



Debra Ann Stockwell

November 13, 1957 - September 27, 2025

Debra Ann Stockwell, 67, died on September 27, 2025 at the Morrison House Hospice facility in Zanesville, Ohio, after a multi-year battle with ovarian cancer. Born November 13, 1957, in Kansas City, Missouri, she was the eldest child of the late Donald G. Kiefer and late Shirley (McKnight) Kiefer. A talented writer and editor, Debra graduated from Excelsior Springs Missouri High School, received a Bachelor of Arts in English from Northwest Missouri State University, and completed a Master of Arts degree in Interpersonal Communication from Ohio University. After her April 17, 1982, marriage to Daniel R. Stockwell, Debra became a resident of Zanesville. She was a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church and active in her daughters' education and activities, from tennis to photography to theatre.

During her career, Debra was employed with the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company in Minneapolis, with Muskingum Area Technical College (now Zane State College) in Zanesville, with Franklin University in Columbus, and with Ohio University-Zanesville, where she taught English, writing, public speaking, and communications. Her primary higher education duties were teaching and academic advising. She was dedicated to her students, forging life-long friendships with her students; many served as her nurses during her long illness.

Debra was a former member of the National Association for Developmental Education, the Ohio Association for Developmental Education, the Ohio Association of Two-Year Colleges, and the Delta Psi Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. After her retirement, Debra resumed her life-long love of reading, spending time with friends, and began attending plays and musicals in Columbus. She also enjoyed spending time with her husband, daughters, relatives, and friends.

In addition to her husband Dan, Debra is survived by two daughters, Alison Stockwell of Columbus, OH and Ashley (Daniel) Hollingsworth and grandson Porter of Arlington, VA. She is also survived by siblings Alan (Rosa) Kiefer of Liberty MO; Denise (Tracy) Barker of Rowlett, TX; Diane (Chad) Marnholtz of Warrensburg, MO; and Alex (Linda) Kiefer of Belton, MO. Other survivors include sisters-in-law Jeannie (Paul) Bailey and Sandy (Larry) Turner, brother-in-law John Stockwell, and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews. She was preceded in death by her father, Donald G. Kiefer, and her mother Shirley Kiefer of

Warrensburg, MO, her father-in-law Lawrence Jenkins and her mother-in-law Alverna Jenkins.

Calling hours will be 4:00 to 7:00 PM, Friday, October 3, 2025, at the Hillis Combs Funeral Home, 935 Forest Avenue, Zanesville. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated 10:30 AM, Saturday, October 4, 2025, at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, 144 North 5th Street, Zanesville, with Fr. Jan C. P. Sullivan as celebrant. Burial will follow in Mt. Calvary Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Genesis Cancer Center or St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church. To sign the online guestbook or leave a personal note of condolence please visit www.hilliscombsfh.com

Cemetery Details

Mount Calvary Cemtery

1676 West Main Street
Zanesville, OH 43701

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 3. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Hillis Combs Funeral Home
935 Forest Avenue
Zanesville, OH 43701
(740) 452-5494
directors@hilliscombsnestor.com
<https://www.hilliscombsnestor.com>

Mass of Christian Burial

OCT 4. 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
144 North Fifth Street
Zanesville, OH 43701

Tribute Wall

CD

“ To Dan and Family, we send our deepest sympathies. Deb will always be fondly remembered for her kind and gentle spirit. Our hearts go out to you at this most sorrowful time.

Mike and Chris Drake

Christine Drake - October 04, 2025 at 07:04 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Debra Ann Stockwell.



October 02, 2025 at 12:25 PM

PR

“ Our condolences to Deb's family. May you find comfort during this difficult time.

Patty and Doug Reynolds - October 01, 2025 at 11:18 PM

AN

“ Deb and I met at Northwest Missouri State University. She and Steve Bragg and Doni Mollus and I became fast friends, young English Department scholars and writers. I remember those early days with my friends as being my very first intellectual and creative relationship. Our discussions centered around our favorite writers, our own writing, the literary magazine we created, *Envy's Sting*, and the wonderful professors in the English Department.

And friend stuff, of course.

As our individual lives took us all over the Midwest after graduation, we stayed connected through calls and letters. Deb will be missed. Terribly. I hope she finds herself in the great library in heaven, where she'll be wonderfully happy. Until we meet again, Deb. Love you always.

Andrea Nett - October 01, 2025 at 08:36 PM

KM

“ I worked at Zane State and I was just down the hall from Debra. She was a sweet person. Sorry to her about her battle with cancer. Prayers for the family and friends for comfort.

Kathy McCaslin - October 01, 2025 at 04:37 PM

NG

“ *Debbie and Dan and I date back to the early 1980s when we were in welcome wagon together. We had so much fun and great eating with the welcome wagon dinner group that we all belong to! We follow each other on and off. for several years and during occasions at St. Thomas.*
So sorry for your loss Dan. My condolences to you and the family members. □

Nancy Geiger - October 01, 2025 at 03:28 PM

KB

“ *Deb and I became friends in high school. Later we were college roommates. She always has been intelligent and very interested in literature. Most of all, she was a good friend. I will miss her.* Kathy Bunse

Kathy Bunse - October 01, 2025 at 03:28 PM

SH

“ *Dan and Debra bought our house on Lenox Avenue years ago. So, so sorry for your loss.* Ralph and Sally Hummel

Sally Hummel - October 01, 2025 at 03:18 PM

CE

“ *I was a student of Deb's years ago at OUZ. She taught Communications. Being very introverted and shy, I used to dread going to class. As a warm-up, Deb would ask a question at the beginning of each class and go around the room for everyone to answer. This simple practice helped me improve my confidence and has had a lasting impression on my life. The welcoming environment she created really fostered my communication skills and helped to shape my success and personal growth. I'm very grateful to have met her.*

Cameron E. - October 01, 2025 at 02:51 PM

RT

“ *Deb was intelligent, interesting, a gracious hostess, and a caring mother among many other wonderful traits. Sending our love and sympathy to Alison, Ashley, Dan and the rest of the family. Thinking of you all.*

Rob and Sue Thuma - October 01, 2025 at 11:57 AM

JC

Deb was an instructor at Muskingum Tech when I became a student back in the late 80's. Since it had been so long since I was a student, she wanted me to write a story about a future vacation, I wrote about a gorgeous place with all the flora and fauna and where I'd like to be. When I was done and she read it, she told me to take her with me. She was such a good person and perfect for her job to work with older students who were transitioning back into being a student again.

Jeanette Caldwell - October 23, 2025 at 05:56 PM