God for giving me such an amazing Grandmother and blessing me with so much time on this Earth with her. She was truly the best Grandmother anyone could ever ask for and I was so lucky to have her in


my life.”

At the end, Sandy was surrounded by her daughter BethAnne, her friend Vonnie, her former son-in-law Andrew...and her beloved William.

A small remembrance of her life will be held at Pierce Funeral Home in Manassas on the 13th of February 2026 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Should you wish to remember Sandy....

- * Share a smile or a laugh with a stranger...
- * Listen to a Beatles song (Specifically: In My Life or She Loves You)
- * Watch Polar Express, ANY Peanuts movie, the sitcom Mom or Criminal Minds
- * Give to a no-kill animal shelter or anywhere that does TNR and rescue of cats. Her beloved Fur-babies of Sandy (Yes, William's cat is named after her!) and Sandy & Beth's fur-baby Lilly were both rescues...or to Joey's Paw, a charity that optimizes the quality of life for special needs dogs (and other animals)
- * Donate to a charity that feeds those in need, both body and soul
- * Make a donation to a charity that encourages the betterment of humanity, especially ones that focus on overcoming depression and suicide prevention as well as ones that assist alcoholics/addicts in overcoming their dependencies and achieving/maintaining their sobriety

But MOST of all, don't just tell those around you how much you love them....SHOW them. Sandy did. 

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 13. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Pierce Funeral Home
9609 Center St.
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 257-6028
pfh@piercefh.com
<https://www.piercefh.com>

Tribute Wall

JH

“ Jeff, Sandy & Gage Haas purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of Sandra Duerstein.



Jeff, Sandy & Gage Haas - February 12 at 07:15 AM

JR

“ Jeanette Rishell purchased the *Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses* for the family of Sandra Duerstein.



Jeanette Rishell - February 11 at 07:24 PM

DA

“ So sorry for your loss, your Mom was a good friend to my Mom Josephine, deepest sympathy, Denise

Denise Adams - February 10 at 01:47 PM

BR

And your Mom was such a good friend to my Mom - and me, as well! (I did add your Mom in her obituary - my guess is they're in Heaven at Eat-n-Park having their Breakfast Smiles and coffee together...at least that's how I like to think of them!)

Beth Ann Roland - February 15 at 10:44 AM

PH

“ So sorry for your loss. Keeping you and your family in my prayers

Pam Harvey - February 09 at 11:12 AM

LV

“ *Love, Lesina, Joe, Tomi & Tony Visgaitis purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Sandra Duerstein.*



Love, Lesina, Joe, Tomi & Tony Visgaitis - February 09 at
09:57 AM