



ELLEN WARNER GRAHAM

DEC 7, 1965 - FEB 3, 2024



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Ellen Warner Graham was born on December 7th, 1965 in Waupun, Wisconsin, and passed away on February 3rd, 2024. She lived in Miami, Florida for the majority of her adult life.

Prior to her passing, she was the mother of 20-year-old twins, Lucas and Lea; the soulmate to Brian Rivers; sister to Annette and Tom Warner; and above all, the friendly florist beloved by all who got the blessing of crossing her path.

Growing up, Ellen always had a desire for exploration and adventure. After witnessing the Air Traffic Control (ATC) strike in 1981, she enlisted in the Air Force at the young age of 18. Her nine years in the Air Force took her across the globe, spanning from San Bernadina to South Korea, feeding her adventurous spirit while simultaneously advancing her career. She completed her time in the Air Force with a Bachelor's degree in Aviation Management with honors. She was hired by U.S. Customs as a Drug Intercept Controller until she became an ATC Manager, a role she worked for 3 years, leading to an eventual promotion to the role of ATC Instructor. Ellen retired at the age of 50 to dedicate her time to raising her kids.

Ellen raised Lucas and Lea Graham, alongside their father, Dillon Graham. Ellen was a devoted mother to her children, keeping traditions such as annual birthday trips to Disney World. This tradition would last over a decade. Ellen made it a priority to attend all of the kids' events, ranging from sports games to dance recitals to honor roll ceremonies. Ellen played a pivotal role in facilitating their development into driven, accomplished, and independent young adults.

Ellen was not Ellen, AKA Nelle, without her partner, Brian Rivers, AKA Nairb. Ellen and Brian met while working as air traffic controllers 12 years ago, which blossomed into a beautiful relationship. Brian shared Ellen's passion for exploration. The two made sure to explore as many places as they possibly could, resulting in an annual travel pact where they would pass off surprising each other with a fully planned trip every March, keeping the destination a secret until they reached the



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airport. Regardless of where they were in the world, they were simply content to be in the company of their best friend, each other.

While Ellen was a presence for love, she also fought a battle with addiction in her later life. This addiction took an unexpectedly hard toll on Ellen; nevertheless, she persisted by attending AA meetings, going to rehab facilities, and making life changes to seek sober living. Unfortunately, her efforts were insurmountable in the face of the disease and it eventually took her life far too soon. May we choose to remember Ellen for the person she was before her addiction. Ellen accomplished great things in her life, and that should not be overshadowed by her struggles.

Ellen never lost her love for life, despite her pain. We should all strive to carry such an attitude into our own lives. Ellen's joyful spirit and positive attitude will forever live on in the hearts of those who loved her. Anyone who knew Ellen would know she'd want us to celebrate her life rather than mourn her passing. Such a life must be celebrated, and celebrate we shall!



Tribute Wall

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Betsy.Colbert5@Gmail.Com posted:

I was Ellen's roommate at Hazelden in 2022. Ellen was so kind, loving and anything you could ever ask for. She absolutely loved her twins and we had that in common. She loved Brian as much as anyone could possibly love another human. She said if I mess this up he won't take me back. Sent pictures of his retirement party with firehoses going everywhere. Ellen was intelligent, beautiful, and every other accolade you could think of. We lost a wonderful person and I lost a best friend. She loved her kids more than life itself. Betsy

November 14 at 5:00 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring ELLEN by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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