

A portrait of a smiling woman with short, curly brown hair, wearing a light-colored top. She is positioned in the center-right of the frame. To her left, there are large, vibrant purple flowers with green leaves, some of which are slightly out of focus. The background is a soft, light blue and white gradient.

Celebrating The Life of

Desiree "Desi" Van Riper

*Sunrise
June 23, 1960*

*Sunset
June 19, 2020*

Reflections of Life

Desiree “Desi” Van Riper was born on June 23, 1960 to Harold Vincent Van Riper and the late Helen Van Riper in the Township of Orange, New Jersey. She departed this life on June 19, 2020 at St. Joseph’s Regional Medical Center in Paterson, New Jersey.

Desiree, affectionately known as “Desi,” was the eldest of three children and grew up in Paterson, New Jersey where she attended the city’s public schools. She also attended Christ Temple Church with her family.

Desiree, a popular teenager, attended and graduated from John F. Kennedy High School in 1978. She was a bright and spunky student; whose gentle kindness and charm touched the hearts of many. Desiree also had a magnetic personality, which drew many friends to her, from top athletes to the nerdy underclassmen and even members of her alma mater’s “uppity” girl cliques. To know Desi was to love her.

Desiree’s gift of gab, knowledge of sports, and passion for music and films contributed to her indomitable spirit and ability to connect with others. She was an avid sports enthusiast, who maintained an encyclopedic memory of her favorite athletes, from the NBA and NFL and the worlds of pro golfing to tennis and gymnastics.

Desiree was a cinephile whose favorite pastime was watching classic films. Her collection featured Betty Davis, Diahann Carroll, Sidney Poitier and Cary Grant to name a few. She also was a Trekkie who loved Leonard Nimoy as ‘Spock’ in Star Trek: The Original Series, and her other sci-fi favorites, included the original Twilight Zone Series and The X-Files. Also, as an avid TV buff she was a big fan of Grey’s Anatomy, NCIS and Bull.

Desiree also possessed an eclectic love of music and her favorite artists included Prince, Michael Jackson, Al Jarreau and Angela Bofill. Desi was a huge fan of Earth, Wind and Fire, the Brothers Johnson, the Jackson Five and the Beatles. Her soundtracks brought her great joy which she loved to share with her sister, Monica and brother, Vinnie.

Desiree had an innate acumen for business and math. After high school she attended William Paterson College where she majored in business administration and accounting. Desi was a quick study of shorthand and possessed a typewriter speed of 85 wpm. These skills would prove to be invaluable assets as she entered the business world.

Desiree worked for Toys “R” Us Corporate for several years. Later, moving on to the Paterson Board of Education. During her tenure, she worked at several elementary schools in the district where she used her skill set to support the administrative staff.

Desiree made a huge impact in her community, like her late mother, Helen Van Riper. She was a civic-minded advocate, committed to the fight for social injustices and equality for African Americans. Desi, along with her siblings, were encouraged to volunteer in their community during their childhood. She later went on to work in the Paterson City Clerk’s Office during elections. In recent years, Desi shared her thoughts and points of view on Facebook and many of her friends looked forward to her posts highlighting her faith, political views and sports updates.

Desiree loved her family and cherished spending Sundays with her father. She was truly a daddy’s girl. Desi always shared a kind word with her beautiful smile and sweet welcoming spirit, when her siblings, nephew, niece and great niece visited her.

Desiree was preceded in death by her mother, Helen Van Riper; and survived by her father, Harold Vincent Van Riper; sister Monica Poitier (DaWayne Brashear); brother, Vincent C. Van Riper; her nephew, Jayvon Jones; niece Angelique Jones, a great niece, Chelsea Watson; and a host of uncles, aunts, cousins and friends who loved her dearly.

She also leaves to cherish her memory, a devoted aunt, Deborah Boggs; uncle, Chester Boggs, and cousin, Joshua Boggs. Desiree’s favorite time of the year was Christmas. The perfect introduction to the holiday season was our tree-trimming party and transforming Desi’s living space into a Christmas spectacular with poinsettias, cards and gifts.

Desiree will be missed by her family, friends and a special circle of devoted lifelong “sisterfriends,” who were apart of her sacred journey.--

Service

Tuesday, June 30, 2020 • 11:00 a.m.

EAST RIDGELAWN CEMETERY
255 Main Avenue, Clifton, New Jersey
Rev. Anthony Cureton, Officiating



Goodbye Family

Goodbye family, I had to go
But there's something I want you to know.
I enjoyed you while I had life
I had to cross over with my father, Jesus Christ.
Don't you cry, don't shed a tear
Just look up and my love will appear.
So goodbye dad, sister, brother,
nephew & niece
Goodbye friends.
I'll see you soon one day
Just remember I am OK.
Go on and live your life
You will soon cross over with Jesus Christ.
Don't weep or mourn
Because you will all be called home.
Goodbye, Goodbye love you all.
Just remember don't let my death let you fall.
Hold on, hold on tight.
I will see you soon, Goodnight.

Acknowledgement

The family of the late **Desiree Van Ripper** wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many expressions of love, concern and kindness shown to our family during this our time of bereavement. May God Bless and Keep You!

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